Evaluation of Options

Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan

Seattle Public Utilities

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) has identified preliminary options to improve the city's solid waste facilities. These range from making small improvements to rebuilding or expanding our facilities to accommodate customer services and build in flexibility to meet future solid waste needs. In the next few months, the City will identify which of these will best improve service to customers, provide environmental benefits, and increase the efficiency in the waste management system. Input from citizens, community and business organizations, and facility staff will help the City in making its selection.

Public Involvement

In February 2003, SPU held its first two public forums and attended six community and business meetings. SPU introduced the planning process to the public and obtained input on initial ideas for facilities improvements. Comments related to the north and south stations, in general, focused on known problems, including traffic, odor, appearance, and operations. Suggestions for improvements included providing buffers or other visual improvements, adding more collection options, and improving traffic flow and site design. Concerns related to the development of a new intermodal facility centered mostly on cost and access. Generally, comments on this issue were favorable, particularly with regard to the potential for related improvements to the existing recycling and disposal stations.

Narrowing the Options

SPU narrowed an original list of 20 options down to five for detailed evaluation of economic and quality of service costs and benefits. The five were selected based on a preliminary assessment of overall dollar cost, recycling potential, customer service, safety and neighborhood impacts. (See chart on page 3.) Evaluation criteria during the preliminary assessment phase and the upcoming detailed evaluation phase are consistent with the overall project goals established by the City Council.

North Recycling & Disposal Station: Built in the 1960s, the stations need frequent repairs.

Preliminary Options

A brief summary of each of the options is described below. These options demonstrate the range of possibilities. Options 1, 2, and 3 present potential alternatives at our two existing solid waste facility sites. Options 4 and 5 also include an intermodal solid waste transfer facility at a new, third site. A "no action" option will also be considered.

Option 1: Modify Existing Stations

The "Modify Existing Stations" option includes ongoing maintenance and repair of existing structures, replacement of worn out equipment and structures as required, and other modifications to existing facilities.

1

Pros
- Some improvements to traffic flow
- Minimal construction impacts
- Low initial capital costs compared to other options

Cons
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse not significantly improved
- Wait time anticipated to get worse over time
- Increased down time for repairs and maintenance as equipment and facilities age
- Lack of capacity may result in turning away some trucks and other vehicles during peak times
- Lack of flexibility to change to meet future needs

Option 2: Rebuild

The "Rebuild" option involves demolition of existing recycling and disposal station buildings and a total rebuild of the stations, offices, scalehouses, and other associated structures on the existing site footprints.

2

Pros
- Wait time expected to decrease or hold steady over time
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse are improved compared to Option 1
- Facility aesthetics improved and local impacts reduced compared to Option 1

Cons
- Temporary construction disruption
- Higher capital costs than Option 1
- Limited opportunities to improve recycling and reuse

Option 3: Optimal Rebuild

The "Optimal Rebuild" option involves demolition of existing recycling and disposal station structures and a total rebuild on an expanded footprint. Sufficient property would be obtained to size facilities with enough capacity to accommodate additional customer needs.

3

Pros
- Wait time anticipated to decrease compared to Options 1 and 2
- More opportunities for recycling and reuse than Option 2
- Facility aesthetics improved and local impacts reduced compared to Option 2
- Traffic backups onto the street reduced
- Increased flexibility to respond to future needs

Cons
- Temporary construction disruption
- Higher capital costs than Option 2
- Additional property must be acquired to improve recycling and other waste management activities

Option 4: New Intermodal Facility

Option 4 involves construction of a new intermodal solid waste transfer facility along with the optimal rebuild of the existing two recycling and disposal stations. Under this option, the majority of garbage trucks and other large vehicles would be directed to the intermodal solid waste transfer station, thereby allowing the existing two stations to be upgraded to meet self-haul customer needs and improve customer service.

4

Pros
- Wait time anticipated to decrease the most
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse similar to Option 2
- Facility aesthetics improved and local impacts reduced
- Majority of truck traffic diverted to intermodal facility
- More flexibility to respond to future needs compared to Option 3
- Reduced waste handling costs compared to Options 1-3
- Traffic backups onto the street reduced

Cons
- Temporary construction disruption, but truck traffic can be diverted to intermodal during construction
- Higher capital costs than Option 3
- Additional property must be acquired to improve recycling and other waste management activities (same or less than Option 3)
- A third site must be developed for solid waste transfer

Option 5: Optimize Three Facilities

The "Optimize Three Stations" option involves construction of a new intermodal solid waste transfer facility with enough capacity to handle anticipated waste management opportunities along with the optimal rebuild of the existing two recycling and disposal stations. This option would allow increased flexibility to adapt to changes in the wastestream, regulations, and technologies.

