



Jefferson County's Solid Waste Facility Replacement Planning Project

Contract No. JC0726-2022-069

DRAFT Stakeholder Outreach Needs Study
Task 2.10 Deliverable 2.7

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April 11, 2023



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File No.

Contract: JC0726-2022-069

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FROM: Penny Mabie, Task Lead, Public Outreach, Definitely Mabie Consulting, LLC

CC: File

SUBJECT: [Updated - Stakeholder Outreach Needs Study](#)

Purpose

This Stakeholder Outreach Needs Study was completed in accordance with the Professional Services Agreement, Task 2.10 – Complete a Public Outreach Needs Study, between Vikek Environmental Engineers, LLC (Vikek) and Jefferson County (County). The purpose of this study is to identify stakeholder groups and interests, potential issues, process concerns, communications preferences, and involvement expectations.

Scope of the interviews

In late November and early December 2022, Definitely Mabie Consulting conducted interviews with members of the Jefferson County Solid Waste Facilities Task Force (SWFTF) to gauge individual knowledge and aspirations and catalog concerns and expectations about the Jefferson County Solid Waste Facility Replacement Planning project. The purposes of these interviews were to:

- To better understand the knowledge and interests of people in the communities served by the solid waste system.
- Identify areas of concern of group members
- To learn how best to involve community members in the existing solid waste facility assessment and planning effort
- To inform a public involvement plan that is based on deep knowledge of the communities served by the solid waste system
- To learn best practices for reaching into the community and determining potential barriers to people's involvement



Interviewees

David Wayne Johnson
Carol Cummins
Tim Deverin
Owen Rowe
Pinky Feria-Mingo
Steve Gilmore

Miranda Nash
Cindy Jayne
Tracy Grisman
Zach Wailand
Matt Stewart
Lisa Crosby

Major Themes

Participants were asked questions along three lines of inquiry: familiarity with the project and background; concerns and issues with solid waste facilities and/or the project along with project aspirations; and public involvement.

Familiarity with the Project and Background

Familiarity: As all but three interviewees attended the SWFTF kick-off meeting, most everyone felt at least reasonably comfortable in their knowledge of the project and of the Jefferson County Solid Waste system. Additionally, most participants had either used the facilities at the transfer station at least once or had visited the site for other business purposes.

Why this project: Several participants noted they felt fairly aware of why the project is needed, but several others expressed concerns that the “why replace facilities” question had not been fully articulated and needed more attention, particularly with respect to why relocating the transfer station was under consideration.

“Why consider moving? I thought the current site was plenty big enough.”

“Is it off the table to keep our current station and modify it?”

“Let’s don’t assume what the solution is.”

One participant noted that people need to see that the current system is not working well, suggesting the County stop spending money and resources on maintaining a failing system.

Concerns and Issues

Congestion: Several participants noted they had either experienced or were aware of congestion issues at the Port Townsend Transfer Station, which resulted in long lines to use the facilities. Two participants noted the single ingress and egress to the station made it almost impossible to bypass the scale house when accessing the station for purposes other



than dropping off materials. Another concern was the impact on county/state road when traffic backed up from the scale house.

Size of the facility: Many participants recognized that the size of the waste and recycling facilities was either currently or very close to being inadequate to efficiently handle the volumes of materials coming to the station. Some noted that the station had not kept up with rapid growth in Jefferson County (County) and needed to be expanded, especially as additional growth is projected.

On a different note, several participants stated a new or rebuilt facility should be sized appropriately, although there were different interpretations of appropriate. Some participants were concerned the facility could be over-sized if growth projections are not met or if food waste diversion and additional recycling reduce the waste stream significantly. Others questioned the need for more space than is currently at the current site. Three people suggested the new or rebuilt facilities' size should be phased, with the current project sized for 20-year growth and waste projections but with the ability to be expanded to meet 40-year projections.

"Plan big with smart design."

"Before spending any money, we should think broadly about the future of solid waste in the County."

Convenience of the facility location: A couple of participants noted the convenience of the facility for Port Townsend residents. One stakeholder expressed concern the station would be moved further away from the urban area causing inconvenience. Several participants noted that relocating the facility further to the south of the county would place it closer to where most future growth is projected and would likely be welcomed by south county residents.

Need for the project: Many participants noted that if people do not understand, clearly, the reason for the project, what problem is being solved, they will resist.

