

Colclasure, James

From: Krivit, Dan <Dan.Krivit@Foth.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 5:48 PM
To: Gates, Jim
Cc: Larson, Kim; Moore, Lynn; Young, Susan; Shuros, Warren A
Subject: Bloomington SWMP - Foth memo report on results of second Open House. Draft outline of Community Engagement Report
Attachments: M - Memo Report - Results of second Open House 1-21-14.docx; Community Engagement Report DRAFT Outline SAY 1-21-14.docx

Jim,

Attached are two documents we can use as discussion tools for our PMT conference call tomorrow at 12:30 p.m.:

- ◆ Foth memo report on the results of the second Open House held last Thur Jan 16
- ◆ Draft outline of the Community Engagement Report

Please forward these on to your other City staff PMT members.

Note that we reference the Master Recyclers/Composters (MRC) draft hand out, but we did not attach this to our Foth memo report. (Do you have an electronic copy? My copy has my hand notes all over it!)

I am assuming you will use Foth's conference call dial in numbers again:

Dial into the service: **866-453-5550**

Then, when prompted, enter the participant code: **118 1298#**
(Make sure to enter "#" after the code to get it entered.)

(P.S. Susan probably will not be able to join us. Her daughter will be recovering from early morning surgery!)

Thanks!

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Memorandum



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January 21, 2014

TO: Jim Gates, City of Bloomington

CC: Bloomington Project Management Team (PMT): Lynn Moore, Jim Eiler,
Deborah William, Kim Larson
Warren Shuros, Foth Infrastructure & Environment, LLC (Foth)

FR: Dan Krivit and Susan Young, Foth

RE: Bloomington *Solid Waste Management Plan*:
Results Report on Second Open House

The purpose of this memo is to summarize the comments heard and the preferences expressed at the second Open House for public input to the *Bloomington Solid Waste Management Plan (Plan)*. Open Houses were selected by the City as part of a suite of community engagement tools to solicit and gather input from interested residents and businesses about the *Plan*.

A primary function of this memo is to focus on selected issues related to the *Plan* that have elevated as top priority concerns for the City and residents. This memo provides a higher-level briefing to the Project Management Team (PMT). This memo is **not** intended for public release at this time until further data results can be analyzed within the context of all community engagement strategies. That analysis will be contained in a Community Engagement report separate from the *Plan*, currently schedule to be submitted to City staff on January 31, 2014

Methods

An Open House was held in City Hall from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 16, 2013. The Open House was advertised on the City web site, and by e-mail messages to residents that had subscribed to be notified about the *Plan*. All Open House participants were asked to sign in at the Open House.

Large sheets containing the draft *Plan* "Goals" and "Strategies" were on easels in the Council Chambers with City staff and two Foth representatives were available to explain and discuss the draft Goals and Strategies. The draft Goals and Strategies posted and handed out were the same text as released and posted on the City's web page on Friday, January 10, 2014 so that interested parties could review these documents before the Open House. Forty three (43) residents signed in at the Open House registration desk.

All attendees were given blue and green “sticky dots” to indicate the four *Plan* Goals they considered most important and the four Strategies that they believed should be given highest priority. “Sticky dot” instructions were included in their hand out packets.

Foth staff kept notes of informal, small group interviews with Open House attendees. Comment cards were also available for residents to give more anonymous statements. The combined interview notes, comment card transcriptions, and selected emails to-date are included with this memo report as Attachment 1.

The quantitative summary results of the dot ranking exercise are noted below in Table 1 (Goals) and Table 2 (Strategies). Scans of the actual dot charts can also be viewed at Foth’s ShareFile FTP web page at: <https://foth.sharefile.com/d/se0c18be486942b98>.

Two community organizations have begun collaborating to provide comments and input to the *Plan*: the Master Recycler/Composter (MRC) group and the Sustainability Coalition. They coordinated written, draft comments entitled “Strategies to Improve Recycling in the City of Bloomington” and handed copies to the City and Foth staff. These draft MRC / Sustainability written comments were attached to the City Manager’s Information (CMI) packet on Friday, January 17, 2014. While not attached to this memo report, the draft MRC / Sustainability comments were an important contribution to the Open House.

