



# Recycling Steering Committee

*Modernizing Oregon's recycling system with support from Oregon Consensus*

## Input from Underrepresented Stakeholders

### Introduction

In response to global recycling market changes that occurred in 2018, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) brought together participants responsible for Oregon's recycling system including local and state governments, businesses, and other organizations, through the Recycling Steering Committee (RSC). The RSC has been working to identify what Oregon's future recycling system should look like, conduct research to inform decisions and recommend changes to achieve that future system.

DEQ and its partners on the Stakeholder Engagement Subcommittee identified the need for input from underrepresented communities on the RSC's work. The RSC is evaluating recycling system framework options that will affect recycling throughout Oregon. The frameworks are complex – considerations include increased roles for the State, new financial and management roles for Producers (brands and retailers that manufacture and sell products into Oregon), changes in involvement of local governments, and approaches to greater uniformity and transparency in the system.

The purpose of the Underrepresented Stakeholders Listening Sessions conducted in February and March 2020 was to engage a range of communities with lower representation within the RSC process—rural communities distant from the Portland Metro area, low income people, houseless populations, and communities of color. The engagement is intended to provide feedback for the RSC to consider in their current consideration of recycling system framework options, as well as to begin building trust and long-term relationships within underrepresented communities. These groups are very diverse, with engaged individuals varying greatly in their interest in and understanding of the existing recycling program.

The listening sessions were facilitated by Libby Bakke of Barney & Worth, Inc., supported by two specialty firms: The Formation Lab specializes in equity in public infrastructure and BanksCuesta provides Spanish-language translation and facilitation. This combined team brings experience integrating underrepresented voices into public infrastructure decisions, creating equity-focused outreach efforts, and facilitating groups from diverse backgrounds.

Additional funding for this project, in the form of stipends and meals for underrepresented stakeholders, were provided by Metro, The Recycling Partnership and the Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association.

This memorandum is organized as follows:

- Approach
- Workshop and Listening Session Results

- Survey Results
- Conclusions

Notes from individual listening sessions and a summary of survey results are included as attachments.

## Approach

The approach included an initial workshop and three additional listening sessions. These live interactions were supplemented with an online survey to broaden engagement to other geographic areas and groups. The sessions were as follows.

**Initial Workshop (Portland).** The first workshop was hosted by Trash for Peace, an organization that creates economic and other opportunities for disadvantaged populations to participate in waste reduction. Attendees included members of Trash For Peace and a Master Recycler who identifies as a person of color. This group represented individuals highly interested in and knowledgeable about the recycling system – input from this group provided a foundation for future sessions. Participants in the initial workshop were compensated as consultants by Metro. Notes from this workshop are in Attachment A.

**Listening Sessions.** Listening sessions were conducted with the following groups:

- **Session 1 (Medford).** This session was hosted by ACCESS, an organization that provides food, warmth and shelter for residents of Jackson County. The session included a range of participants from Medford and Jackson County, representing small businesses, non-profit social services agencies and their clients, and a local Master Recycler.
- **Session 2 (Portland).** This session was with individuals from the Environmental Promoters program, operated by Trash For Peace. The Environmental Promoters program works with residents at multifamily sites to meet goals of improving recycling, waste reduction, green cleaning and hazardous waste reduction opportunities at their housing site.
- **Listening Session 3 (La Grande).** This session was hosted by Northeast Oregon Network, an organization that helps residents in Eastern Oregon reduce barriers to their health. This session's participants were mainly from Eastern Oregon University, with additional attendees from Northeast Oregon Network and US Bank.

All attendees were compensated for their time with \$50 gift cards funded by The Recycling Partnership and a meal provided by the Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association. Notes from these listening sessions are provided in Attachment B.

**Online Survey.** A brief online survey was developed in both Spanish and English and distributed to community members through community organizations, including:

- Housing Works (Deschutes County)
- Northeast Oregon Network (Union County)

- Rogue Retreat (Jackson County)
- Oregon Housing & Community Services (Marion County)
- Trash For Peace (Multnomah County)
- Washington County Solid Waste & Recycling (Washington County)
- Master Recycler Program (Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas Counties)

The survey questions in Spanish and English and full results are provided in Attachment C.

## Workshop and Listening Session Results

Characteristics of workshop and listening session participants were as follows:

- Total number of participants was 42, including 11 at the Trash for Peace Workshop, nine at the Medford Listening Session, nine at the Environmental Promoters Listening Session, and 13 at the La Grande Listening Session.
- Most participants (86%) have curbside recycling where they live.
- The majority (63%) live in apartments or condominiums.
- Around half the participants (45.5%) were white, with representation from Native Indian/Alaska Native (3.0%), Asian (6.1%), Black/African American (6.1%), Hispanic/Latino (24.2%), and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (12.1%) groups.
- Participants represent the Portland Metro area, Southern Oregon, and Central Oregon.

Key themes that emerged through the workshop and listening sessions are summarized here, focusing on themes relevant to current selection of a recycling system framework.

**People should be able to recycle the same things, no matter where they live or work.** The types of materials able to be recycled should be the same for all types of housing and businesses – recycling should be accessible to all. In addition to equal access, stakeholders note the current system makes sorting very confusing for users. Greater consistency would make sorting easier and improve the quality of collected materials.

**Recycling should be accessible in all parts of the state.** Stakeholders see deficiencies in recycling access in areas outside the Portland Metro area. Some accept the configuration of the system may need to be different in different places but all emphasize that a reasonable level of access needs to be provided everywhere.

**Stakeholders support producer responsibility for system costs—with strong oversight.** It is fair that producers take financial responsibility for the waste they create. However, stakeholders question whether producers should be trusted to manage the recycling system and prefer strong government control over the system and a high level of transparency.

**Local control is preferred by those outside the Portland Metro area; within Portland, stakeholders were largely indifferent.** Few understand the current role of local government in the recycling system. Stakeholders outside the Portland Metro area have experienced state-led

programs as being Portland-centric and prefer local control. Inside the Portland Metro area, local control was not a topic of great interest. Regardless of location, stakeholders see education, sorting, and collection—currently under local control—as having the greatest potential for creating economic opportunities for underserved communities. These opportunities are perceived as more probable under a government-managed system (whether state or local) than in a Producer-managed system.

**Recycling should be affordable for all.** Access to recycling is considered a right by many and income level should not be a barrier to access. However, affordability shouldn't come at the cost of universal accessibility or environmental outcomes.

**Underrepresented stakeholders appreciate the opportunity to learn more and provide their input.** Attendees lack opportunities to learn about and provide feedback on the recycling system—including attendees from organizations with missions highly aligned with the recycling system. The lack of feedback from underrepresented groups indicates a lack of opportunity, not a lack of interest.

Stakeholders also generated numerous ideas for improving the existing recycling system. Much of the feedback focused on making the sorting process easier by improving signage, increasing public education, and creating opportunities for businesses or underrepresented groups to support sorting efforts. There were some regional differences in this feedback—for example, in La Grande participants found comingled recycled was a barrier to learning which materials are recyclable, where in Portland many participants preferred the ease of comingled recycling. Those additional ideas are documented in the attachments and may be applicable to later phases of the RSC's work, as well as to future work by DEQ, Metro and others.

