



SOLID WASTE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 27, 2013

Councilmember Jean Godden
Chair, Libraries, Utilities, Center Committee
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Dear Councilmember Godden and Committee members,

In June 2013, the Seattle Solid Waste Advisory Committee members had the opportunity to review and discuss SPU's Draft 2012 Annual Recycling Rate Report. Overall, the committee is encouraged by the results detailed in this report and the associated SPU outreach, education, program and policy efforts which have contributed to Seattle's very impressive recycling rates.

Among the many successes presented in the 2012 Recycling Report, the committee would like to place special emphasis on the marked progress of both the single family and multi family sectors. The single family sector continues to move toward the City's 2015 goal of 75.4% diversion; 2012 showed success in this sector with both an increase in recycling and a decrease in total tons generated.

Historically, the multi family sector has been and continues to be one of the most challenging sectors to increase recycling and encourage waste reduction. However, Seattle successfully increased the multi family recycling rate by 3.5% in 2012. This substantial jump in multi family recycling is a major achievement and we applaud the City's 2012 rollout of mandatory multi family food waste collection that now provides universal access to food and yard debris recycling to all multi family residents throughout the City.

Seattle's commercial sector's recycling achievements will be key in the City's effort to reach its aggressive recycling goals of 60% by 2015 and 70% by 2022. SWAC members would like to take this opportunity to make recommendations specific to improving recycling rates among Seattle's commercial sector.

Firstly, the City's Resource Venture program has undergone budget cuts and is functioning at a reduced level in 2013/14. This program serves as the City's single business recycling assistance program. We urge the City to consider the rededication of resources for increasing diversion among Seattle businesses through Resource Venture. The success of the commercial sector is critical and shows a considerable return on investment. We believe that Seattle Public Utility can best achieve its diversion goals when Seattle businesses are enlisted as partners in reducing landfill waste. Resource Venture assistance gives businesses the education, tools and knowledge to better participate in recycling programs, which will help achieve the City's ambitious diversion goals.

Secondly, we encourage the City to stay on-track with bans slated for the commercial sector as identified in the Solid Waste Plan, assuming current recycling markets for considered commodities are stable. Currently, the commercial sector is prohibited from disposing paper and cardboard as garbage. Other traditional recyclables as well as food and compostable papers present major opportunities for increased diversion in the commercial sector. Finally, in relation to current and potential bans, SWAC encourages the City to allocate adequate resources for enforcement and customer education.

We thank you for considering our comments and look forward to providing additional comments and feedback upon your request.

Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Wendy Walker' written in a cursive, flowing style. The signature on the right is 'JBR.' written in a more stylized, blocky cursive script.

Wendy Walker & Joseph Ringold
SWAC Co-Chairs

Cc: Ray Hoffman, Vicky Beaumont, Sheryl Shapiro, SPU Community Advisory Committees