

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

10:30 AM

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VO1bdo96K5w>,
<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or
888-475-4499 (toll free)

Council work session

10:30 Call to Order and Roll Call

Council President Peterson called the Work Session to order at 10:34 a.m.

Present: 5 - Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Mary Nolan, Duncan Hwang, Lynn Peterson, and Christine Lewis

Excused: 2 - Juan Carlos Gonzalez, and Ashton Simpson

10:35 Work Session Topics:

10:35 Bulky Waste Policy Project

Presenter(s): Marta McGuire (she/her), WPES Director, Metro, Rosalynn Greene (she/her), Strategic Policy Advisor, Metro, Sara Kirby (she/her), Senior Solid Waste Planner, Metro

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

Council President Peterson introduced Marta McGuire (she/her), WPES Director, Metro, Rosalynn Greene (she/her), Strategic Policy Advisor, Metro, and Sara Kirby (she/her), Senior Solid Waste Planner, Metro, present on the topic.

Staff pulled up the Bulky Waste Policy Project PowerPoint to present to Council.

Presentation Summary:

The presenters discussed the current policy framework for Bulky Waste, the current available service, the Bulky Waste Policy Project work to date, and the Bulky Waste Pilot. They requested guidance when considering future Bulky Waste policies. They defined bulky waste and discussed the 2030 Regional Waste Plan, which has the goal to provide regionally consistent services for garbage, recyclables, and other priority materials that meet the need of all users. The presenters provided the phases and timeline for the project, stating that they are in Phase 3, which is the Collection Pilot

Study. The Pilot Program will conclude on March 24, 2024. Presenters discussed the details in the previous phases and explained that they are working on multifamily bulky waste service in their pilot program, not single-family units. They noted that the Pilot Project is taking place in Gresham. They asked the Council if they wish to advise the staff on anything related to this project, and what information they need to support a future work session in considering future Bulky Waste Policy options.

Council Discussion

Councilor Rosenthal asked what the appropriate measurement is for bulky waste. Councilor Rosenthal additionally asked why they chose Gresham as the city of their pilot project.

Sara Kirby responded that they are measuring the materials in weight. She added that bulky waste is the most variable waste stream, and that one of the issues of having multi-family waste streams is that if a bulky waste item is put into the garbage, it takes away from the amount of volume the larger waste containers can carry.

Rosalynn Greene added that they are conducting counts of mattresses.

Kirby added that they look at data regarding box spring collection, and about 40% of what rent control collects is bulky waste. She also noted that Gresham has a demographic that is representative of the region and that they have many multifamily sites.

Councilor Lewis noted that she is excited about the work plan and hopes to accelerate the plan. Councilor Lewis

questioned the sites they picked in Gresham, asking what is unique about Gresham that the region will need to operate in other regions.

Kirby responded that in the city of Portland, multifamily is part of the commercial garbage and recycling system which is unique to them. It was not so much the franchise agreement that determined their choice to use Gresham in their pilot, but because Gresham has four franchise haulers, so they were able to split each group into two haulers and work with multiple collection companies. Gresham's demographics matched well, but having multiple franchises made it more ideal for them to have good samples.

Greene added that junk haulers and the way they are incorporated differ by jurisdiction. For Washington county, if a junk hauler only hauls waste, they would be in violation of the franchise, but if they did another job in addition to hauling waste, they would be seen as an addition to the franchise. She noted that the franchise laws are inconsistent with different jurisdictions.

Councilor Lewis noted that there is a special need to make the junk haul removal consistent.

Greene responded that in Gresham, there are junk haulers that play an important role in addition to the franchise system.

Councilor Lewis responded that they want to see a recommendation that layers any policy revision codes for those door-to-door in addition to what will be required for base services.

Councilor Nolan asked about the frequency level for bulky

waste collection, questioning why they have been doing weekly collection for bulky waste. Councilor Nolan added that it may not be necessary to have weekly service rather than monthly or scheduled days, and that would be a very high cost if they distributed this among the entire region.

Kirby responded that the frequency of once a week is something that will likely not continue, and they decided to do pick-ups once a week in the study to make sure they could measure how much waste they should plan for to help determine a less frequent interval. If they used a less frequent interval for the pilot, the pilot program would need to last longer, and they would have a harder time determining how often each area would need pick-ups.

Councilor Nolan noted that if an individual disposes of a 100-pound item once a year, that does not mean that they are disposing of 2 pounds a week, which could disrupt the accuracy of the study. Councilor Nolan raised concern about the applicability of the results because of this.

Greene added that doing the pick-ups at a weekly pace allows for them to look at how the waste disposal fluctuates and to have a baseline for a financial analysis to see what the cost could look like.

