

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, January 25, 2022

10:30 AM

**<https://zoom.us/j/471155552> (Webinar ID: 471155552) or
877-853-5257 (toll free)**

Council work session

10:30 Call to Order and Roll Call

Council President Peterson called the Work Session to order at 10:30 a.m.

Work Session Topics:

10:35 Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan update and structure

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)

Council President Peterson introduced Marta McGuire (she/her) and Will Elder (he/him) to present on the topic.

Staff pulled up the Garbage & Recycling System Facilities Plan Presentation to present to Council.

The presentation discussed the Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan, which outlines the facilities and resources necessary to accomplish the vision of the Regional Waste Plan, an adopted 2019 policy that seeks to create a resilient, equitable, and sustainable regional garbage and recycling system. The presenters noted three key considerations regarding the System Facilities Plan...

- Metro needs to provide continued investments and updates into our garbage and recycling facilities to meet the growing needs of the region. Expanding facilities will reduce the climate impact, lower the amount of waste going to the landfill, and will increase opportunities for recovery of recyclable materials.
- The System Facilities Plan would increase access to services.
- The garbage and recycling system requires continual support, and this plan will illuminate costs and financing options moving forward.

A detailed timeline for the plan was provided.

Council Discussion

Councilor Rosenthal asked for clarification on what the WPES department is planning on utilizing consultants for.

Staff responded that they are looking to use consultants for their knowledge on best practices when creating a plan such as this, especially when the System Facilities Plan builds the framework for the next 20 years. Furthermore, given the large scope of the plan having a team of contractors expands the capacity of the department and creates stronger efficiency.

Councilor Rosenthal questioned if Metro is contemplating seeking consultants from international firms.

The presenters explained that they have not placed any geographic limits on their search, although they noted that hiring consultants outside of North America would place additional obstacles for communication, and therefore is unlikely.

Councilor Lewis asked if the department expects the consultants to fulfill the role of a facilitator, or if this position will be held by a WPES staff member.

Staff explained that the process for engagement will continue to be steered by Metro staff working in close collaboration with community leaders and voices.

Councilor Craddick was curious as to how this plan addresses the future needs of the system, particularly regarding recycling and the difficulty of recycling certain items.

Staff noted that the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act will be the primary driver for the effort to improve recycling across the Metro area. They stated that this act is moving forward alongside the System Facilities Plan.

Councilor Gonzalez expressed that he would like to see the plan adopt a neighborhood retail model for hard to recycle items rather than specialized sites. He also remarked on the importance of giving clear explanations of key cost variables when performing engagement.

Councilor Lewis firstly asked about how we should consider either further bolstering the more diverse, neighborhood-centric approach to the system or following the trend towards consolidation. She proceeded to ask how to best discuss the System Facilities Plan in parallel with the challenges being faced at current facilities like Metro South.

The presenters stated that they hope to further conversation on the different potential approaches of the plan with the Council. Addressing Metro South, staff reported that they are in the process of working through shorter-term policy solutions to match the high consumer demand.

Councilor Lewis emphasized that the Systems Facility Plan must account for the systemic issues plaguing facilities like Metro South if it is to be successful.

Councilor Hwang added that consultants should make engagement efforts a priority, particularly in communities in which new facilities may be placed. He called attention to the fact that the presentation did not mention

environmental justice as a core value behind the plan.

Staff explained that the values listed in the presentation were created by an equity work group, and that while environmental justice itself was not held as a value that the other values such as preservation and the reallocation of resources accounts for its absence.

Councilor Nolan shared that they believe this plan should fundamentally be built upon what we envision for our future usage and disposal of materials to look like.

The presenters noted the importance of finding the incentives and disincentives inherent in the system and using them to guide future action. They also commented on viewing the system as a whole, rather than focusing on how to improve only the facilities.

Council President Peterson firstly asked staff about how they plan on engaging industry partners. The president also emphasized that as the Metro region continues to grow, our trash and waste output will grow as well, and we need to be prepared and capable of matching this greater demand.

Staff stated that Metro's industry partners are a fundamental component of this plan, and therefore they will be actively included in policy conversations. They expressed that Metro plans to continue operating under its hybrid system, taking a market approach to addressing the waste needs of the area.

Councilor Craddick requested that the WPES team not only consult with the MPAC committee, but with other local jurisdictions as well. The councilor also called attention to the absence of reducing greenhouse gas emissions as a core

tenant of the System Facilities Plan, remarking that this should be a fundamental component of the plan.

Councilor Rosenthal proposed that the WPES department implement four GAP analyses in the plan rather than just one. He stated that one analysis should be focused on measuring the goals included in the 2030 plan, the second on a waste-stream analysis, the third centered on evaluating facilities and their capacity for growth, and lastly an equity analysis.

Staff responded that the first three analyses listed by Councilor Rosenthal will be addressed under the current plan. However, they noted that an equity analysis could be beneficial to the policy.

Councilor Gonzalez was curious as to if the plan considers collaboration with a much wider market, including coalitions stretching from Seattle down the West Coast. He conveyed the importance of working within economies of scale, particularly so that difficult to recycle materials can be addressed in an efficient and effective manner.

Staff acknowledged that the System Facilities Plan focuses primarily on handling current and future waste streams within the Metro region, with little consideration towards end markets. They reported that other communities have expressed interest in creating a wider market for repurposed and recycled goods, and that there is opportunity for growth in this area.

Councilor Lewis discussed the opportunity for this planning process to work in collaboration with industrial lands planning. The councilor suggested that the waste plan should not only consider land use needs given that facilities

will need to be in the correct regions, but that building a greater ecosystem of manufacturing will be essential for creating high-end end market products.

Seeing no further discussion, Council President Peterson moved on to the next agenda topic.

11:35 Chief Operating Officer Communication

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

Metro is hosting a WPES budget development forum with our public and private partners across the region.

11:40 Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- **Councilor Lewis** recommended the Council go to the Glean Portland Artist and Residence Exhibition.

11:45 Adjourn

There being no further business, Council President Peterson adjourned the Metro Work Session at 11:40a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeffrey Kain, Legislative Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE WORK SESSION OF JANUARY 25, 2022

ITEM	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOC DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT No.
1.0	Presentation	01/25/2022	Garbage and Recycling System Facilities Plan	012522cw-01