Emails are also a community engagement tool. Emailed comments are included in this memo report up through Tuesday morning, January 21, 2014.

Discussion

The top three Goals from the dot ranking exercise (see Table 1) were:

- ◆ Reduce road wear impacts (36 dots)
- ◆ Lower environmental impacts (34 dots)
- ◆ Improve recycling, composting and waste reduction (31 dots)

The second tier of Goal preferences, “Enhanced public education and awareness” (18 dots) and “Assure all residents have recycling services” (11 dots) have also been reflected in many public comments to date.

As seen in Table 1, there was a significant fall-off in support of other goals, although none of the Goals were rejected by participants. These top-ranked Goals mirrored the focus of the Open House interviews and comment cards. These results also reflect comments heard at the first Open House held on December 4, 2013 and in the on-line survey.

Table 1: Draft Goals

(Number of blue “sticky dots” – Reordered by resulting rank)

◆ Reduce road wear impacts	36
◆ Lower environmental impacts	34
◆ Improve recycling, composting, and waste reduction	31
◆ Enhance public education and awareness	18
◆ Assure all residents have adequate recycling services	11
◆ Improve hauler reporting systems	8
◆ Increase use of resource recovery facilities	8
◆ Allocate adequate staff resources	8
◆ Improve value of services	6
◆ Improve safety	6
◆ Promote local economic development	5
◆ Enhance coordination among government agencies	1

The top three Strategies from the dot ranking exercise (see Table 2)

- ◆ Trash collection systems (46 dots)
- ◆ Citywide Curbside Cleanup (24 dots)
- ◆ Recycling (23 dots)

Table 2 shows that Open House participants overwhelmingly supported the strategy of improving (organizing) trash collection systems. This strategy received nearly twice as many sticky dots as the next highest ranked strategy related to the Citywide Curbside Cleanup. “Recycling” was the third ranked strategy followed by “Recycling and Waste Reduction at Events and ‘Away-From-Home’ Activities” (16 dots). Other strategies received significantly less support as indicated by the number of dots, although this appears to be more a result of very strong support by the Open House participants’ priorities for organized collection, recycling, and food waste / organics recovery than by dislike of the other strategies.

Table 2: Draft Improvement Strategies

(Number of green “sticky dots” – Reordered by resulting rank)

Trash Collection Systems	46
Citywide Curbside Cleanup	24
Recycling	23
Yard Waste Composting	17
Recycling and Waste Reduction at Events and “Away from Home” Activities	16
Food Waste/Organics Recovery	15
City Parks and City Buildings	8
Environmental Education Outreach	6
Household Hazardous Waste	6
Electronic Waste	5
Resource Recovery (for Mixed Solid Waste)	3
Source Reduction and Reuse	2
Bulky Waste	1
Landfilling	1
Other Problem Materials	0

The Open House interview notes, comment cards, written draft recommendations from the MRC / Sustainability group(s) and emails provide helpful background information to the results of the sticky dot exercise. Several key themes emerged as a result of these community engagement tools and are summarized below.

Organized Collection

The MRC / Sustainability group(s) have changed their position from the MRC letter submitted in the fall of 2012. They are now recommending that the city establish an organized collection system for recyclables, organics and trash. Previously, the MRC group had recommended a strategy of organizing of recyclables collection only.

Nearly all of the Open House participants interviewed spoke favorably regarding organized collection of trash and recyclables. Only one hauler representative attended this Open House but did not actively engage with City staff or the consultants. Several persons described their efforts to organize collection in their neighborhoods and/or homeowner and condo associations.

It was noted by several attendees that the City used to provide written tools and assistance to individuals that wished to organize trash collection in their neighborhoods. These tools included a standard letter explaining organized collection, a hand out with “Four Steps to Organize” and a hand out explaining the benefits of organizing the neighborhood. One attendee brought the materials that he used to organize collection in his neighborhood.

