

Metro Garbage & Recycling System Facilities Plan Phase 3 Workshop Summary Report

Executive summary

Purpose

Metro is engaging with stakeholders from local government, industry, and reuse and repair organizations as well as other community members with diverse identities and lived experience to guide the development of the Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify facility investments that reduce waste, increase access, and keep ratepayer costs affordable. The plan will consider investment in current facilities – including Metro’s two transfer stations – and new facilities like reuse and recycling centers.

This report summarizes findings from a stakeholder engagement workshop and survey in Phase 3 of the project. The workshop was part of the Reuse, Recycling, and Garbage System Symposium, hosted by Metro’s Waste Prevention and Environmental Services Division at the Oregon Convention Center on September 27, 2023. Additional survey input will be reported as engagement continues during Phase 3.

Phase 3 Workshop

The Reuse, Recycling, and Garbage System Symposium consisted of a panel discussion followed by an interactive workshop to review four draft scenarios proposed for Metro’s Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan. The scenarios were assessed using evaluation criteria developed in phase 2 of the project and presented to workshop participants, following the [Workshop Discussion Guide](#). The scenarios represent different ways of responding to the gaps identified through engagement and technical analysis.

The input shared by workshop participants will help inform Metro Council’s decision on a preferred scenario. The preferred scenario or combination of scenario components will move forward into phase 4 of the System Facilities Plan for more analysis, including developing a detailed funding and implementation strategy.

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Draft Scenarios Considered

Baseline	Full-Service	Distributed	No-Build
			
Metro does not build new facilities or address facility gaps, but maintains current facilities	Metro builds four large transfer stations and two new reuse facilities	Metro builds a network of distributed mid-sized facilities across the three counties	Metro increases requirements, invests in private facilities and renovates existing facilities

Key findings

- Workshop participants indicated the most support for components included in the Distributed (public facilities that include reuse and recycling centers) and No-build (fee to invest in reuse organization) scenarios.
- Participants also showed substantial support for new reuse and repair facilities, and a role for Metro in providing space and investment to support organizations offering reuse and repair.
 - Across groups, there was support for including reuse and recycling services at public facilities.
 - As a group, private industry participants were also supportive of Metro investing in private facilities.
- Many comments indicated an important role for Metro in providing education and outreach, and that this work is needed to support changes to the reuse, recycling and garbage system.
- Metro's use of regulatory tools is not favored by most participants, especially the mandatory subscription to curbside service. Regulating rates private facilities charge was only moderately supported.
- Metro building new full-service transfer stations was not well supported by many participants, but there is more support for mid-sized facilities.
- Concern about costs: Participants did not support large new costs for customers, and some asked for more information about how cost estimates were developed or questioned their accuracy.

Input mechanisms

Input from workshop participants was collected through two mechanisms; written comments submitted during table discussions and an online survey.

- Written comments were requested from workshop participants regarding the description and presentation of evaluation results for each scenario. Participants discussed each scenario in a table group with the assistance of a facilitator and posted their comments at their table. Written comments are not associated with a participant role.
- Workshop participants were asked to complete an online survey at the end of the workshop and the survey link was provided via email after the event. A total of 50 workshop participants

provided input through the survey. The survey responses are associated with a respondent roles.

Who we heard from

Approximately 80 participants attended the workshop and were supported by approximately 36 staff members from Metro and the consultant team.

Among the 50 participants who completed the survey, the largest share (30) identified their role as members of private industry, followed by community and local government (both at 16 people), and reuse/repair organizations (14), as shown in Figure 1. Among private industry participants, specific roles were identified, as shown in Figure 2. Survey respondents were able to indicate multiple roles.

Figure 1: Workshop survey participant roles by type (n=47)

