



# Waste Prevention and Environmental Services Staff Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan

*In November 2022, staff from Metro's Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (WPES) Department provided input on the garbage, recycling, reuse and repair service gaps that could be filled by new or updated facilities. The intent was to seek input and expertise from all levels of staff currently involved with planning, operating, and delivery of garbage and recycling services. Feedback was provided from policy and program staff, as well as staff at WPES's existing facilities: Metro South and Central Transfer Stations, Metro Paint, and the RID Deployment Center. The following is a high-level summary of what we heard.*

## Existing facility gaps

Staff shared the following summarized comments about the existing system:

- There is a need for more transfer stations, spread equally throughout the region.
- There is a lack of space at existing garbage and recycling facilities to separate and store unwanted items that could be reused.
- Many people don't donate items at a separate facility for reuse because they don't know where to take them or don't want to make multiple trips.
- Composting facilities, especially food waste composting, are needed in order to meet state waste reduction & carbon goals.
- Facilities need to better accommodate residential self-haul customers. There is currently limited capacity for residents, which is a critical need.
- More sites need to offer asbestos testing to allow for easier reuse of building materials and prevent contamination. Currently only Waste Management in Hillsboro can dispose of asbestos.
- Facility maintenance and disaster resilience is needed at Metro facilities.



## Other system gaps

- Recycling should be incentivized through credits at facilities.
- Need better employment pathways for advancement for Metro facility staff.
- Need for more recyclers to accept hard-to-recycle items like clothing, plastics, sharps and plastic film.
- There is a lack of medication drop-off sites on the west side of the region.
- There is a lack of animal rendering services; businesses that process meat do not have many options for waste besides the landfill.
- It would be nice to have more sites that can convert food waste into energy.
- Transportation to and from facilities is inequitable because a vehicle is needed.
- Seniors and disabled residents need assistance moving and disposing of large household appliances and furniture.
- Large quantities of food waste are taken to the landfill because there are not enough recyclers to de-package food waste for composting.
- More public education is needed about what is recyclable.
- More collection events are needed.

Staff at each facility voted on a list of identified gaps and needs. Their priorities are summarized in this table:

Gaps & Needs	Metro South	Metro Central	Metro Paint	RID	Total
More facilities for the general public to take recyclables and donate reusable items	9	13	3	1	26
Dedicated drop off areas before entering scalehouses to recover materials for reuse and recycling	8	8	6	1	23
More and better access to parking, lockers, restrooms, etc. for Metro facility workers	11	3	6		20
Space for reuse organizations to sort, repair/refurbish and store items collected	10	7	1	1	19
More and affordable self-haul facilities for garbage, construction waste and large household items	9	8	1		18
More facilities that accept household hazardous waste	9	8	1		18
Improvements at existing facilities to reduce energy use, emissions and other pollution	8	6	1		15
Facilities that are accessible to people who don't drive cars	3	7	3		13
Safety improvements at existing facilities	4		2		6
More capacity to process food waste from businesses and households	3		1		4
More lending libraries to encourage people to buy less			3		3

Staff identified gaps specific to Metro (WPES) facilities, including the following highlights:

#### Metro South Transfer Station

- Facility is overcrowded and residents travel long distances use services.
- Residential self-haul and commercial customers should be separated for safety and convenience.
- Items that could be reused cannot be recovered once they pass the scales.
- Reusable materials are being thrown away due to lack of space for recovery.
- Need public restrooms.

#### Metro Central Transfer Station

- Site layout is not optimal.
- Need a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) loading dock for easier unloading.
- Need covered outside areas.
- Need employee amenities like space to eat lunch.

#### MetroPaint

- Facility building is leased rather than owned, which is not ideal.
- Need to modernize facility and equipment for efficiency and staff safety.
- Facility needs more employee amenities like locker rooms, space for meetings and lunch.
- Need a viewing room for community education.
- Could use a grey water system to recycle the large amount of water needed for facility washing.
- Facility could be co-located with other programs like RID and graffiti abatement.

#### RID

- Current RID vehicles do not have space to separate wet waste from reusable items for transfer or distribution to facilities/organizations.

- RID staff see lots of opportunities to recover reusable items across the region to bring to transfer stations or organizations that could sell or distribute them to people in need.

*Facility staff identified many other gaps and needs related to day-to-day facility maintenance, operations, worker safety and programming. The gaps that were identified that are not directly related to this project will be incorporated in other projects.*