Several Open House participants live in condominium or homeowner associations (also known as “managed communities”). They were unanimous in recommending that these types of properties not be treated differently than single family homes, and that if the city organizes trash and recycling collection, that the association properties have the same haulers as adjacent single family homes. While these associations can and often do “self-organize” their trash/recycling collection systems, they expressed an opinion that their properties be serviced by the City-contracted hauler(s) if Bloomington moves to organized collection.

One of the participants noted that several of his neighbors in his association do not have regular trash service. He has observed that some will put their bags of trash into their neighbors’ trash carts instead of subscribing with the association hauler.

Recycling, Waste Reduction and Sustainability Objectives

A very common theme in the discussions and comment card comments was the belief that the City of Bloomington should set specific, aggressive, numeric objectives for waste reduction, recycling and food waste / organics recovery. These Bloomington – specific objectives would also be an important part of the City’s implementation of a larger sustainability plan.

Zero waste public events and recycling in parks and public spaces and park permit requirements for zero waste were cited as examples that the City could implement to show leadership in this area.

Many open house participants noted that multi-family complexes and businesses were lacking adequate opportunities for recycling. Providing adequate opportunities to recycle and enforcement of existing ordinances were both mentioned as activities to improve recycling in these sectors.

The need for better data from haulers and businesses on recycling and waste reduction efforts was mentioned by several participants. A component of trash reduction that was frequently mentioned was the need to establish a program for organics collection and/or composting in back yards.

Education and Outreach

Several attendees commented that there may be a lack of knowledge about recycling, special waste rules, waste reduction and food waste / organics collection in various Bloomington communities and sectors. Enforcement strategies were discussed and linked to improved education. Several participants noted that not all provisions of existing ordinances are being followed. City ordinances require all residents and businesses to have a trash container with a tight fitting lid (not just a trash bag) and recycle.

Several participants commented that Bloomington used to have a recycling coordinator on staff that provided community education. This coordinator provided: education at community events and schools, helped multi-unit properties with tenant education including multi-lingual fliers, and provided information about organized collection. Several of the Open House participants requested that the City provide those services in the future.

Next Steps

These preliminary results of this Foth memo report, including the Attachments, should be briefly discussed at our PMT meeting on January 22. The results will also be further discussed in separate Community Engagement Report that has been requested by staff to be prepared to be posted on the City's *Plan* web page, for the City Council and as additional supporting background for the *Plan*.

Attachment 1

Bloomington *Solid Waste Management Plan* Additional Comments, Interview Notes and Other Records From the Second Open House Held on January 16, 2014

Comment Cards

The following suggestions were submitted via written “comment cards” at the second Open House. These are verbatim as written by the participants.

Comment Card #1:

- ◆ Use State / County goals as starting point, but SET HIGHER GOALS FOR CITY.
- ◆ Prioritize actions that can be implemented soon (2 to 5 years).
- ◆ Establish organized collection.
- ◆ Set pricing to encourage recycling + discourage disposal
- ◆ Make recycling available @ parks, facilities, + events
- ◆ Require event permittees to meet zero-waste reqmnts.
- ◆ Provide training to meet zero waste
- ◆ Collaborate w/ Henn. Co. Env Serv.
- ◆ Increase recycling @ businesses
 - ▶ Inspections
 - ▶ Incentives
 - ▶ Tech assist.

Comment Card #2

- ◆ Set SIGNIFICANT city-wide solid-waste REDUCTION GOALS (e.g. 90% by 2030 and measure and report).
- ◆ Include SIGNIFICANT focus on REDUCTION at multi-family and businesses.
- ◆ Re-establish city recycling coordinator position (and increase staff resources and ramp up education/outreach/technical assistance and incentives).
- ◆ Establish a citizen advisory committee/commission (for continued feedback/input on reaching sustainability goals).

Comment Card #3

Charge for garbage by the pound, especially at businesses and multi-family. Recycling free.

Comment Card #4

We appreciate being invited and heard regarding this topic – solid waste and all its facets. We favor the goals of safety, reducing wear and tear on streets and conserving fuel.

Comment Card #5

- ◆ Remove “voluntary” from strategy #1
- ◆ Organize both trash and recyclables
- ◆ Offer organics recycling – mandatory, not opt in or opt out.