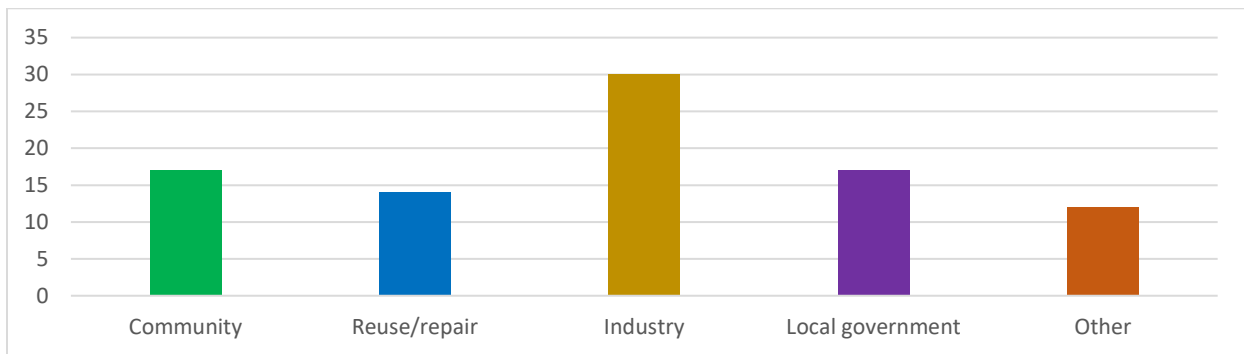
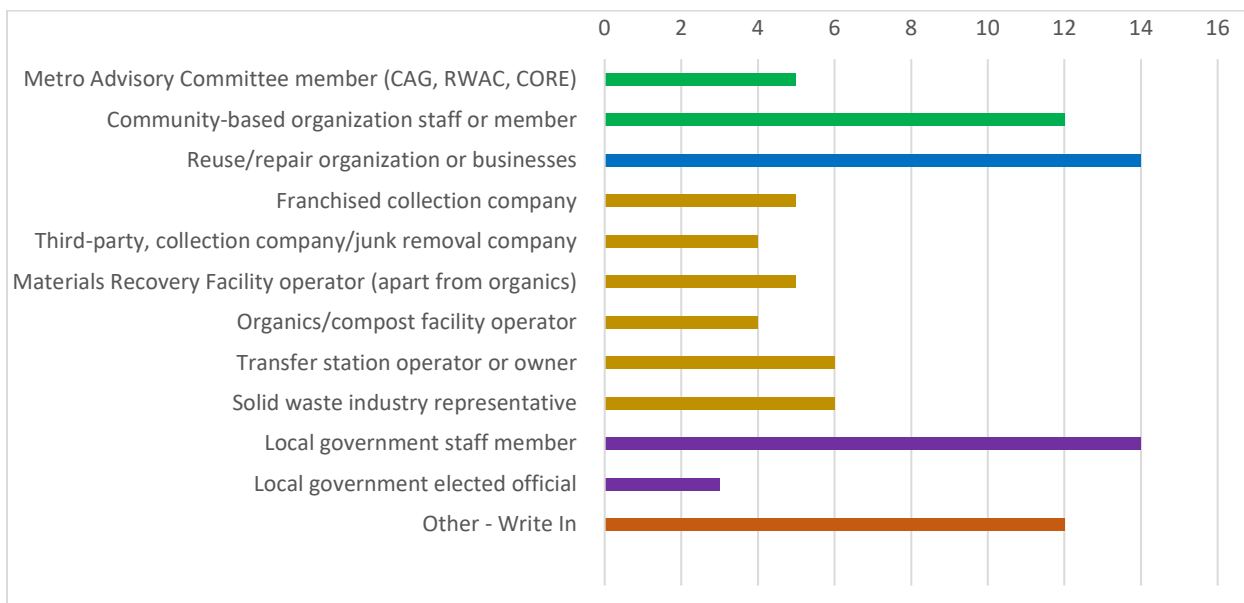


Figure 2: Workshop survey participant roles, detailed



Workshop findings

Preferred scenarios

Survey respondents were asked to identify their preferred scenario from those presented at the workshop. As shown in Figure 3, 62 percent of respondents identified the Distributed Scenario as their preference, followed by the No-build Scenario (22 percent), Full-service (10 percent), and Baseline (6 percent). Over 80 percent of survey respondents said they would make changes to their preferred scenario.

Notable differences among subgroups of survey respondents (Figure 4) include:

- Local government and reuse/repair respondents indicated a preference for the Distributed scenario by a much larger margin compared to private industry participants
- No private industry or reuse/repair respondents identified Full-service as their preferred scenario
- The Full-service scenario was identified as preferred by a larger share of community respondents than the No-build scenario

Figure 3: Preferred scenarios (n=49)