## Survey Results

The online survey opened on February 27. Results summarized here are based on 65 English-language responses and seven Spanish-language received by March 10, 2020. Characteristics of the survey participants were as follows:

- Participants have a high level of interest in recycling, with 83% indicating either they work hard to recycle things properly (18%) or recycling is their passion (65%).
- Most (75%) have curbside recycling where they live.
- Most participants (54%) live in apartments or condominiums that they rent, with most of the remaining participants living in a detached house that they own (20%) or rent (14%).
- The majority of participants (65%) are white, with representation from Hispanic/Latino/Spanish (25%), Black/African American (11%), Asian (6%), American Indian/Alaska Native (1.4%), Middle Eastern/North African (1.4%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1.4%), and mixed race (2.82%).

- Participants mainly live in Central Oregon and the Portland Metro area—represented counties include Deschutes (38), Multnomah (17), Washington (16), and Crook (3), with single respondents from Clackamas, Jefferson, Lane, and Union.

Participants were asked – “When you think of our future recycling system, what would you most like it to do?” Participants were able to pick their top three. Their selections, in order from most selected to least, are:

- Recycled materials are put to their best environmental use (selected by 47 participants).
- Everyone can recycle the same materials regardless of where they live (selected by 33 participants).
- Businesses that make and sell products are responsible for making sure they are recycled or disposed of safely (selected by 29 participants).
- Health and safety of workers is protected (selected by 22 participants).
- Bills for customers are kept low as possible (selected by 20 participants).
- We recycle as many materials as possible, even if it costs more (selected by 16 participants).
- Local communities (i.e., city or county government) control their own recycling programs (selected by 12 participants).
- Underrepresented communities have greater economic opportunities (selected by 11 participants).

The ranking was very similar for the Spanish and English language versions of the survey; the second and third most popular responses were reversed, but rankings were otherwise identical.

Similar to the Listening Sessions, being able to recycle the same materials everywhere and Producer-responsibility ranked as top priorities. Interestingly, materials being put to their best environment use was not mentioned frequently in the Listening Sessions but was the number one selection in the survey. This ranking points to the importance of a high level of transparency regardless of the framework selected.

Local control received few selections. Based on the feedback gathered through the Listening Sessions, this may be because the areas represented in the survey (Central Oregon and Portland Metro) feel more connected to the Portland Metro area and/or feel better represented by state government. In the Listening Session feedback, there was a much greater interest in local control from stakeholders in Eastern and Southern Oregon, than from those in the Portland Metro area.

## Conclusions

The listening sessions were successful in hearing from populations with little voice within the RSC or the existing recycling system. In considering the recycling system framework options, the stakeholders engaged generally:

- Support models where Producers are financially responsible but are wary of full producer control of the system.
- Strongly support local government control if they live outside the Portland Metro area.
- Support a high level of government oversight (whether state or local) and transparency under any Producer-responsibility model.
- Support a high level of consistency across the state and across housing types, homes and businesses. The desired high level of consistency points to a greater level of state involvement, through either state management or greater regulation.

The sessions were well received by participants and successful in strengthening relationships with underrepresented communities. Underrepresented communities want to have a voice in the recycling system and they are ready to learn and engage when given the opportunity.

## **Attachments**

Attachment A. Trash for Peace Workshop Notes

Attachment B. Notes for listening sessions in Medford, Portland and La Grande

Attachment C. Online Survey Questions (English and Spanish) and Results

## **Attachment A – Trash for Peace Workshop Notes**



# Recycling Steering Committee

Modernizing Oregon's recycling system with support from Oregon Consensus

## Input from Underrepresented Stakeholders

Title: Trash for Peace Workshop

Date: January 21, 2020, 10 am to 12 pm

Location: City of Roses, Disposal & Recycling, Portland

Attendees: *Trash for Peace* - Laura Tokarski, Katheryn Marshall, Isaiah Talton, Vance Berry, Laura Gumpert, Zahra Pike, Alondra Flores Avina, Michael Fawcett, Barbara Weber, Taylor Cass Talbott

*Master Recycler* - Anjeanette Brown

*Additional attendees* - Pam Peck (Metro), Sanne Stienstra (Department of Environmental Quality), Libby Bakke (Barney & Worth), Nicki Pozos (The Formation Lab)

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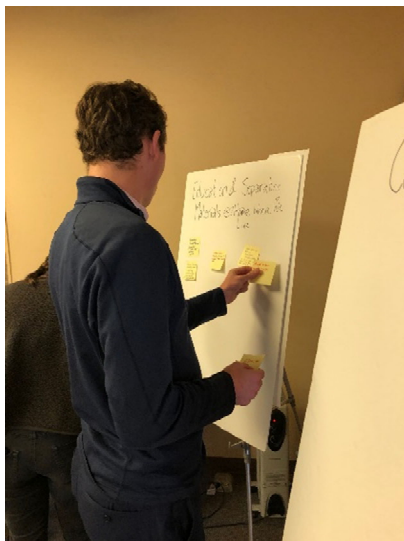
### Overview

The goals of the workshop were to:

- Share information on the project to modernize Oregon's recycling system.
- Conduct a workshop to identify community and benefits associated with framework options being considered by DEQ.
- Gain a deeper understanding of perspectives and priorities of underrepresented communities for use by the Recycling Steering Committee in evaluating framework options.

The workshop was divided into three exercises – a brief description of the process and results from each exercise are summarized below.

### Exercise 1 – Recycling System Opportunities for Underrepresented Communities



This exercise focused on brainstorming opportunities within the recycling system, organized around four stages of the existing system: education and separating materials at home, collection, sorting, and end use. Based on attendee feedback, "separating materials at home" was revised to "separating materials where you live."

Input is summarized in Table 1, with similar ideas organized into opportunities. The greatest number and variety of ideas were in first stage – education and separating materials where you live. There were also several ideas that fell under product design and manufacturing, which could be used as a separate category at future workshops.



Strong themes included:

- Thinking beyond current concept of recyclable materials to include reusable items and bulky waste.
- Greater transparency and information sharing, including lifecycle information, feedback loops to producers and consumers, and information on recycling contaminants.
- Inclusive decision making, routinely engaging underrepresented communities
- Additional economic opportunities for community members, through paid sorting, diversion of reusable materials, education, and creative end use.
- Greater producer responsibility for system costs and improving products and packaging to reduce waste.
- Increased opportunities/reduce impacts for houseless population, including increasing recycling access, legalizing, and creating paid opportunities for waste picking, and improving bulky waste diversion and disposal.
- Use of incentives/subsidies to encourage desired behaviors, such as better packaging, socially responsible materials sorting facilities, and increase domestic use of plastics.