5

Pros

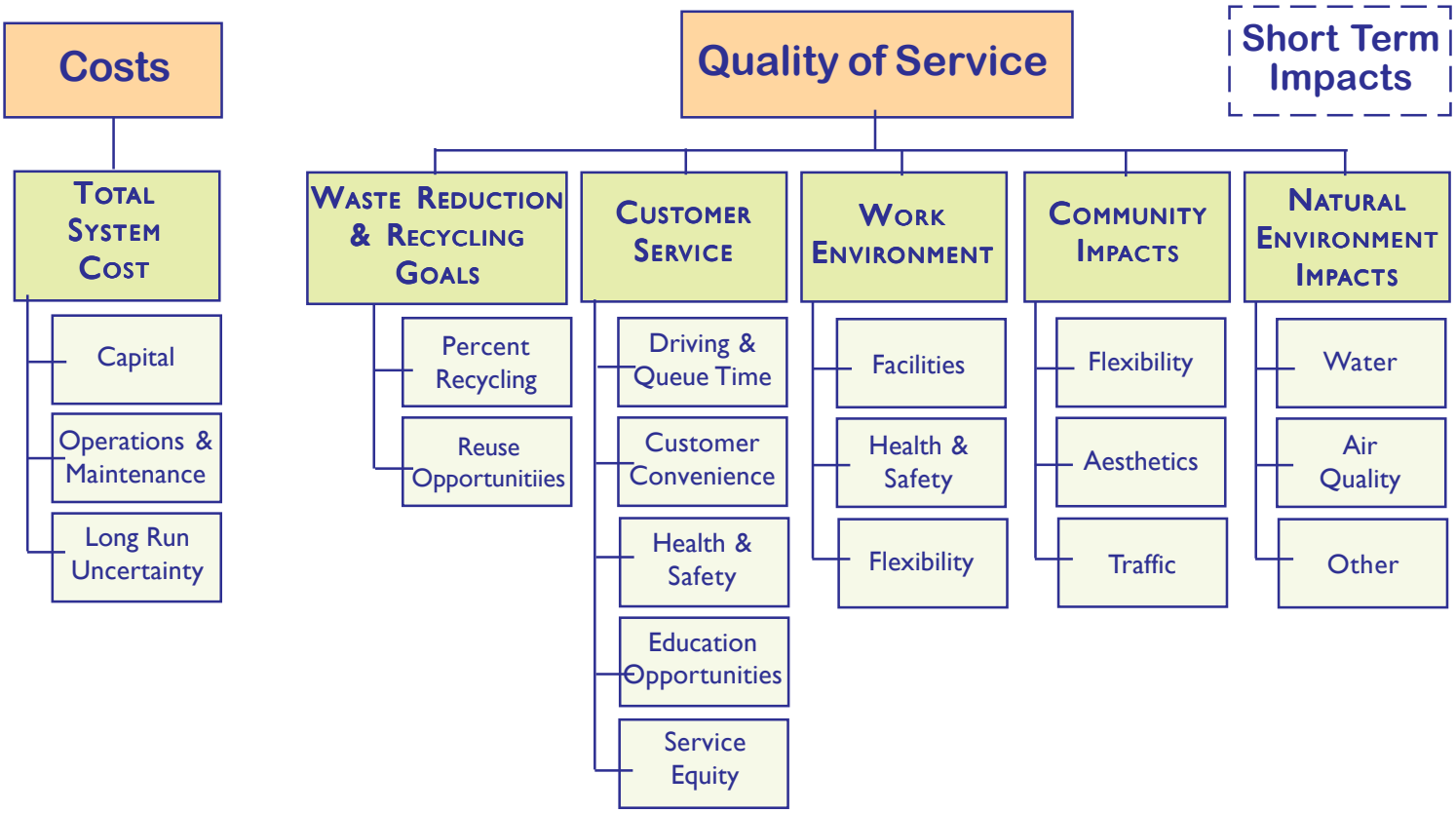
- Wait time anticipated to decrease (same as Option 4)
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse maximized
- Facility aesthetics improved and local impacts reduced (same as Option 3)
- Majority of truck traffic diverted to intermodal facility, bypassing existing stations (same as Option 4)
- Highest flexibility to adapt to changes in wastestream, markets, and technologies
- Reduced waste handling costs compared to Options 1-3
- Ability to accept partner waste (not just Seattle municipal waste) at intermodal facility increases economies of scale and reduces overall costs
- Traffic backups onto the street reduced

Cons

- Temporary construction disruption, but truck traffic can be diverted to intermodal during construction
- Higher capital costs than Option 4
- Additional property must be acquired to improve recycling and other waste management activities (possibly more than Option 4)
- A third site must be developed for solid waste transfer (larger than Option 4)

Screening Criteria

This chart shows the screening criteria that will be used to evaluate the five short-listed options . These criteria are consistent with the overall project goals set by the Seattle City Council, include cost considerations for each option, and reflect input from the community.



Next Steps

After hearing from the public in April, the project team will conduct a thorough analysis of these five options in preparation for review by the Mayor and Council in July. The analysis will identify how well each option meets our goals and the needs of our customers , and its potential cost. If rebuilding of the recycling and disposal stations and/or a new intermodal facility is a preferred option, this will trigger an environmental review process that will be conducted in concert with the plan development. The Mayor, Council, and the public will then have an opportunity to review all the potential impacts and benefits prior to adopting a final plan.

SPU will keep the public informed and involved as the process continues. Information will be posted on the project website and additional meetings and briefings of community groups will be scheduled prior to any key decisions.

Additional Information

To stay informed or to receive additional information about this project, visit the SPU website at www.seattle.gov/util or contact Henry Friedman at (206) 733-9147 or swfmp.spu@seattle.gov.

Schedule

- **FEBRUARY 2003**
  Public Forums
- **SPRING 2003**
  Development of Options
- **APRIL 2003**
  Public Forums
- **SUMMER 2003**
  Selection of Alternatives for Draft Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan
- **FALL 2003**
  Environmental Review
- **2004**
  Final Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan

Argo Railyard: Our trash is trucked from the city stations to Argo and sent to a distant landfill.