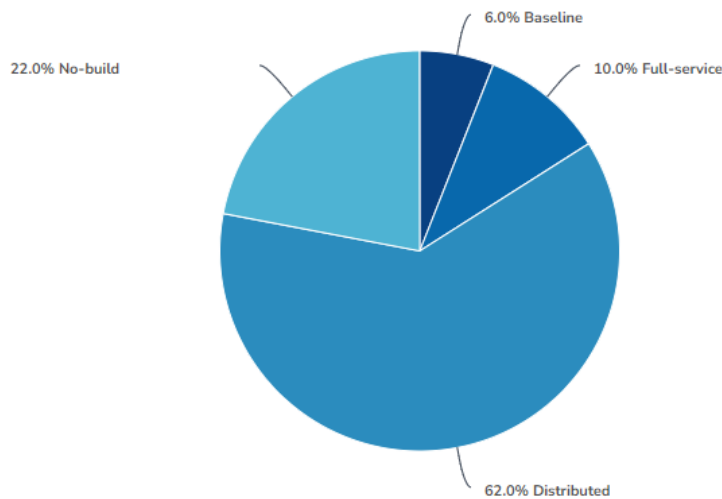
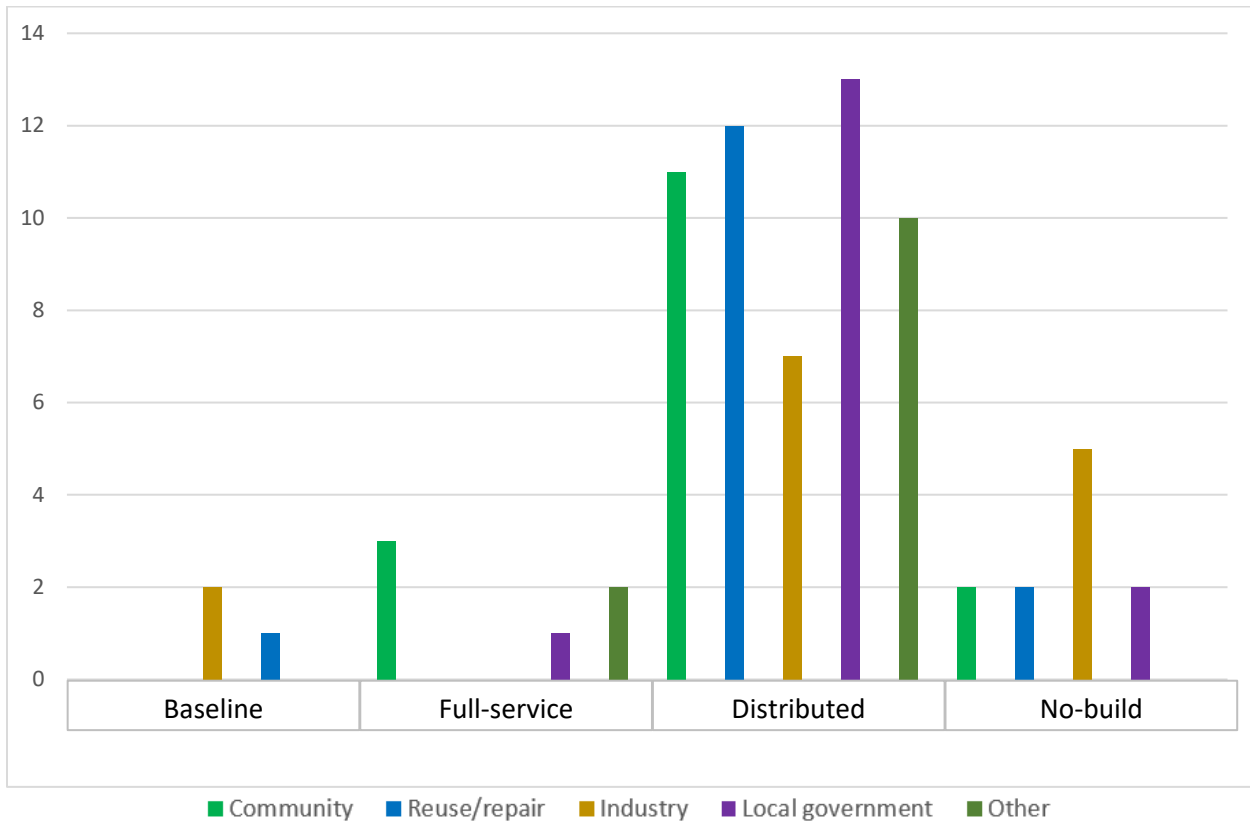


Figure 4: Preferred scenarios by stakeholder role (n=50)



Most important information in selecting a preferred scenario

Survey respondents were asked what information was most important to them in selecting a preferred scenario. Figures 5, 6 and 7 show the ranking of most important information for the respondents that identified, Full-service, Distributed, and No-build scenarios respectively. For all three of the scenarios apart from the Baseline, respondents indicated services available to the general public was the most important information in selection their preferred alternative.

The **Full-service scenario** (Figure 5) was selected by the smallest number of respondents with just four people who indicated it was their preference. For those respondents, “how the scenario meets policy priorities for waste reduction, access, and affordability” ranked second after “services available to the general public.”

For respondents who indicated the **Distributed scenario** (Figure 6) as their preference, “how the scenario meets policy priorities for waste reduction, access, and affordability” similarly ranked second most important, with “services available to commercial haulers” ranked as the least important.

For respondents who indicated the **No-build scenario** (Figure 7) was their preference, “improvement to private facilities” was the second most important information, with “services available to commercial haulers” and “how this scenario performed in the evaluation” ranking lowest.

