

Summary of November 29, 2005 SBI Roundtable on Reuse/Recycling

On November 29, 2005, twelve participants representing various sectors of the reuse and recycling industries met in the second roundtable sponsored by Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy's Sustainable Business Initiative. Included were representatives from BRING, St. Vincent DePaul, the UO and LCC recycling programs, state, county and city government, non-profit organizations and local businesses. The following summarizes the outcomes of the discussion.

Recommendation One:

The City of Eugene should support the creation of value added products through incentives to companies transforming existing waste.

- An education campaign should accompany these incentives so that waste producers know of the market for their waste.
- While efforts should be made to attract outside companies, existing reuse/recycling businesses ought to be prioritized for incentives.
- These incentives could take the form of SDC waivers, tax credits, low interest loans, etc.
- 11 in favor, 1 abstention, 0 opposed

Recommendation Two:

The City ought to launch a multiphase technical assistance/education campaign that focuses on the reuse/recycling of a few key commodities.

- The value of those commodities needs to be quantified, both for the cost of the material and the savings in avoided waste.
- The campaign should include one on one work with businesses and other entities; a city led leadership summit of decision makers from multiple businesses; and a media campaign.
- A group of practitioners will determine the commodities to focus on, based on a broad perception of value, ease of recyclability, marketing appeal, toxic materials, etc.
- 12 in favor, 0 abstention, 0 opposed

Recommendation Three:

The City of Eugene should form a multijurisdiction task force to look at surcharges, tipping fees and other charges associated with waste disposal and collection.

- The issue of tipping fees is not a City issue, but one that involves the county as a whole.
- 12 in favor, 0 abstention, 0 opposed

Other Key Themes and Suggestions:

- Support through incentives for value added products (Recommendation One):
 - Materials can be brought in from outside the area, as volume is needed to create revenue from some materials – ex: polyurethane
 - City can provide incentives not only to those using waste as a feedstock, but also to those that recover a certain amount of material.
 - City could ask EWEB could provide different rate structure for those recovering certain amounts
- Education and technical assistance (Recommendation Two):
 - Message: Waste is a commodity without a market
 - Take advantage of existing free media
 - Look to other successful campaigns – seatbelts, turning off lights

- Feedstocks are here, but for a company to dedicate the labor and space needed for separation, they need to be educated as to the value of their wastestream.
- Currently, those seeking the information are able to find it – campaign needs to extend further.
- City could provide weekly commodity values– like NY stock exchange
- Education must be sustained to be effective
- Sector specific leadership summit allows for more complex message
- In gathering commercial sector, provide toolkit to help commercial sector think of waste upfront
- Education should reach all sectors
- Waste management should be part of new employee training – this could be required in permitting

- Comingling:
 - Many waste generators do not realize that a portion of their commingled recyclables are landfilled – people need help identifying what is recyclable
 - Need for comprehensive statewide study of commingled stream.