**Table 1. Recycling System Opportunities for Underrepresented Communities**

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Individual Ideas</b>
<b>Education and Separating Materials Where We Live</b>	
Create more paid opportunities for members of underrepresented communities to provide education and recycling promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expand environmental promoters program</li> <li>▪ Paying/involving community members in educating neighbors/residents (train the trainer)</li> </ul>
Expand the range of education and outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bulky waste education – what are the opportunities to reuse/reclaim</li> <li>▪ Have hands on programs for communities to learn about recycling and waste</li> <li>▪ Further educate residents on how to materials sort</li> <li>▪ Placard with updating info on recycling for apartments and grocery stores.</li> <li>▪ Education to those living outside on trash and recycling in relation to the environment</li> <li>▪ Educators with master recycler badges</li> </ul>
Pay community members to pre-sort materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pay community members to help pre-sort at multi-family housing</li> <li>▪ Pay community members/Ground Score members to pre-sort</li> <li>▪ Create jobs</li> </ul>
Improved access at multi-family residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A better system put in place with landlords/property management to facilitate how materials are recycled.</li> <li>▪ Multi-family housing managers entry program about recycling/bulky waste educational information and resources.</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Individual Ideas</b>
Inclusive Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core objectives of recycling system modernization should include economic inclusion</li> <li>Regular multi-stakeholder forums to promote inclusive planning and public engagement in our system.</li> <li>Respect and create spaces for black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), marginalized communities when it comes to community events.</li> <li>Asset Based Community Development approach</li> <li>Research informal recycling in state/City to better understand this part of the system</li> <li>Map flows within state's waste system to facilitate goal setting for better economic distribution and opportunity development for marginalized groups and businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Collection</b>	
Greater opportunities for businesses from excluded groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waive franchise fee for previously excluded groups</li> <li>Franchises for previously excluded groups</li> </ul>
Expand the bottle bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand bottle bill to include wine, milk, coffee cups</li> <li>Expand bottle bill to include bags (now that we need to pay for them)</li> <li>Expand bottle bill to pay for other types of packaging</li> </ul>
Include reusable and bulky items within the recycling system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for bulky items too</li> <li>EPR for litter</li> <li>EPS for bulky and reusable waste</li> <li>More consistent (bi-monthly) bulky waste collection (Trash for Peace pilot)</li> </ul>
Engage community members to identify and collect reusable/recyclable items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighborhood collection of higher demand/more valuable items</li> <li>Pay Ground Score members to collect/identify items (bulky waste, reusable)</li> <li>Pay community members to pull recyclable/reusable goods at transfer center (Trash for Peace pilot)</li> <li>Offer opportunities to swap items with neighbors before trashing (to reduce amount of waste, increase opportunities for reuse)</li> <li>Improved sorting at transfer station</li> </ul>
Legalize waste picking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legalize waste picking</li> </ul>
Consider environmental impact in deciding what must be recycled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate cost of environmental change to determine what must be recycled in Oregon</li> </ul>
Increase access for unhoused community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Places for those living outside to return recyclable materials</li> <li>Improved collection of trash for those living outside</li> <li>Recycling and waste collection service for unhoused communities</li> </ul>
Decrease carbon footprint of collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bicycle transport for lighter materials</li> <li>Subsidize electric vehicle and transport for recyclables (especially in rural areas)</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Individual Ideas</b>
<b>Sorting</b>	
Provide feedback to improve sorting by users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Friendly report card “you might have missed...” or “don’t forget lids are not recyclable”</li> <li>▪ Target programs based on issues at waste sites, items of excess (feedback)</li> </ul>
Better pay for workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pay workers who sort more per hour</li> </ul>
Incentives to encourage sorting facilities to be socially responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Incentives/support for companies with B Corp, cooperative, NGO status, or that maximize their income/job creation ratio</li> </ul>
Decentralize the sorting system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mobile plant to process/compact materials from smaller communities</li> </ul>
<b>End Use</b>	
Expand reuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Give materials a second life</li> <li>▪ Promote and fund program that turns hard to recycle materials into art</li> <li>▪ Expand/promote opportunities for swapping goods (buy nothing, etc0</li> </ul>
Reduce export of recyclable materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Find more domestic markets – incentives for local businesses (subsidies?)</li> <li>▪ Ban on plastic exports, which would incentivize local infrastructure and create jobs</li> </ul>
Greater research into end use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What materials are currently in high demand and what resources currently plentiful will run out? e.g., electronic/battery technology</li> </ul>
Implement producer responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ EPR for packaging that includes/covers collection and processing, with enough money to incentivize domestic processing and discourage exports</li> <li>▪ Fees/programs for responsibility from producers</li> <li>▪ Policies around how much waste one product creates</li> </ul>
Incentive producers to create better products and packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Address overpackaging and hold companies accountable</li> <li>▪ Have a contest for engineering and design students to solve packaging issues for products</li> <li>▪ Expand/support Right to Repair</li> <li>▪ Incentivize multi-use items</li> </ul>
Increased regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regulate DEQ operations</li> </ul>
Increase transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publicize where the trash is stored, shipped and monthly difference</li> </ul>

## **Exercise 2 – Comparison of Benefits**

This exercise was planned to focus on evaluation and discussion of the relative importance of benefits related to the recycling system. The benefits initially contrasted included:

- People have the same access and cost everywhere
- Local control

- Producer responsibility
- Optimizing the amount recycled
- Keeping bills low
- Transparency and requirements for end use of materials

Based on feedback from the group on the exercise, the group instead discussed outcomes they would like to see from modernization of the recycling system. Input included:

- People can recycle the same materials in all areas of the state and should have a “right to recycle,” but the way the recycling system is accessed should be different in different areas.
- It is okay if people pay different amounts in different areas of the state.
- Producer responsibility is important, but should be implemented in a way that maintains local control, opportunities for small producers and recyclers, and stakeholder engagement
- All people, including the houseless, should have equal access to trash and recycling services – the system should be “radically inclusive”
- Modernization should increase the total amount of material being recycled
- Changes should not increase the cost to consumers – increased costs should instead be paid through producer responsibility and reduced profit for private companies (as an outcome of increased transparency).

Based on feedback from the group, this portion of the workshop will be revised for future workshops and engagement to focus on discussing of key questions (e.g., producer responsibility) instead of contrasting the value of specific benefits.

### Exercise 3 – Framework Scenarios

In this exercise, the five framework scenarios were briefly described, and attendees had the opportunity to pick their preferred and least preferred options and reasons. Forms were received back from five participants, with four identifying Scenario 4 as their preferred alternative and the fifth identifying Scenario 3. Consistent with the discussion during previous exercises, attendees favor producer responsibility for costs while maintaining local control over the system. Local control is perceived as providing opportunities to provide benefits/protections to community organizations and subcontractors either owned or employing underrepresented populations.

For their least favorite option, attendees were split between Scenarios 1 and 5. Scenario 1 was disliked because attendees feel it provides insufficient transparency and directs benefits disproportionately to private waste management companies. Scenario 5 was disliked because of the lack of public control and uncertainty in how full producer responsibility would be implemented.

A summary of the attendee feedback is provided in Table 2. The table includes specific comments on the best and least liked scenarios.