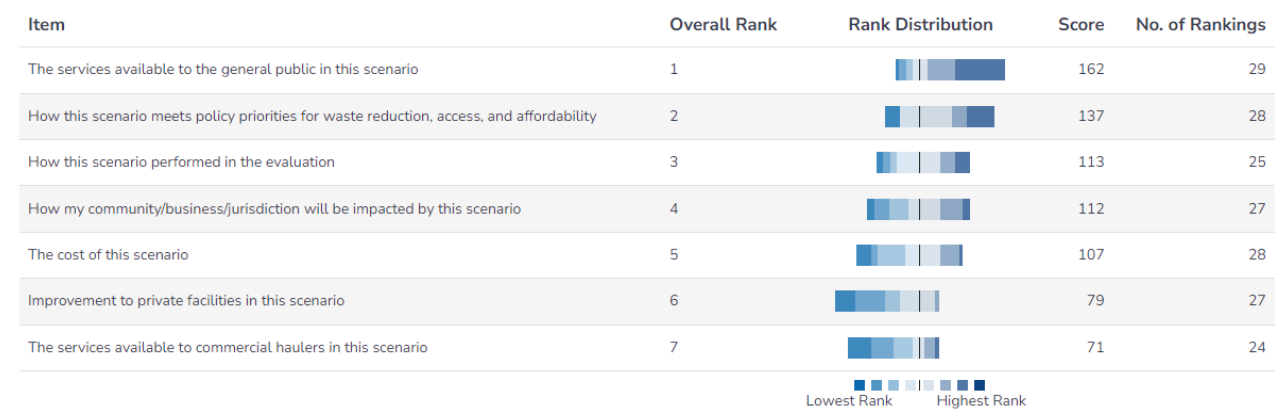
Full-Service

Figure 5: Important information in choosing a preferred scenario, Full-Service



Distributed

Figure 6: Important information in choosing a preferred scenario, Distributed



No-Build

Figure 7: Important information in choosing a preferred scenario, No-Build



Preferred scenario components (Build your own scenario results)

Workshop participants were asked through the survey to indicate which scenario components they would include in their own scenario. The views of industry participants varied most from all workshop participants among the respondent roles. Additional results from survey input are shown in figures 8 and 9.

The components **most often selected** across groups include:

- **Public facilities that include reuse and recycling centers** was among the most favored scenario components across all participant roles.
 - Over half of participants across *all roles* included this component in their preferred scenario.
 - This component scored lower among local government participants.
- Over half of participants favored a **dedicated fee to invest in reuse organizations**.
 - Such a fee was most favored by reuse and repair participants.
 - Local government participants showed lower support for a dedicated fee to invest in reuse organizations, and private industry participants favored such a fee the least out of respondent groups.
- The **regional reuse mall** and **regional reuse warehouse hub** components scored similarly and were included in just less than half of respondents' preferred scenarios.
 - These new reuse facilities were most supported by reuse/repair participants, followed by community participants.
 - They were least often favored by local government and private industry participants.

The scenario components **least often selected** include:

- **Mandatory subscription to garbage curbside service** was supported least of all the scenario components offered. It was included most often by private industry participants, 25 percent of whom included it in their preferred scenario.
- **Large transfer stations** were most supported by local government participants with just under 30 percent of this group including it in their preferred scenario.
- More than half of private industry participants included **redevelop Metro Central and Metro South transfer stations** (with Metro not building other facilities) in their preferred scenario, however this component was not included by more than half of any other group apart from Metro staff.

Scenario components among **neither the most nor least selected** include:

- Over half of community respondents included **commercial facilities that include mid-sized transfer stations** in their preferred scenario, but that was not true for any other group apart from Metro staff.
 - Mid-sized transfer stations were included by more respondents across all groups compared to the large transfer stations component

- Among the components with the largest difference in survey results between respondent groups, a **program to invest in expanding/adding services at private facilities** was tied with public facilities that include reuse and recycling centers as the most popular component among private industry participants, but the least popular for community and reuse/repair participants.
- **Required expansion of curbside programs** was not included by more the half of any of the respondent groups but was more often selected by community and reuse/repair participants.
- **Regulate rates that private facilities charge commercial customers** was the least popular of any of the scenario components for private industry respondents with just 8 percent including it in their preferred scenario. However, about 40 percent of local government and community participants selected this component.

Figure 8: Components of preferred scenarios - All survey participants (n=48)