Councilor Nolan added that they are interested in what the information they receive from the pilot project will give them in terms of how they participate in, regulate, or collaborate with responsibility and upstream management. The best approach would be to not throw anything out because everything is recycling. Councilor Nolan hopes that this project will tell them about incentives for recycling. Councilor Nolan asked if there are any things in the pilot program that will address incentives for a reduction of

waste.

Kirby added that they are tracking mattresses and box springs. As EPR materials work, they need to go to a depot. They are looking to see what percentage generate these covered materials that can be reused.

Councilor Nolan asked if the covered materials include upholstered furniture.

Kirby responded no, it is mattresses and box springs, adding that the characterization data will help them better understand what they are collecting. They are also tracking how many bulky e-cycle materials are being collected as well.

Councilor Nolan asked if they are correcting for people deciding that this is an opportunity for people to get rid of all their bulky waste now that it is an option, who would not have done it before.

Kirby responded that they have close tracking of this, adding that the multifamily waste stream is determined by move-in and move-out rates. Collection companies need to accommodate for providing these services, so if they did a lesser frequent pick-up interval, it could block access to the garbage and recycling bins.

Marta McGuire added that this data will also allow them to see how many items can be reused.

Councilor Hwang asked what the local examples are for single-family waste disposal.

Kirby responded that each jurisdiction is different. Troutdale

and Milwaukie each have two pickups a year, whereas other areas have days where they can dispose of materials by calling collections. Durham does an annual collection, whereas Tualatin and Forest grove have a self-haul day. It is hard to determine what day is best. The set-day per year method has more participation but smaller piles, whereas the on-call days have larger piles but fewer participants.

Councilor Hwang asked about the partnership in how decisions are being made between the cities and the companies, asking if they are compensating the nonprofit partners and how they are collaborating and getting their voices heard. He additionally asked if they have a community warehouse in Gresham.

Kirby responded that they have a lot of meetings, and there is a lot of outreach and education services in place. Additionally, she noted that there is a lot of collaboration but not all are ground-up partnerships. They are not currently collecting materials for reuse yet because they need to weigh it, categorize it, and analyze it.

Greene added that all nonprofit companies are being compensated and determining what it reusable is also a collaborative process with companies. The pilot is bringing together a lot of partnership.

Councilor Hwang asked if they do not know what community waste can take until after the Pilot.

Greene added that they do not know yet, and because it is winter, there may be different results for summer.

McGuire added that they do have some data that they have collected where they have given reusable items to folks who

are moving into a new place.

Greene mentioned that the demand for materials for bulky waste and housing items in Gresham are very high, and many are looking for these reusable materials.

Councilor Lewis asked what kind of data will be collected in terms of surveys from residents, in addition to companies, and explaining to them why they are going to remove the weekly hauling, so they do not feel like the government has taken away this hauling opportunity.

Kirby responded that they are currently developing a survey for residents, and the questions ask how often they used the service, and how likely they would be to use it.

Councilor Lewis noted that a survey about casual reuse would be an important survey question and one that they have not been able to track previously.

Councilor Rosenthal asked if flatback furniture is not bulky waste.

Kirby responded that most flatback furniture is the least reusable bulky waste because of its inability to disassemble easily, so when people move quickly, they are likely to not take it with them. Because if that, a lot of it ends up in bulky waste.

Council President Peterson noted that she did not have any specific questions but asked for McGuire to provide next steps.

McGuire stated they will come back to Council early next year.

Kirby added that they will likely provide the findings to Council in the spring.

There being no further discussion, Council President Peterson moved onto the next agenda item.

11:30 Chief Operating Officer Communication

Marissa Madrigal provided an update on the following events or items:

- They are asking for feedback from the community at the memorial at Lone Fir Cemetery which memorializes the historic Chinese section of the cemetery. That survey is open until November 28th. Folks can find that at oregonmetro.gov/lonefirgarden.
- The Oregon Zoo is expecting babies. The Eastern Rhino Josie is going to give birth between now and January, and the Asian elephant is also going to give birth. The gestation period for the elephant is really long and she will not give birth until 2025.

With no further communication, Council President Peterson moved to the next topic.

11:40 Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- Councilor Rosenthal noted that he attended the grand opening of a Tigard senior center. Councilor Rosenthal added that the groundbreaking was about a year ago and it was nicely done, so they should be proud of it.
- Councilor Nolan added that their niece was reelected to the Cambridge Council, and they were elected through ranked choice voting, which is the same system that they will be implementing next year.

11:50 Adjourn

There being no further business, Council President Peterson adjourned the Metro Work Session at 11:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Georgia Langer

Georgia Langer, Legislative Assistant