Comment Card #6

I am only interested in fewer garbage trucks ruining my new street that was put in a couple years ago. Too many garbage trucks in Bloomington.

Comment Card #7

“I feel many residents are either unaware or uneducated as far as how to divide household waste into Recyclable + Compostable & real garbage. Too much waste is being created which could be placed into recycle + compost areas. Individual composters & those with less garbage should be rewarded with lower bills ☺ because they respect our environment & take the time to separate waste. I only need pick-up once every 3 weeks, yet I pay for 4 pickups. CRAZY! I detest the trucks on my street during garbage day – too many”

Interview Notes

The following are edited versions of the consultants’ interview notes from the second Open House. The interview results are grouped by major topic for ease of review and discussion.

Numeric Objectives for Bloomington

The *Plan* should develop Bloomington-specific target numbers for waste reduction and recycling objectives. These quantified objectives should be more aggressive and more specific than the Hennepin County targets. These objectives should fit within the broader Bloomington sustainability goals.

There should be short-term and long-term objectives established in the *Plan*. The City should determine which actions can happen sooner and which are long term. The City should start implementing the short term plans sooner rather than later.

Organized Collection

Bloomington should consider reducing the number of trash licenses. This should not be accomplished through attrition, but through determining the City goals and which haulers can meet specific standards. Those haulers that can meet the license standards (for instance, all CNG fleet) should have the licenses; those that can’t should not have licenses.

The Sustainability Coalition and the Master Recyclers / Composters (MRC) group(s) have changed their position. They now recommend that recyclable and trash collection

should both be organized (not just recyclables collection alone as an interim compromise step).

The City should strive to improve hauler reporting. It doesn't seem that the City gets accurate numbers from haulers.

One of the participants self-organized their townhome association several years ago. The association is now less than 100% organized due to attrition and owners changing.

The City should have organized collection that serves all residents. For example, the City should not allow managed developments, townhomes or other self-organized associations to "opt out" of any city-wide contract system.

One of the participants who lives in a condominium, noted that the management company has a contract with Randy's Sanitation at a very cheap fee (\$10/ unit per month for both trash and recycling). Details of his comments included the following informal observations gleaned in part from "walking the route" during trash or trash/recycling collection days:

- ◆ Recycling is every other week and trash is every week.
- ◆ 25% of the residents do not have trash collection at all. Some of these use their neighbor's trash cart [or maybe take to work?].
- ◆ 45 to 50% never recycle.
- ◆ Similar townhome associations on either side of his are also "organized," but each with different hauler. He stated that to protect common (arterial) streets, the City should have organized collections so that all such homeowners' associations in a larger area should have one hauler. Associations should not be allowed to opt out of organized collection. Single family homes, condos and such townhome associations should all have organized collection. Treat all residential units the same.
- ◆ Condo associations could help with recycling education if City gave them information for newsletters, posters, etc.

The City used to promote neighborhood "organization" of trash routes. One participant worked hard to consolidate the homes in his neighborhood. He came to the Open House with a foam-core board mounted presentation with pictures of his neighborhood on trash collection day, etc. His comments included:

- ◆ The City used to provide a form letter to neighborhood or block coordinators, to give to the residents on the block. The form had spaces for the individual address, the owner's name, and the "organized" rate that would be billed.
- ◆ The City used to provide a flier entitled "Four Steps to Organize". This flier included "how-to" instructions for the neighborhood organizer.
- ◆ The City also provided a form/handout with reasons to consolidate trash collection in the neighborhood.

- ◆ Waste Management (WM) also provided forms to organize a neighborhood. WM gave a special discounted rate to the neighbors in the organization, a special “organizer rate” for the volunteer leader, and guaranteed the rates to stay the same for several years.

Multi-Family Housing

One commenter lives in a multi-family situation. Her observation for this complex is that better than 50% of residents set out recycling bins every-other-week. This set-out rate can be significantly increased. She expects that this rate may be far lower for multi-family complexes without a garage for each unit. One idea is to develop some kind of package of incentives for the owners, manager and hauler. For the multi-family complexes, it might be some kind of tax incentive. For the haulers, it might be a recognition dinner every year. For example, haulers with the most improved recycling statistics or positive comments from residents could receive some form of public recognition.