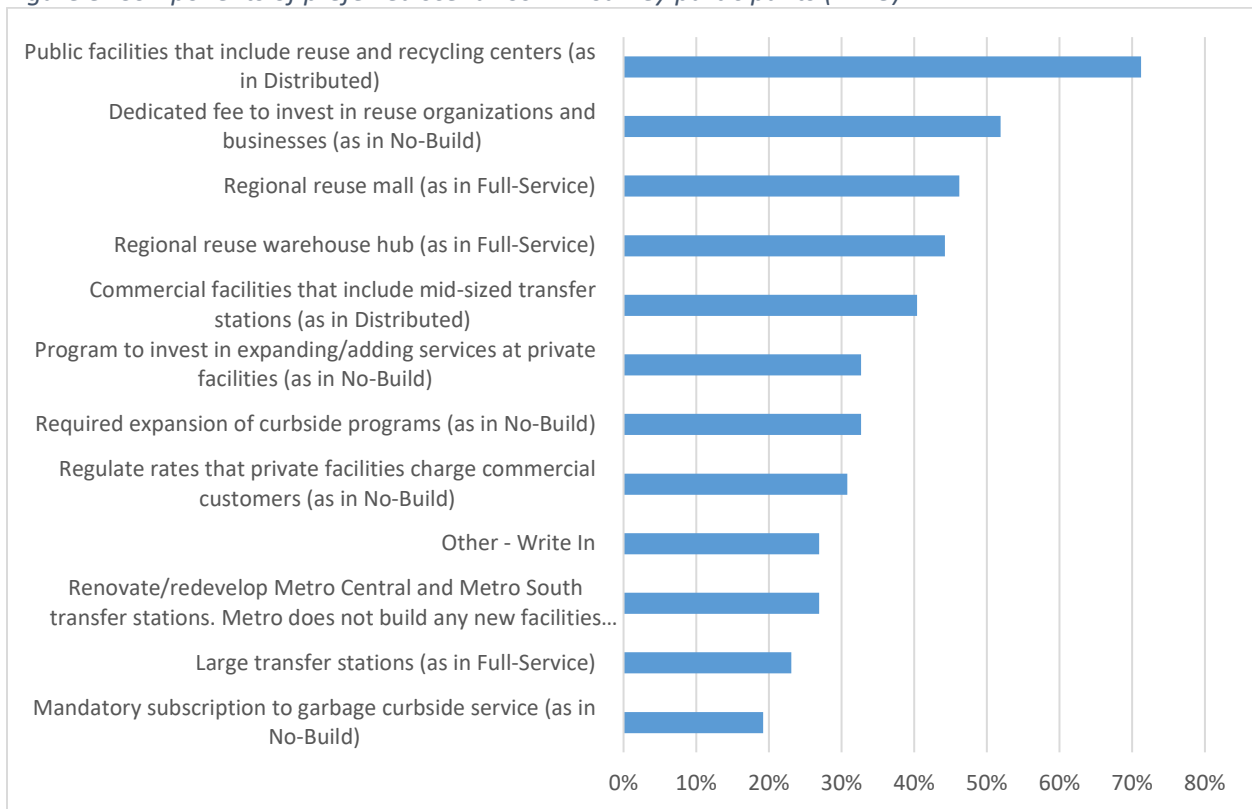
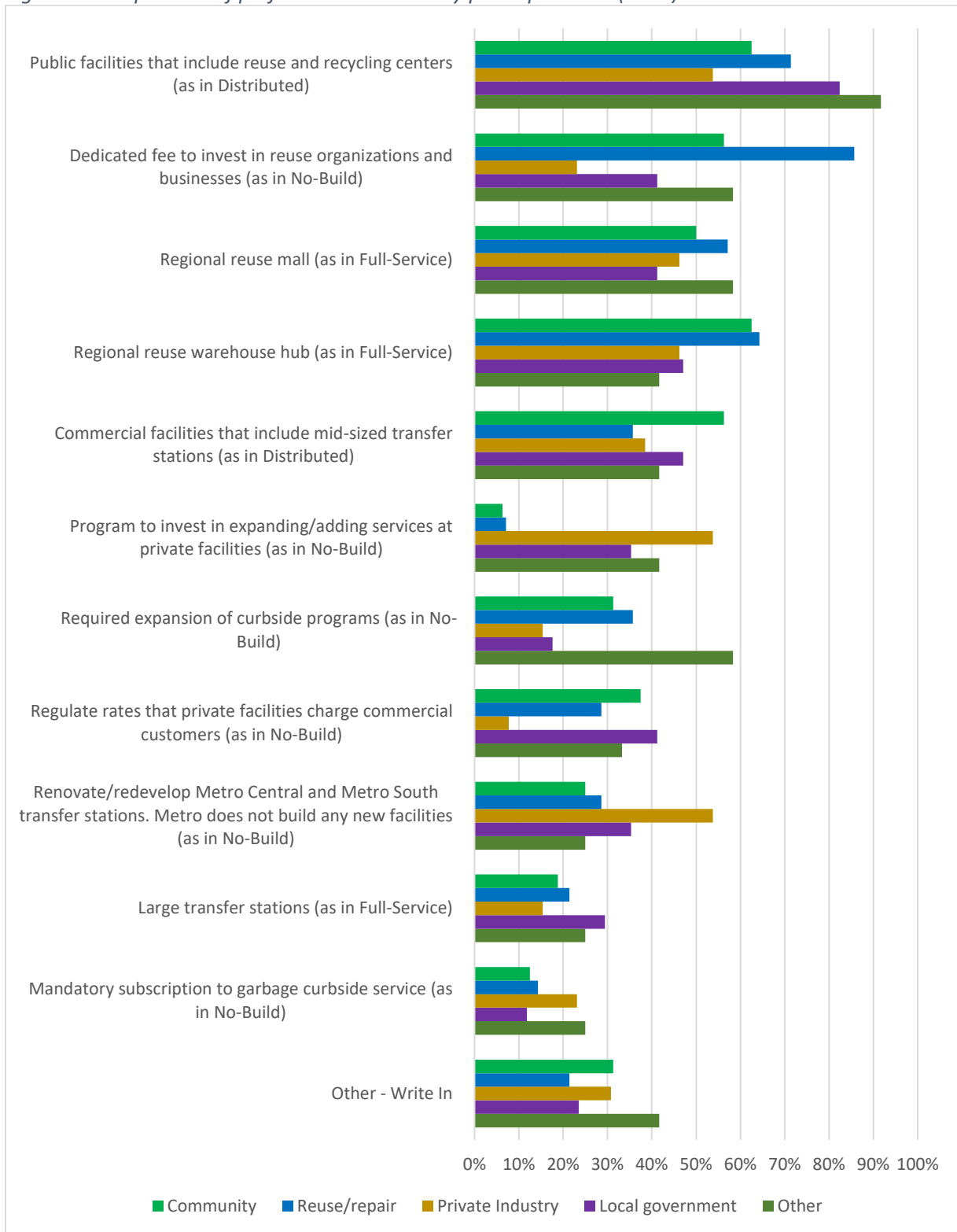