**Table 2. Input on Most and Least Favored Framework Scenarios**

Scenario	Individual Ideas
<b>Best-Liked Scenario</b>	
<b>Scenario 4</b> Producer Responsibility with Local Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take pressure off the consumer</li> <li>Focus on hard to recycle items first like plastics and bulky waste</li> <li>Local control will allow for adjustments based on need</li> <li>Reimbursement will cover cost burden (we are not being paid more, but our bills keep going up)</li> <li>Prefer Scenario 4, but overseen by Scenario 2</li> <li>Offers opportunities for cost-shifting to producers with protections for underrepresented communities</li> </ul>
<b>Scenario 3</b> Post-Collection Producer Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producers could be required to provide opportunities for community organizations or subcontractors promoting diversity in employment</li> <li>Fee paid to organize plan to recycle items</li> </ul>
<b>Least-Liked Scenario</b>	
<b>Scenario 1</b> Enhanced Government Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Profits overly concentrated among haulers</li> </ul>
<b>Scenario 5</b> Full Producer Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full responsibility by producers could create abuse</li> </ul>

Attendees also discussed outcomes they would like to see from the modernization, which included:

- Maximize environmental benefit, increase recycling rate
- Increase equitable access
- Additional reuse of items
- Maintain affordability. It is irresponsible to raise bills if you don't help folks afford it. Exchange volunteering for bill reduction.
- Increase community access to benefits (not just waste haulers)

It was difficult for attendees to determine which of the frameworks would best lead to these desired outcomes. For example, many attendees were interested in maximizing the amount recycled, but it was unclear how the scenarios would affect the amount recycled. These desired outcomes may be useful to inform later decisions in the modernization.

In part because the approaches to implementing each scenario are still undefined, many attendees found it difficult to select one of the scenarios. Based on attendee feedback, future workshops will include description of the framework scenarios as part of Exercise 2, and the additional feedback will focus on advice to the Recycling Steering Committee.



## **Attachment B – Listening Session Notes**

Medford Listening Session

Portland Environmental Promoters Listening Session

La Grande Listening Session



# Recycling Steering Committee

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## Input from Underrepresented Stakeholders

Title: Medford Listening Session

Date: February 24, 2020, 10 am to 12 pm

Location: ACCESS Olsrud Family Nutrition Center, Medford

Attendees: *Housing Authority of Jackson County*– Jennifer Southwick, Susan Lynch, Liz MacGregor

*Clean Sweep*– Chris Hyde, Tony Valade

*Short Kutz*– Tara Short

*ACCESS*– Joe Vollmar

*Joint Homelessness Task Force*– Christine Quitt

*Master Recycler*– Dane Marland

*Additional attendees*– Laura Leebrick and Denise Barnes (Rogue Disposal), Sanne Stienstra (Department of Environmental Quality), Libby Bakke (Barney & Worth),

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### Overview

The goals of the workshop were to:

- Share information about the project to modernize Oregon's recycling system.
- Gain a deeper understanding of perspectives and priorities of underrepresented communities for use by the Recycling Steering Committee in evaluating framework options.

The workshop was divided into two sections – a brief description of the process and results from each section are summarized below. The intent was to leverage information from the Trash for Peace Workshop, which is referenced throughout these notes.



### Section 1 – Recycling System Opportunities Brainstorm

This exercise focused on brainstorming opportunities within the recycling system, including education and separating materials where you live, collection, sorting, and end use. Input is summarized in Table 1, with similar ideas organized into opportunities. This group was less familiar with the recycling system than the initial workshop with Trash for Peace. Generated ideas are summarized in Table 1, using the same opportunity categories generated at the Trash for Peace Workshop.



**Table 1. Recycling System Opportunities for Underrepresented Communities**

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Individual Ideas</b>
<b>Sorting</b>	
Pay community members to pre-sort materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Create a business opportunity for private companies to sort and dispose of recyclable materials from homes and businesses</li></ul>
<b>Collection</b>	
Engage community members to identify and collect reusable/recyclable items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Create an incentive program where materials can be exchanged for vouchers</li><li>▪ Businesses participate in hiring people for cleaning and recycling, improves job readiness</li><li>▪ In multi-family housing, create a Green Team managed by residents with gift card incentives</li><li>▪ Create a company that picks up cans and bottles for a fee, plus they would get the deposit, similar to Clean Sweep</li></ul>

## **Section 2 – Big Picture Discussion Questions**

### **1. How important is it for people to be able to recycle the same things in rural, urban and distant areas?**

- Education is the top priority
- We are one state, and everyone should have the same opportunities
- Rural families sometimes opt out of garbage service to save money
- If we are going to solve the problem, it has to be all across the state

### **2. How important is it for people to be able to recycle the same things regardless of where they live (single detached home, apartment building, houseless)? How important is it to be able to recycle the same things in businesses as in residences?**

- Need more Bottle Drop locations, in particular to increase access for the houseless
- Need to educate people on how to recycle
- Recycling is very complicated – the rules change all the time
- Why don't we regulate apartments, mobile homes? It should be equitable.
- What about establishing requirements for recycling signage used by businesses?
- Strategize process (look at what other countries are doing that works).





**3. Right now there is a lot of local control. What do you think would be the benefits and drawbacks of more state control?**

- Right now, Ashland is so different from Medford. This is frustrating and confusing—why isn't it the same everywhere?

Benefits

- Same playing field for everyone.
- Rules would be the same wherever you live or move
- State managed is good, but there should be local implementation. Local implementation would allow small companies to profit and will allow more effective, stronger rules.
- Would provide an overall, universal standard all the way across the state.

Drawbacks

- State “messes up” everything
- Will cost more money
- More rules

**4. Some places in the world have producers play a bigger role in managing and paying for recycling materials. What do you think would be good about producer responsibility and/or control? What would concern you?**

Benefits

- Producers are held accountable for their own waste.
- There should be a shared cost for things like plastic bags.
- Things that are hard to recycle would have a higher cost.
- Forces producers to be more efficient.
- Producers would create infrastructure to recycle the stuff they create.
- Producers have the money & means to do it.

Drawbacks

- Cost may be passed onto the buyer.
- Producers will do as little as possible for the lowest cost possible.



# Recycling Steering Committee

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## Input from Underrepresented Stakeholders

Title: Environmental Promoters Listening Session

Date: February 29, 2020, 10 am to 12 pm

Location: Former Thai Binh Restaurant, Portland

Attendees: *Trash for Peace Environmental Promoters* – Robin Zuiderveld, Mayn Brunner, Spencer Bolivar, Miriam Gomez, Angel Perez-Gomez, Tania Thorkelson, Maria Ruiz, Amber Dominguez, Blanca Martinez

*Other Attendees* – Sanne Stienstra (Department of Environmental Quality [DEQ]), Shannon Davis (DEQ), Libby Bakke (Barney & Worth), Carlos Banks (Banks Cuesta)

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### Overview

The goals of the workshop were to:

- Share information about the project to modernize Oregon's recycling system.
- Gain a deeper understanding of perspectives and priorities of underrepresented communities for use by the Recycling Steering Committee in evaluating framework options.

Feedback during the workshop was divided into three sections – input from participants during each section is summarized below.

