

# Every Other Week Garbage Pickups for Households



Seattle  
Public  
Utilities

# Seattle Considers Every-Other Week (EOW) Garbage

## Pros

- Saves up to \$5-6M per year
- Reduces truck impacts, traffic and emissions
- Encourages recycling and composting
- Implemented in other regional cities

## Cons

- Potential for customer opposition and unintended consequences
- Higher rates for some
- Moderate overall savings may not justify perceived service drop

# Why do we seek your input now?

**The Mayor and Council need to decide by early 1Q 2014, so that we can notify the contractors by 4/1/14 –if we want to implement in April of 2015. Missing this deadline would push off the next earliest implementation date to 4/1/16.**

# 2012 Pilot Background

**Council directed SPU to complete pilot to understand potential impacts**

- **Feedback from Seattle customers**
- **Impacts on different neighborhoods**
- **Recycling and composting benefits**
- **Reactions to different rate options**
- **Operational issues**

# Potential Citywide Context

**Citywide service could be as early as 2015 (if chosen)**

- **Pilot results in June 2013 report**
- **Solid Waste Advisory Committee reviewed in September and recommended implementation**
- **Customer Panel review in November 2013**
- **Mayor and Council decision by February 2014**
- **Notify contractors March 2014**
- **Possible citywide implementation April 2015**

# Pilot Overview

## One Less Truck: July 1 to Dec. 31, 2012

- Four contiguous pilot routes
- 200 single-family houses in each route - 800 total
- Mandatory participation, with stipend
- Two customer rates tested (average 11% price break)
- Recycling, yard waste stayed the same
- Utilized Race and Social Justice focus

# Pilot Project Findings

## Two groups of findings, that inform:

- Whether to go Citywide: **customer satisfaction, neighborhood impacts, recycling potential**
- How to implement if desired: **rate options, customer outreach, operations and transition impacts**
- **Focusing on first set of findings**

# **Whether to Implement: Pilot Customer Satisfaction**

- **63% satisfied (a 5+ rating on 1-7 scale)**
- **Higher than 33% satisfaction in 2011 citywide survey**
- **Satisfaction higher for participants after pilot than in early stages**
- **Still much lower than with weekly service (89%)**
- **Recycling/yard waste satisfaction stayed high (89%)**