Figure 9: Components of preferred scenarios – By participant role (n=48)



Scenario evaluation and feedback through small group discussions

Workshop participants were invited to discuss each of the draft scenarios in small groups and then provide written comments. The comments follow a “Rose, Bud, Thorn” framework, with discussion prompts of:

- Rose: What aspects of each scenario do you like most and why?
- Bud: What changes would you make to improve each scenario?
- Thorn: What aspects of each scenario do you like least and why?

Comments from small groups discussions were compiled and analyzed for themes. The most prominent themes by scenario and comment type, as well as the counts for all comment types, are summarized below. The comment counts are useful for understanding and comparing the relative prominence of each theme. The exercise was not designed to assess a representative sample, and individual comments were assigned multiple themes. The full list of comments is provided in *Appendix A: Small Group Comments*.

Full-Service Scenario

Roses - Full-Service Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
<p>Reuse/Repair: Many comments were supportive of the reuse mall concept and the community benefits it would provide including community education. Commentors also said that the reuse hub concept would provide needed capacity and support, and opportunity for collaboration among reuse organizations.</p> <p>Access: Many comments were also supportive of increased access provided by the Full-Service scenario in providing new facilities in both Washington County and East Multnomah County. Many commentors appreciated the idea of a “one-stop-shop” where people could access multiple services.</p> <p>Capacity: Comments were supportive of increased space leading to operational efficiency, labor efficiency, material consolidation, and community-facing benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reuse/repair (33) • Access (23) • Capacity (12) • Other comment themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Washington County (5) ○ Environment (4) ○ Multnomah County – East (4) ○ Jobs (3) ○ Cost (3) ○ Project process (3) ○ Self-haul (2) ○ Metro’s role (1) ○ Organics (1) ○ HHW (1) ○ Clackamas County (1)

Buds - Full-Service Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
<p>Project process: Questions and suggestions about the specifics of this scenario such as how it relates to the Recycling Modernization Act (RMA) and land use considerations and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project process (19) • Reuse/repair (16) • Access (15)

challenges in facility siting. Some comments requested more detail about how the scenario would work, how reuse/repair partners would be selected and how existing businesses would be incorporated.

Reuse/repair: Comments about the opportunity to divert more items to reuse and about including existing reuse organizations. Many also called for multiple reuse malls in a “hub and spoke” model. Other comments included suggestions to include reuse organizations in program design and facility operations, and that maximum value in reuse items is encouraged by including items specifically designed for reuse, items that are “higher-end” or refurbished. A comment suggested adding another reuse hub to the scenario.

Access: Some commentors suggested providing options for garbage disposal at reuse hubs, and/or providing additional transportation options to enhance the convenience of facilities for customers, especially those without access to a vehicle.

Cost: Commentors offered ideas around funding the facilities expansion in the Full-Service scenario, which included funding from producers, from government grants at different levels, and from consumers of products for reuse (ensuring reuse companies are able to recoup their costs as well).

Metro’s role: Comments said there would be a need for additional education under the scenario. Another commenter said there should be an opportunity, along with the RMA provisions for haulers and other businesses to expand their current facilities and programs to better meet demand.

Capacity: There was a request to not impact wet waste tonnage allocations because they felt there is existing capacity in the system.

- **Cost (12)**
- **Metro's role (10)**
- **Capacity (8)**
- Other
 - Environment (5)
 - EJ (5)
 - Washington County (4)
 - Organics (4)
 - Self-haul (3)
 - Multnomah County – East (1)
 - HHW (1)
 - Resilience (1)
 - Multnomah County – Central (1)

Thorns – Full-Service Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
Access: Comments said the scenario fails to improve access for people lacking cars/transportation, despite higher cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access (16) • Capacity (14) • Cost (13) • Reuse/Repair (11) • Metro's role (9) • Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project process (8) ○ Environment (7) ○ Jobs (5)
Capacity: Comments about the difficulty of finding/building large buildings or questioning the need for more facilities given current capacity.	
Cost: Some thought the scenario would be too costly, particularly for those less able to afford, and that costs should	

be shifted to producers. There was also a comment that existing transfer stations would be challenging to rebuild.