### Section 1 – Future Recycling System

Participants were asked, "What would you like to see a future recycling system in Oregon accomplish?" The group discussion mainly focused on education and sorting. Specific ideas were:

- Better signs or labels (they are currently too small)
- More community outreach—bigger!
- Help people learn how to recycle properly – Focus on people to people interaction
- Education in the public-school system; kids can teach their families.
- Teach all kids more about recycling in school—in one school, kids with disabilities are taught about recycling but other kids were not.
- Standardize recycling across the state and types of places – multi family, businesses, etc.
- Hold information nights to learn how to recycle in multifamily properties



## Section 2 – Big Picture Discussion Questions

### Question 1. How important is it for people to be able to recycle the same things in rural, urban and distant areas?

- “Recycling should be a right and a responsibility.”
- There should be recycling everywhere—same opportunities. We need better access.
- This is important to the environment—crucial we all make a change—a recycling revolution.
- Everyone should have access.
- Incredibly important to make the price equitable for everyone. We need to make it more affordable and accessible (these go hand-in-hand)
- Speaking as someone who lives with disability—everyone should have a chance to recycle.
- Important for everyone to have access to recycling—although a drop-off center may be more community friendly.
- Everyone should have the same rights
- People who can’t recycle use their materials more (and also may burn materials that could be recycled).
- Yes, because plastics are thrown into the oceans and beaches because there is no place to recycle.
- Like on a farm, they should learn about what to do with farm waste. People need to learn about what to do with their waste.

### Question 2. How important is it for people to be able to recycle the same things regardless of where they live (single detached home, apartment building, houseless)? How important is it to be able to recycle the same things in businesses as in residences?

- Standardize across the board; no matter where you live and who you are or what you are trying to recycle & compost.
- Apartments where I live, I can’t recycle big items.
- My neighbor threw away couches and the apartment manager charged them \$250. They didn’t know they weren’t allowed to dispose of couches. They didn’t have any other way of disposing of a couch.
- Cities need to provide trash receptacles for homeless people and make it easier for people to clean up after themselves.



**Question 3. Some places in the world have producers play a bigger role in managing and paying for recycling materials. What do you think would be good about producer responsibility and/or control? What would concern you?**

- Producer should be responsible for making their products recyclable.
- Absolutely if someone is making a product, they need to be responsible for what happens.
- Not sure what this type of system would look like, so hard to know what's good or bad about it.

**Section 3 – Best Advice**

Participants were asked, "What advice do you have for the Recycling Steering Committee as they consider options for recycling?"

- "Accessible and affordable for everyone". Doesn't have to be the same everywhere.
- Make sure everyone gets to do composting and glass. I always had that, and they took it away.
- Simpler system – something that is easy to understand for everyone – even people who just moved here. It's only in English and Spanish now.
- I like Scenarios 3 and 4 – don't like the "producer do all" – hard to enforce.
- Make sure people who are differently abled can recycle too – can reach the bins, do recycling like everyone else can do (accessible to the differently abled).
- Outreach is vital – the more the better.
- Update the labels, simplify them.
- More space and equipment to recycle in apartment complexes – places to put the recycling.



# Recycling Steering Committee

*Modernizing Oregon's recycling system with support from Oregon Consensus*

## Input from Underrepresented Stakeholders

Title: La Grande Listening Session

Date: March 10, 2020, 10 am to 12 pm

Location: Cook Memorial Library, La Grande

Attendees: *Northeast Oregon Network (NEON)* – Teresa Aguilera

*Eastern Oregon University* – Michael Williams, Dale Naba, Maria Jiminez, Sally Chen, Alfredo Jiminez, Benne Moses Mesubed, Andrea Camacho, Kaitlyn Joyner, Maggie Verduso, Brad Walta

*US Bank* – Augustina Smea

*Other Attendees* – Sanne Stienstra and Shannon Davis (Department of Environmental Quality [DEQ]), Libby Bakke (Barney & Worth), David Skakel (Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program)

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### Overview

The goals of the workshop were to:

- Share information about the project to modernize Oregon's recycling system.
- Gain a deeper understanding of perspectives and priorities of underrepresented communities for use by the Recycling Steering Committee in evaluating framework options.

Feedback during the workshop was divided into three sections—input from participants during each section is summarized below.

### Section 1 – Future Recycling System

Participants were asked, "What would you like to see a future recycling system in Oregon accomplish?" Input focused on three ideas—improving access to recycling, making the system simpler and easier to understand, and increasing transparency. Specific ideas were:

- Would like glass to be picked up curbside.
- Recycling should be available at apartments.





- Improve access to bottle returns, should be available 24-hours, there should not be limits on how many bottles and cans can be returned, and the returns process should be consistent at different locations.
- Would prefer a separate drop-off recycling center, run by local government, where you can recycle everything. Could be safer (better monitored), simpler, create local jobs, and provide better access to recycling.
- Would like to see special programs to pick up lawn debris or bulky waste/household items (more than one day per year as they have currently).
- Want to know where money invested in the recycling system goes—need a more transparent process. Can more of the money stay local?
- Find opportunities to integrate art and recycling in local schools.
- Find comingled recycling is a barrier to understanding which materials are recyclable. By sorting materials, people have the opportunity to be more aware of what they are recycling and what the rules are.

## Section 2 – Big Picture Discussion Questions

### Question 1. How important is it for people to be able to recycle the same things in rural, urban and distant areas?

- If everyone can buy the same things, they should have the same ability to recycle it.
- Scenario 4 where there is producer funding would make it more possible for recycling access to be the same everywhere.
- Scenarios 3 & 4 would help make recycling programs more consistent so that people know how to sort their materials.
- Recycling should be equitable—for example we shouldn't pay a tax we don't benefit from. Or if we need a little more help to get to the same spot where Portland is with recycling, we should have that.
- We should make recycling easier – such as making containers look the same everywhere.



### Question 2. How important is it for people to be able to recycle the same things regardless of where they live (single detached home, apartment building, houseless)?

- Right now, it is a challenge to recycle in apartments. It is more important for apartments to have recycling because we have less space to put stuff.
- Because there isn't any recycling at apartment buildings, people will go through apartment dumpsters looking for cans, which is a safety issue.
- It is hard to get to the recycling centers we have now without a car.
- It would be good to have opportunities for houseless people to recycle.

- Scenario 3 could solve some of these issues by making better access more affordable.

**How important is it to be able to recycle the same things in businesses as in residences?**

- Business should have the same access, especially because they have more volume.
- We should ask businesses directly to learn more about what they want.

**Question 3. Right now, there is a lot of local control. What do you think would be the benefits and drawbacks of more state control?**

Benefits

- More control of what happens to end product – more transparency in where things go.
- Programs would be more consistent around the state.
- State control could help bring in more resources for Eastern Oregon.

Concerns

- Generally, not in favor of more regulation.
- Local people would be upset about State taking over, they might lose their businesses or lose profits.
- Could mean more fees and costs.
- Urban areas would likely get better service because they have more influence.
- Local control would be more affordable—locals know the conditions in their communities. It would be better to have state supporting local efforts.

**Question 4. Some places in the world have producers play a bigger role in managing and paying for recycling materials. What do you think would be good about producer responsibility and/or control? What would concern you?**

Benefits

- Should be a greater role for producers in broader environmental justice issues—shared responsibly for a sustainable world.
- Provides an incentive to make better packaging—more recyclable, better for the environment.
- Scenarios 4 & 5 would be best, because they have producers take full responsibility for costs.

Concerns

- Producers may pass recycling costs back onto consumers.
- Worried about accountability? How will we know they are doing the right thing?
- Communities should be jointly responsible with producers—we should do it together, a collaboration.

**Section 3 – Best Advice**

Participants were asked, “What advice do you have for the Recycling Steering Committee as they consider options for recycling?”

- I would like a recycling container that is easy for every person to use.