"It must be really transparent that this project has to be done."

"People need to know the reality of having to meet 75% reduction by 2025."

Accessibility: One participant noted the current transfer station is not well designed for customers with disabilities and expressed an expectation for new facilities to be designed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure full accessibility.



"If we design for ADA accessibility, it works for everyone."

Air quality: One participant was concerned with the air quality at the current station, given dust and particulate matter escapement. The concern was highest for impacts to on-site employees.

Cost: Many participants noted that the cost of new or rebuilt facilities could be one of the most significant barriers to the success of the project. Several tied cost issues to environmental benefits – new or redesigned facilities must adequately address climate and environmental protection. Any new facilities need to be industrial looking to avoid the perception the County is overspending on the project.

NIMBY: Several participants noted that "Not in my Backyard" (NIMBY) opposition is likely to arise if re-location of the facilities is considered.

Environment: One participant noted that folks who tend to be progressive will object to the project if there is a perception that climate and environmental protection has not been appropriately considered.

Aspirations:

Along with ensuring the scope of the project looks beyond just relocation of the current facilities, many participants emphasized their desire to have the transfer station provide additional recycling and reuse opportunities. Aspirations for additional space or services include:

- Space (and perhaps a facility) to provide reuse services – a "drop and take" drop-off spot for items to be reused rather than landfilled
- Provide space for partner-driven efforts to support additional recycling or reuse. The Styrofoam recycling operation currently using space at Fort Warden was given as an example
- Co-locate all solid waste system activities in one place, located close to the central base of hauling. The carbon footprint of large trucks means the site should be optimized for their footprint, not residents or businesses bringing in smaller, less frequent loads
- Include in the design an area for exhibit space for artists' works.
- Include a viewing area so people can see how the waste process works
- Include space for a repair café – either dedicated space or some type of facility, as well as for other community events that provide education. Space should include adequate parking.
- Design a way to showcase the transfer station workers. The community should know these people



- Provide space for a “young” company to start up an organics/food scraps recycling operation
- Consider a municipal food waste/organics compost facility.
- Consider some sort of commercial scale composting facility that would produce compost suitable for agricultural use
- Include an asbestos facility
- Have a space for reusable construction debris drop-off and for construction debris recycling
- Need space for disaster debris and a plan for how to manage disaster debris
- Have a dedicated space for volunteers; this is an older community and there are lots of volunteer programs and volunteers
- Partner with Clallam County to do asphalt shingle recycling
- Provide space for diversion of edible food
- Wherever the project ends up being, ensure there are no traffic issues that result from backups at the scale house that affect county or state roads as currently occurs
- Increase efforts to minimize litter from loads with additional signage about securing loads and staff or volunteers doing more frequent litter control
- Depending on ultimate location and availability of space, might consider co-locating county roads facilities with transfer station
- Provide opportunity to recycle agricultural plastics that are all currently being landfilled
- Wherever it is located, however it is designed, and however it is paid for, it should encourage curbside service over self-haul to reduce the operation’s carbon footprint and reduce the operational costs.
- Consider co-location of a food hub for storage and distribution of local ag products
- Consider where the County’s Urban Growth area is and the population increase that the Tri-Area sewer will bring
- Consider co-location of a septage receiving and processing facility
- Do not miss opportunities for joint activities with neighboring counties
- Determine if Olympic Organics is ready/able to take our food waste
- Provide waste oil collection

Public Involvement Process

Methods to reach and engage:

Direct mail was recommended by nearly all participants in order to reach those who do not use social media, do not subscribe to newspapers and/or may be inclined to state they never heard about the project.

Other suggested outreach methods:

- Post on bulletin boards in local communities (help was offered in identifying specific high-traffic locations)
- Provide information to groups for them to disseminate to their members
- Post on Next Door
- Use social media, especially local Facebook groups



- Check to see if haulers' phone message capabilities can be used
- Partner with Jefferson PUD to put information in their newsletters
- In-person outreach is best in the south part of the county
- Offer hybrid options – in-person and virtual
- Bill inserts
- Use QR codes to bring people to an online survey
- Briefings to group meetings (e.g., Chamber, Rotary, Kiwanis, garden clubs, etc.)
- Informational handouts at food banks
- Radio (KPTZ) and newspapers
- Solid Waste Facilities Task Force (SWFTF) members serving as the “face” of the project
- Reach out to homeowner associations
- Use ESRI storyboards
- Table at Farmers Market; have small giveaways
- Houses of worship
- County libraries – posters, handouts, presentations
- Find established community leaders who can/will share information with their constituents
- Make it easy for people to email their comments