Reuse/Repair: Comments shared concerns about two reuse hubs being enough or accessible to the whole region, and the costs to build and staff the facilities.

Metro's role: There were also comments that the role for Metro would be too large.

- EJ (2)
- Washington County (2)
- HHW (2)
- Multnomah County – East (1)
- Clackamas County (1)

Distributed Scenario

Roses - Distributed Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
<p>Access: Workshop attendees most often noted appreciation for improved access provided by this scenario. Comments included that access would improve for Washington County as well as in East Multnomah County.</p> <p>Reuse/repair: Many comments in support of distributed reuse/repair hubs to reduce waste and encourage reuse of items. Commentors also said the distributed scenario scored well for reuse/repair, cost, and self-haul services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access (18) ● Reuse/repair (11) ● Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost (5) ○ WashCo (5) ○ Self-haul (4) ○ Capacity (2) ○ Jobs (2) ○ EJ (2) ○ Project process (2) ○ HHW(2) ○ Environment (1) ○ Resilience (1) ○ Metro's role (1) ○ Multnomah County - East (1)

Buds - Distributed Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
<p>Reuse/repair: Comments in support of the reuse/repair hub model included specific suggestions like, make sure there are hubs on each side of the river, providing educational components like classroom space to teach about fast fashion and other waste reduction topics, and urging the current reuse organizations be involved/funded.</p> <p>Access: Some commentors suggested expanded curbside collection for better accessibility for people without vehicle access, and for more drop-off locations for convenience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reuse/repair (22) ● Access (13) ● Metro's Role (11) ● Project process (10) ● Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capacity (8) ○ EJ (6) ○ Environment (6) ○ Self-haul (4)

Metro’s Role: Comments about the roles of Metro and others, including advocating for the inclusion of non-profits, for-profits, and small business partners. Commentors also recommended robust outreach and education campaign for the distributed scenario, support for washing facilities for reuse.

Project process: Many comments noted a lack of clear details for this scenario since the facilities would be provided by private and non-profit organizations.

- Multnomah County - Central (3)
- Cost (2)
- Multnomah County – East (2)
- Washington County (1)
- Jobs (1)
- Resilience (1)
- Organics (1)

Thorns - Distributed Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
<p>Capacity: Concern that the distributed model would not have ‘economies of scale’, small hubs may not have the space required for repair services, that hubs would lack sufficient staffing for proper customer education, or that there isn’t enough need for so many facilities especially when accounting for the presence of services like Ridwell.</p> <p>Access: Concerns that this model doesn’t address the needs of people without access to transportation, or that facilities will not be conveniently located for some.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capacity (15) ● Access (9) ● Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost (7) ○ Project process (7) ○ Reuse/repair (6) ○ HHW (3) ○ Environment (2) ○ Jobs (2) ○ EJ (2) ○ Washington County (1) ○ Clackamas County (1) ○ Metro's role (1) ○ Organics (1)

No-Build Scenario

Roses - No-Build Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
<p>Metro’s Role: Comments in favor of regulated fees of public and private transfer stations.</p> <p>Reuse/repair: Comments in favor of investing in current reuse organizations and the convenience for customers who would benefit from dropping off items at existing facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Metro's role (6) ● Reuse/repair (5) ● Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project process (4) ○ Self-haul (3) ○ Access (3) ○ Capacity (3) ○ Cost (2) ○ HHW (2) ○ Washington County (2) ○ Organics (1)

Buds - No-Build Scenario

Comment themes	Counts
<p>Cost: Many comments about the need for a reuse fee being a contract and not a grant or loan. Some noted concerns that this would increase consumer costs or that curbside service should be optional for customers who don't need additional services. Some commentors said investments in private facilities should not prioritize companies who own landfills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost (13)• Reuse/repair (9)• Other<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Project process (6)○ Access (6)○ Metro's role (3)○ WashCo (3)○ EJ (3)○ Environment (2)○ Bulky Waste (2)○ HHW (1)○ Organics (1)○ Jobs (1)○ Multnomah County - East (1)○ Multnomah County - Central (1)
<p>Reuse/repair: Some thought the scenario would support increased reuse through added convenience from investment in reuse opportunities, like haulers that specialize in reuse and more community collections events.</p>	