- To think about what is best for all of Oregon, not just the most populated parts of the state. Please hold producers to the same standard of shared responsibility.
- Please make it easier and more convenient to recycle. Put producers as the primarily responsible party, to reduce costs related to recycling.
- I would like for you to set up a 24-hour recycling center that is safe and well-staffed, with good security. It should take many types of recyclable materials, including cans that are not in perfect condition (maybe could be compensated by weight), glass, and all different sizes of bottles, glass, yard debris and other recyclable things.
- Use the weight instead of Bar Code for bottle recycling.
- Educate the public on the benefit of recycling.
- Make Producers more responsible and improve access to recycling in apartments and other places.
- Educate communities about what is going on with this process. Being here has helped me better understand how recycling works and who runs it in my community. This information might be helpful in a local survey or more meetings throughout the process. Asking questions to a widely diverse group of people/recyclers.
- Get input on why people do or don't recycle.
- State should make policies so that communities collaborate with Producers to create a stable recycling system.
- Everyone should have access to recycle their plastic waste and get rewarded for it.
- Have more education around recycling available for diverse individuals, including ADA accommodations (available in braille, sign language, etc.). We also need different languages to represent the underrepresented who may misinterpret recycling instructions.





## **Attachment C – Online Survey**

Survey Questions (Spanish)

Survey Questions (English)

Survey Results



# Recycling Steering Committee

*Modernizing Oregon's recycling system with support from Oregon Consensus*

## Input from Underrepresented Stakeholders

### ¡Encuesta de tres minutos de DEQ!

***¡INGRESE SU NOMBRE EN EL SORTEO PARA GANAR UN PREMIO!***

*Complete la encuesta y su nombre será incluido en el sorteo para una tarjeta de regalo de \$50*

Oregón está evaluando como modernizar el sistema de reciclaje del estado, viendo como el sistema está manejado, quien paga por él, que objetos pueden ser reciclados, y más. El Comité de la Dirección de Reciclaje, una colaboración de negocios, gobiernos y organizaciones sin fines de lucro, están liderando el proceso y están interesados en escuchar qué es importante ¡para usted!

1. ¿Cómo calificaría su nivel de interés en el reciclaje?
  - ☐ a. El reciclaje es mi pasión
  - ☐ b. Trabajo duro para reciclar apropiadamente
  - ☐ c. Hago mi mejor esfuerzo, pero no se mucho al respecto
  - ☐ d. No es importante para mi
  
2. ¿Cuando piensas en el futuro de nuestro sistema de reciclaje, que es lo que más te gustaría que haga? (Elija los tres más importantes.)
  - ☐ a. Todos pueden reciclar los mismos materiales sin importar en qué lugar vivan
  - ☐ b. Las facturas de los clientes se mantienen lo más bajas posible
  - ☐ c. Las comunidades locales (ej. Gobiernos de ciudad o condados) controlan sus propios programas de reciclaje
  - ☐ d. Los materiales reciclados son puestos para el mejor uso del medio ambiente
  - ☐ e. Nosotros reciclamos la mayor cantidad de materiales posibles, incluso si cuesta mas
  - ☐ f. La salud y seguridad de los trabajadores están protegidas
  - ☐ g. Los negocios son responsables de asegurarse que los productos que hacen y venden sean reciclados o desechados de manera segura
  - ☐ h. Las comunidades poco representadas tienen mayores oportunidades económicas
  
3. ¿Usted tiene recolección de reciclaje a domicilio donde vive?
  - ☐ a. Si
  - ☐ b. No
  - ☐ c. No estoy seguro/a

4. ¿Qué describe mejor donde usted vive?

- ☐ Casa desconectada de la cual soy dueño/a
- ☐ Casa desconectada que alquilo
- ☐ Apartamento o condominio del cual soy dueño/a
- ☐ Apartamento o condominio que alquilo
- ☐ No tengo una casa fiable
- ☐ Otro \_\_\_\_\_

5. ¿Cuál es su código postal? \_\_\_\_\_

6. ¿Qué categorías lo describen mejor? – seleccione todas las que apliquen

- ☐ Nativo Americano o Nativo de Alaska
- ☐ Asiático
- ☐ Afrodescendiente o afro-americano
- ☐ Hispano, Latino o de Origen Español
- ☐ Medio-este o Norte de África
- ☐ Nativo Hawaiano u otra Isla del Pacífico
- ☐ Blanco
- ☐ alguna otra raza, etnia, u origen, por favor especifique: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Prefiero no responder

7. Ponga su nombre en el sorteo de un premio para una tarjeta de regalo de \$50

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

Correo electrónico o número de teléfono para notificarlo: \_\_\_\_\_

**Gracias!**



# Recycling Steering Committee

*Modernizing Oregon's recycling system with support from Oregon Consensus*

## Input from Underrepresented Stakeholders

### 3 Minute Survey on the Future of Oregon's Recycling System

*ENTER YOUR NAME IN THE DRAWING FOR A PRIZE!*

*Complete this survey and your name will be included in a drawing for a \$50 gift card!*

Oregon is evaluating how to modernize the state's recycling system, looking at how the system is managed, who pays for it, which items can be recycled, and more. The Recycling Steering Committee, a collaborative of businesses, governments and nonprofits, is leading the process and is interested in hearing what's important to you!

1. How would you rate your level of interest in recycling?

- ☐ a. Recycling is my passion!
- ☐ b. I work hard to recycle things properly
- ☐ c. I do my best, but don't know much about it
- ☐ d. It's not important to me

2. When you think of our future recycling system, what would you most like it to do?

(Pick your top three.)

- ☐ a. Everyone can recycle the same materials regardless of where they live
- ☐ b. Bills for customers are kept as low as possible
- ☐ c. Local communities (i.e. city or county government) control their own recycling programs
- ☐ d. Recycled materials are put to their best environmental use
- ☐ e. We recycle as many materials as possible, even if it costs more
- ☐ f. Health and safety of workers is protected
- ☐ g. Businesses that make and sell products are responsible for making sure they are recycled or disposed of safely
- ☐ h. Underrepresented communities have greater economic opportunities

3. Do you have curbside recycling where you live?

- ☐ a. Yes
- ☐ b. No
- ☐ c. I'm not sure

4. What best describes where you live?

- ☐ Detached house that I own
- ☐ Detached house that I rent
- ☐ Apartment or condo that I own
- ☐ Apartment or condo that I rent
- ☐ I do not have reliable housing
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which categories describe you – select all that apply

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin
- ☐ Middle Eastern or North African
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Some other race, ethnicity, or origin, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I prefer not to answer.