Other Commercial Establishments

The City should require gas stations, fast food establishments and other businesses to have companion recycling containers where they have trash containers.

Yard Waste

Yard waste is an issue in managed maintenance areas such as condos, homeowners’ associations, and business parks. The landscape contractor removes the yard waste and then bills the owner/manager (e.g., condo association). One commenter stated that this charge should be included in the solid waste fees and not be a separate charge.

The yard waste collection start date in the spring and end date in fall is not the same for all haulers. It seems that each hauler has a different schedule. This is confusing and unfair.

Some haulers charge \$6.00 per Christmas tree and pick up separately. This lack of a uniform system causes confusion. It would be best to have a standard collection schedule and price system.

Other Problem Materials

Fluorescent light bulbs and household batteries are very hard to store in small condo units until there is enough to make a trip across town to the Hennepin County drop-off worthwhile.

Dred Scott Park gets frequent dumping of TV’s, trash bags and computers. Some people even leave their addresses in the garbage bags. One commenter called the dumper and told them to remove their garbage from the park.

Education and Enforcement

One of the participants stated that the City newsletter, "*The Briefing*", is very good at addressing education topics, so "Please keep it going!"

The City should enhance education and awareness of trash generation and recycling issues. Community awareness has decreased in the last few years. This participant doesn't see the City providing waste and recycling education at school events, city events or fairs or community festivals as much anymore.

Some haulers still have residents put trash in black plastic bags, not in carts. The City's ordinances require that all trash should be in containers. These ordinances should be better enforced.

One participant who lives in residential townhome association made several comments, including:

- ◆ 10% of the people in his neighborhood do not, ever, recycle.
- ◆ He got his hauler to give him a bigger recycling container (35 gallon to 65 gallon); he kept same size trash container (65 gallon).

In one email comment received, the resident stated that there is no commission specifically dedicated to the environment. Disposition of solid waste clearly impacts our environment. The City should establish an environmental commission. This commission could address all manner of environmental concerns on an advisory basis.

One commenter stated that educating residents is a primary strategy to increasing participation in recycling / organics recovery and decreasing solid waste tons. The City should (continue to) take advantage of popular electronic communications like texting, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media.

Several participants suggested that the City encourage or require a small garbage cart and a BIG recycling cart. Some of the haulers only offers one (large) size for garbage carts and one (small) size of recycling carts.

Several participants suggested that those that generate more garbage should pay more. This financial incentive will help them learn to recycle more and throw away less trash.

Staffing

Several Open House participants commented on their desire to reinstate the City recycling coordinator position. One of the comments indicated that this same staff person could direct the work of the proposed environmental commission.

City of Bloomington - *Solid Waste Management Plan*

Community Engagement Report: Activities, Input and Results

Draft Outline (As of Tue Jan 21)

1. **Introduction to Community Engagement Process**
“Engagement” as opposed to “participation” (two sentences)
Why engagement is important (two sentences)
2. **City Council**
November 4, 2013 City Council Study Session
set the tone for the Plan development; two sentence outcome
Various CMI reports provided to Council
3. **Meetings with Community Organizations**
For each group: date (s) of meeting(s), how many attended, up to four key issues that were discussed
 - Haulers
 - Master Recyclers and Composters
 - PARC
 - Business Organizations
4. **Web Site Launch, updates**
Brief description, list of opportunities for information, input
5. **First Open House**
Date, number of attendees, one sentence about format
Key Issues discussed
6. **On-Line Survey**
Dates available, how publicized, number of responses (three sentences)
Sixteen charts with results, brief explanation using Lynn’s example for format and style
7. **Second Open House**
Date, number of attendees, one sentence about format
Key Issues discussed
8. **Distillation of Findings**
Examples of common threads:
 - Set ambitious, measureable goals*
 - Environmental protection*
 - Organized trash and recycling collection*
 - Education opportunities*
 - Waste Reduction, Recycling and Organics*
 - Enforcement of ordinances*
 - Citywide Community Cleanup and curbside collection of large items*

[Separate Appendices will contain the documentation for the various sections.]