Thorns - No-Build Scenario

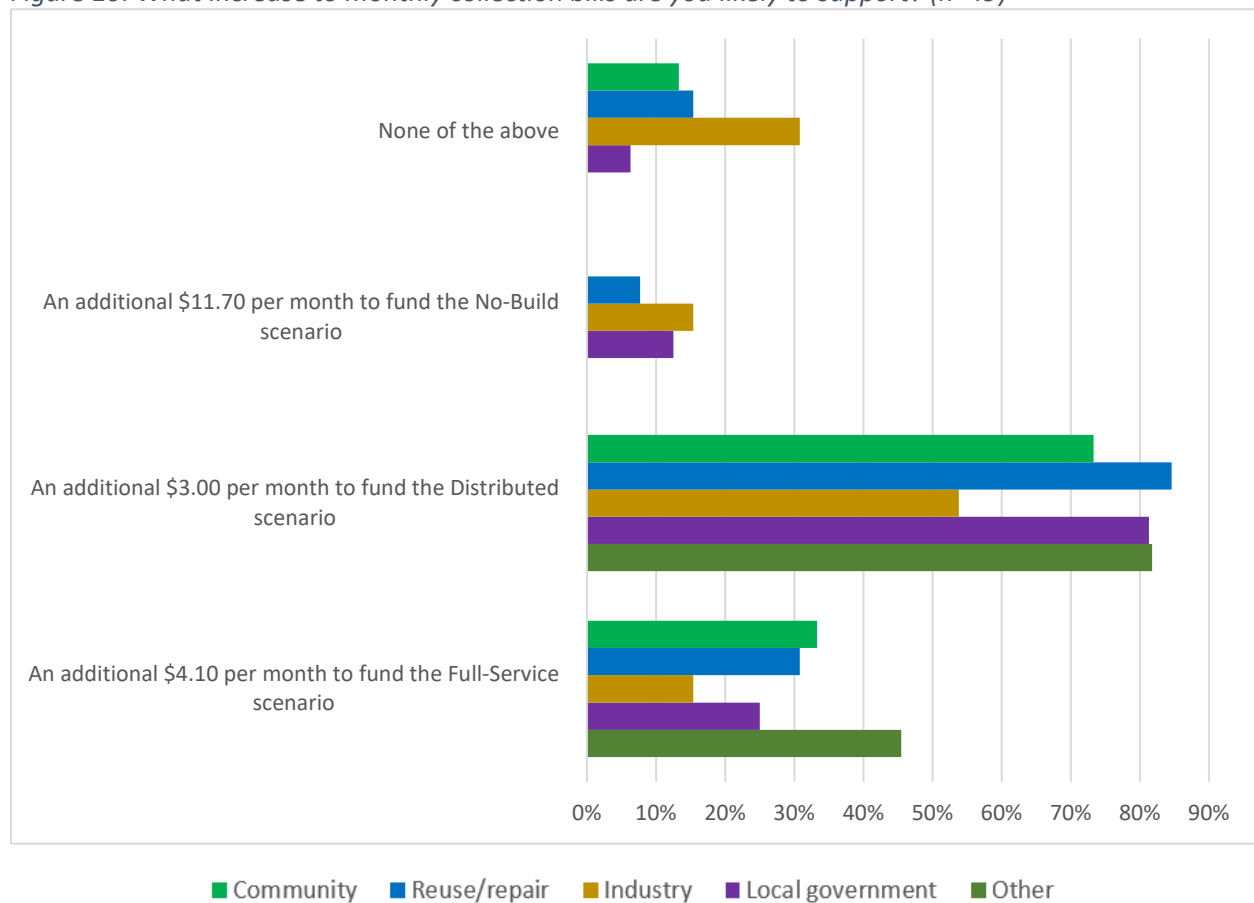
Comment themes	Counts
<p>Cost: Many commentors said large costs would burden customers. Some commentors noted the high cost to renovate existing transfer stations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost (17)• Project process (10)• Capacity (8)• Metro's role (8)• Other comments:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Access (5)○ Reuse/repair (4)○ Environment (2)○ HHW (2)○ Clackamas County (2)○ WashCo (1)○ Jobs (1)○ Self-haul (1)
<p>Project process: Some commentors dislike the idea of requiring residents to subscribe to new services and had questions about the cost analysis.</p>	
<p>Capacity: Some commentors said renovating the Metro South Transfer Station would be very difficult and an additional facility would be needed during the renovations. Comments also suggested the scenario lacks space for reuse/repair and that Metro setting rates could result in existing private transfer stations closing.</p>	
<p>Metro's role: Some thought the scenario was too burdensome to business and local government, that local government deserves more consultation, and that the buildout of this scenario is not well understood.</p>	

Increase to monthly collection bills to pay for future facility investments

When asked what increase to monthly single-family collection bills they are likely to support to pay for future facility investments, most survey respondents across audience roles indicated support for an increase of \$3.00 (Figure 10). Notable observations from responses to the question include:

- An increase of \$3.00 was supported by over 80 percent of reuse/repair and local government respondents.
- There was little support, across all groups, for the highest cost of \$11.70, as in the No-Build scenario.
- Industry respondents had the most divergent responses from all survey participants, with about 30 percent of respondents indicating they supported none of the price options provided. Most members of this group responded that they supported no increase in monthly single family collection bills.

Figure 10: What increase to monthly collection bills are you likely to support? (n=49)



Appendices

Appendix A: Small Group Comments

Appendix B: Survey Report