7. Get your name in the prize drawing for a \$50 gift card

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

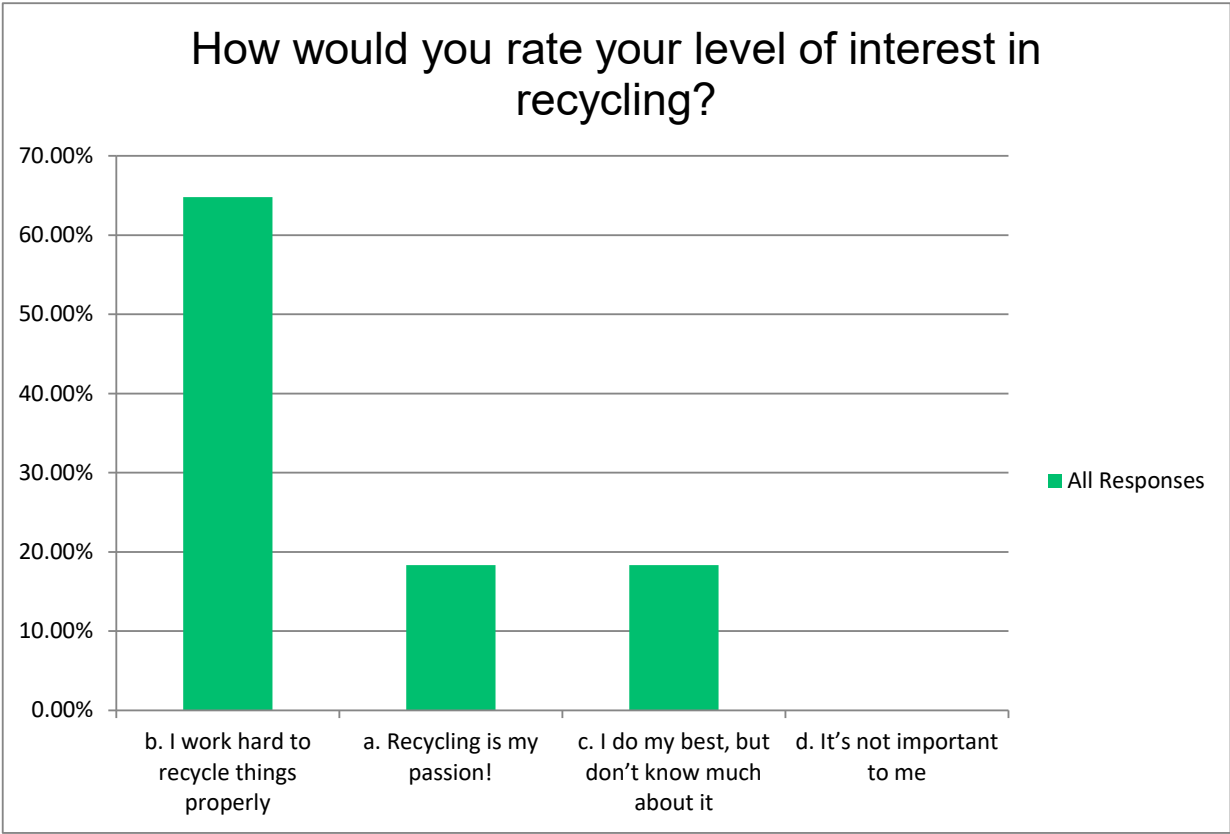
Email or phone number for notification: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you!

### 3 Minute Survey on the Future of Oregon's Recycling System

#### Question 1. How would you rate your level of interest in recycling?

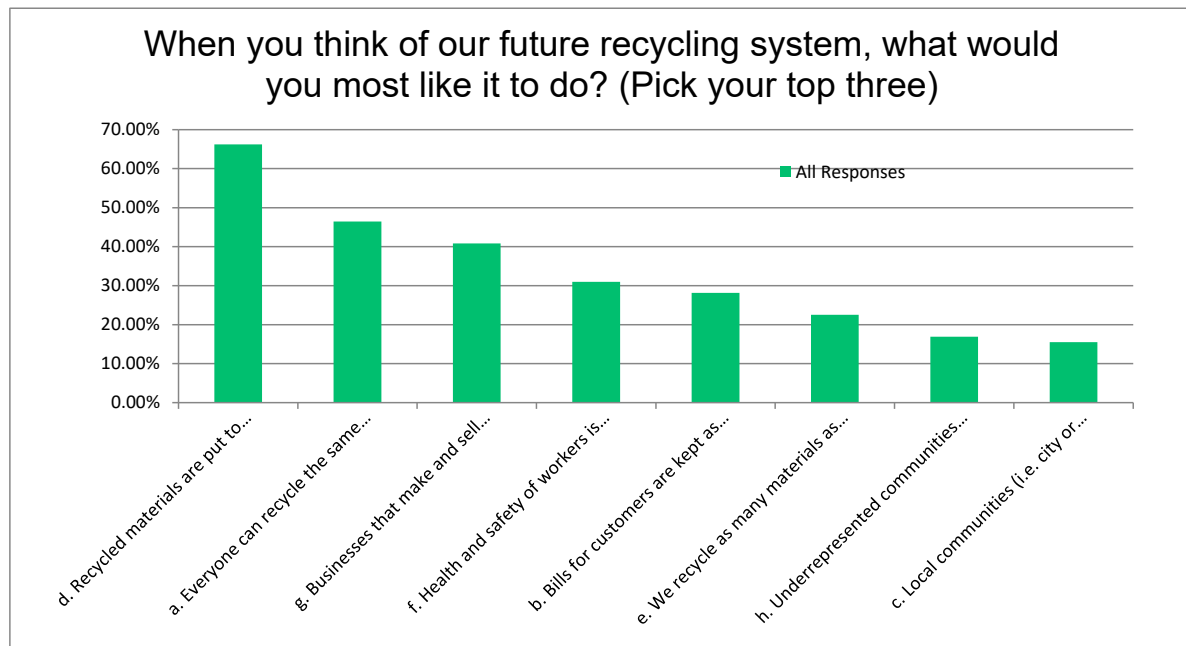
Answer Choices	All Responses	Spanish-Language	
		Only	
b. I work hard to recycle things properly	64.79%	39	46
a. Recycling is my passion!	18.31%	13	13
c. I do my best, but don't know much about it	18.31%	13	13
d. It's not important to me	0.00%	0	0
Answered		71	
Skipped		0	



### 3 Minute Survey on the Future of Oregon's Recycling System

Question 2. When you think of our future recycling system, what would you most like it to do? (Pick your top three)