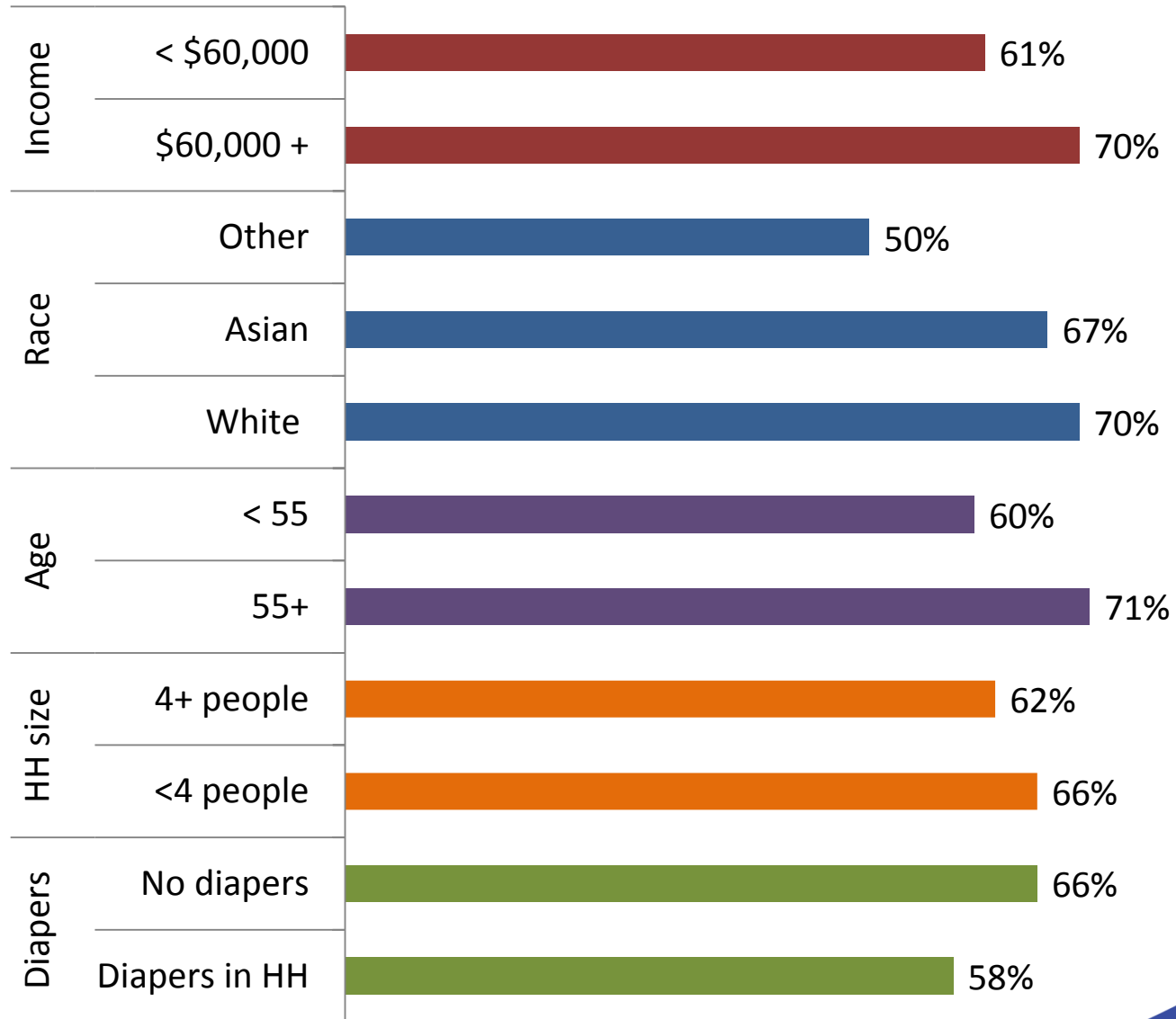


# Satisfaction by Key Demographics

## Higher satisfaction reported by:

- Whites and Asians
- Higher income
- Older and smaller households
- No diaper usage

# Satisfaction Chart



# Reasons for Satisfaction with Pilot

## Of those satisfied:

- 89% liked improving efficiencies and cutting costs.
- 80% liked the \$100 payment for participating.
- 73% did not experience rats or other pests.
- 73% felt there was less truck pollution in the neighborhood.
- 71% did not experience smells or odors.
- 65% said there were fewer trucks on the road.
- 60% said they were saving money on their bill.
- 55% reported their current garbage can worked well.

# Reasons for Dissatisfaction

## Of those not satisfied:

- 76% did not like having garbage on their property for that long.
- 72% felt the change increased smells and odors.
- 66% had to work harder to get garbage to fit in the can.
- 62% reported an increase in rodents and pests.
- 62% didn't like having to wait two weeks to have their garbage collected if they missed a collection.

# Participants Recommendation for citywide change

- **53% pilot respondents recommended citywide implementation (80% of satisfied participants recommended)**
- **33% opposed citywide (88% dissatisfied recommended against citywide)**
- **Demographic responses aligned with satisfaction feedback**

# Whether to Implement: Diversion Potential

- Pilot households reduced garbage by 15% more than citywide households
- Recycling increased. Food composting diversion was difficult to measure.
- 30% survey respondents reported more food composting and 20% reported more recycling.
- Estimated potential to reduce garbage disposal 9,000 tons per year – and add 1.3% points to city recycling rate.

# **Whether to Implement:** **Other Environmental Benefits**

- **Approximate 25% reduction in solid waste truck traffic in local neighborhoods**
- **Approximate 15% reduction in solid waste truck emissions, with regional and global benefits**