Engagement concerns:

Most participants noted the need for **project transparency**. One person recommended the County provide frequent updates, sharing what has been decided and what has not. Many reiterated the need to emphasize why the project is needed. They noted that if residents/businesses do not understand the need for the project, they will not accept it. Another participant noted that the project needs to consider all ideas and suggestions equally, to demonstrate that all input is valued. Another participant suggested that the County will lose credibility and support if people think a decision is already made.

Regular updates, whether there have been major changes or advancements or not, were recommended by several participants.

“We need to get people’s attention. Start with a post card that says, “Hey, this is happening. Here is the website and here is when the first public meeting will be.” Be short and sweet.”

Several participants noted the importance of **engaging people who do not live in or near Port Townsend**. One person noted that people in the county often feel disenfranchised. Their circumstances are different, they are not on curbside collection or municipal sewer, and they do not feel their issues are heard or considered. Another participant suggested giving more rural communities lots of ways to participate.



One participant noted that the **SWFTF** will be very instrumental in the project. They noted the SWFTF's ability to engage with the public will be needed and suggested the SWFTF will likely be more trusted than Public Works by some.

Several participants noted the abundance of retirees/seniors in the community and their willingness to participate and provide feedback. One participant was concerned that there can be an **imbalance in feedback**, and that the volume of feedback from the retired community can drown out that from working class people who have less time or ability to engage.

When asked about who typically gets **overlooked or underrepresented**, participants mentioned a variety of constituencies. These include:

- People with disabilities
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community
- Young people
- Tribes
- Underserved community (socio-economically)
- People in the south part of the county

Specific groups or people to engage with:

- Liz Kocher, Homebuilders Association
- Alicia Brown, Pt Townsend Marine Trades Association
- Lazy C and Seamount Homeowners' Associations in Brinnon
- Linda Herzog, Quilcene
- Joe and Joey Bausch, Brinnon
- Roger Short, Chimacum
- Julia Cochran, Jefferson County Immigrant Rights Advocates (JCIRA)
- Quilcene Community Center
- Chimacum Grange, Tri-Area Grange
- Peninsula College
- Quimper Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
- Local 20/20
- Large food waste generators (restaurants, food bank, hospital, festivals)
- Danny Milholland, production company
- Disability Awareness Starts Here (DASH)
- Jefferson County Council of the Blind
- Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC)
- Olympia Community Action Programs (OlyCAP)
- Agricultural organizations - Conservation District, County Extension Office, and Jefferson Land Trust
- Specific ag producers including:
 - Red Dog Farm
 - Midori Farms
 - Finnriver Cidery
 - Spring Rain Farm
- Housing Solutions Network





Attachment: Interview Questions

Subject Matter:

- Do you use the recycling or transfer facilities?
- Do you have any concerns about the current facilities?
- Do you have any concerns about the County's solid waste system?
- The County is looking to replace or rebuild the current recycling and transfer facilities – do you have thoughts about how that process should go? Concerns? Advice?

Concerns and Issues:

- What are the types of concerns you have about the project (e.g., environmental, economic, health, process, etc.?)
- How would you describe your level of concern for the project? (As long as this is asked in an open-ended fashion)
- Are there issues you think are likely to interfere with the project's success? If so, what?
- How would you describe the characteristics of a successful solid waste facilities assessment and replacement planning project in the County?
- What are your top three questions about the project right now?
- What do you think the County needs to do to achieve a successful project?

Public Involvement Process:

- We are planning to use direct mail, email, web sites and community organizations to get the word out about the Solid waste facility planning project. Are there other ways we should reach out to people?
- We want to consult with the community and with recycling and transfer station users about community values and thoughts about solid waste facilities assessment and planning. Do you have suggestions for how we might do that?
- Are there barriers to people participating in conversations about the project we should know about? If so, what are they? Do you have suggestions for how to break through those barriers?
- Are there segments of the community that have not been represented in this project? If so, where or who?
- Are there specific parts of the community, interest groups, organizations or others we should be sure to include in the planning project?
- Are there specific people we should be sure to reach out to about the project?
- Anything else we should be thinking about as we develop our public involvement plan?