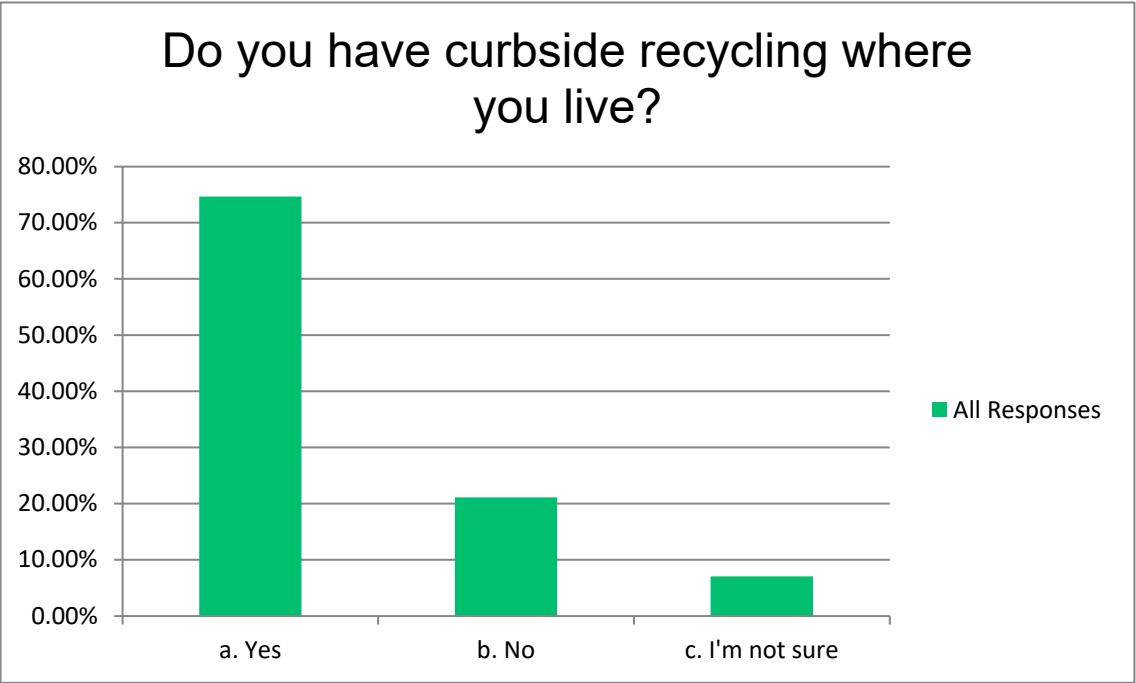
Answer Choices	All Responses	Spanish-Language Only		
d. Recycled materials are put to their best environmental use	66.20%	42	5	47
a. Everyone can recycle the same materials regardless of where they live	46.48%	29	4	33
g. Businesses that make and sell products are responsible for making sure they are recycled	40.85%	24	5	29
f. Health and safety of workers is protected	30.99%	22	0	22
b. Bills for customers are kept as low as possible	28.17%	18	2	20
e. We recycle as many materials as possible, even if it costs more	22.54%	16	0	16
h. Underrepresented communities have greater economic opportunities	16.90%	9	3	12
c. Local communities (i.e. city or county government) control their own recycling	15.49%	10	1	11
Answered		71		
Skipped		0		



### 3 Minute Survey on the Future of Oregon’s Recycling System

#### Question 3. Do you have curbside recycling where you live?

Answer Choices	All Responses	Spanish-Language		
			Only	
a. Yes	74.65%	47	6	53
b. No	21.13%	15	0	15
c. I'm not sure	7.04%	4	1	5
<b>Answered</b>		<b>71</b>		
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>0</b>		

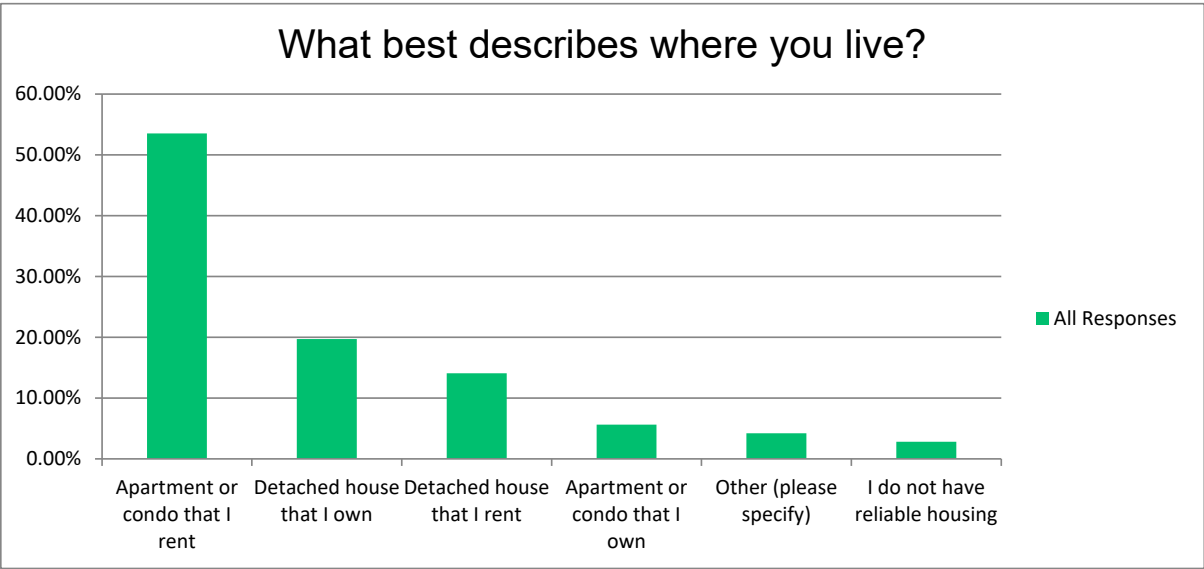




3 Minute Survey on the Future of Oregon’s Recycling System

Question 4. What best describes where you live?

Answer Choices	All Responses	Spanish-Language		
			Only	
Apartment or condo that I rent	53.52%	37	1	38
Detached house that I own	19.72%	12	2	14
Detached house that I rent	14.08%	7	3	10
Apartment or condo that I own	5.63%	3	1	4
Other (please specify)	4.23%	3		3
I do not have reliable housing	2.82%	2		2
Answered		71		
Skipped		0		



### 3 Minute Survey on the Future of Oregon's Recycling System

#### Questions 5. What is your zip code?

Answered 71

All Responses			
Zip Code	County	City	County
97701	14	Bend	Deschutes
97702	12	Bend	Deschutes
97116	5	Forest grove	Washington
97756	4	Remond	Deschutes
97759	4	Sisters	Deschutes
97211	3	Portland	Multnomah
97233	3	Portland	Multnomah
97754	3	Prineville	Crook
97206	2	Portland	Multnomah
97218	2	Portland	Multnomah
97703	2	Bend	Deschutes
97123	2	Hillsboro	Washington
97008	1	Beaverton	Washington
97045	1	Oregon City	Clackamas
97080	1	Gresham	Multnomah
97124	1	Hillsboro	Washington
97202	1	Portland	Multnomah
97210	1	Portland	Multnomah
97213	1	Portland	Multnomah
97217	1	Portland	Multnomah
97230	1	Portland	Multnomah
97236	1	Portland	Multnomah
97478	1	Springfield	Lane
97739	1	La Pine	Deschutes
97741	1	Madras	Jefferson
97760	1	Terrebonne	Deschutes
97850	1	La Grande	Union
			71

Spanish-Language Only			
Zip Code	Count	City	County
97116	4	Forest Grove	Washington
97124	1	Hillsboro	Washington
97123	2	Hillsboro	Washington

#### Count by County

Row Labels	Sum of Count
Clackamas	1
Crook	3
Deschutes	38
Jefferson	1
Lane	1
Multnomah	17
Union	1
Washington	9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>71</b>

Note: City and County corresponding to each zip code were added to the survey results

### 3 Minute Survey on the Future of Oregon's Recycling System

#### Question 6. Which categories describe you (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	All Responses	Spanish-Language Only	
White	61.97%	44	44
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin	25.35%	11	7 18
Black or African American	11.27%	8	8
Asian	5.63%	4	4
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.41%	1	1
Middle Eastern or North African	1.41%	1	1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.41%	1	1
I prefer not to answer.	1.41%	1	1
Some other race, ethnicity, or origin, please specify:	2.82%	2	2 Mixed Race
<b>Answered</b>	<b>71</b>		
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>0</b>		