# Whether to Implement:

## Pilot Neighborhood Impacts

### Neutral Impact:

39% said they did not notice any difference in their neighborhood

### Positive Impacts:

34% noticed less truck traffic

### Negative Impacts

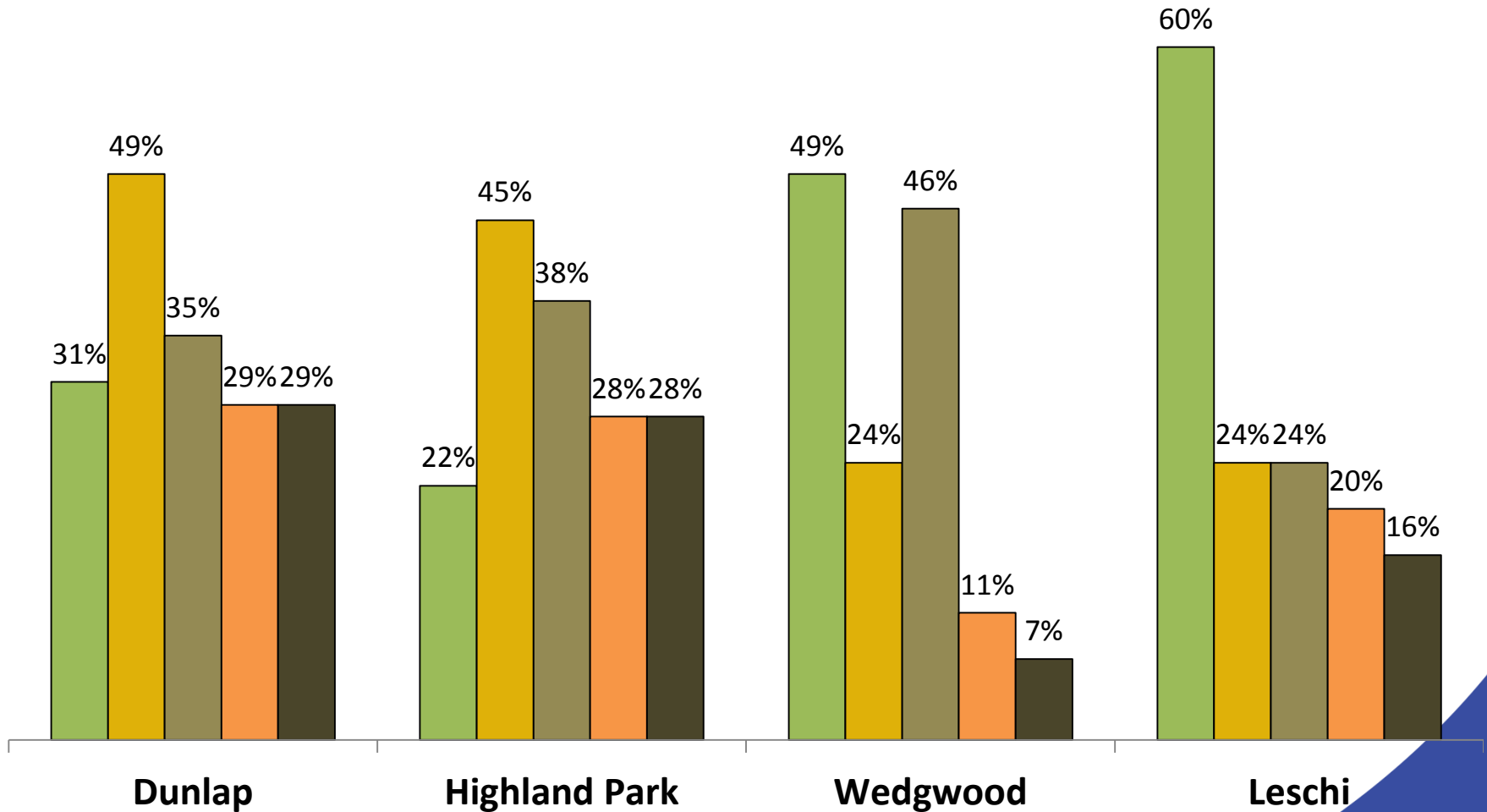
36% said there were more overflowing garbage and recycling containers

20% said their neighborhood look messier



# Differences in Neighborhoods

None Overflow Fewer trucks Cans at Curb Messier



# Whether to Implement: Financial Impacts

## **Solid waste fund impacts:**

- Overall savings up to \$5-6M per year
- 3% saving on all customer revenue OR
- 6% saving on household customer revenue

## **Household customer impacts:**

- “Can upsizers” (10-30%) likely to pay more
- “Can keepers” (70-90%) likely to have moderate savings

# How to Implement:

## Potential Transition Measures

- **Participants identified potential improvements for citywide service, such as free extra garbage or pickups, weekly recycling, diaper pickup, and new containers.**
- **All these measures could ease a transition, but could also reduce truck benefits, cut into potential savings or eliminate customer bill discounts.**

# Key Policy Considerations

- 1. Is projected customer satisfaction high enough?**
- 2. Can projected lower satisfaction for key demographics and potential neighborhood impacts be addressed?**
- 3. Is this the best program to boost composting and recycling?**
- 4. What level of transition measures are reasonable or affordable?**

# SWAC Recommendation

- **Implement Citywide for residential households in April 2015**
- **Address potential lower satisfaction with impacted neighborhoods or populations**
- **Mitigate impacts of overflowing containers, household costs, and potential neighborhood dumping**

# SPB Customer Panel Responses