



Denver City Council

Public Works Committee Summary

Wednesday, May 10, 2006, 10:30 a.m.

Location: Council Conference Room

Committee Members Present: Brown, Chair; Hancock, Lehmann

Committee Members Absent: Montero, Johnson, Robb

1) Recycling Program:

Committee Discussion

Charlotte Pitt, Public Works – Solid Waste, indicated the Automated Recycling Program was originally a five-year plan. In June 2005, new recyclable materials were added and the sorting requirements were removed allowing all recyclables to be mixed together. From June through December 2005 recycling tonnage increased by 20%. In Phase I, by October 2005, Solid Waste delivered carts to approximately 11,000 households. The department plans on expediting the five-year plan and wants to complete the implementation of the automated system citywide by the end of 2006. Phase 2 will be implemented June through August and includes the delivery of 24,000 carts and providing carts for new customers in other areas. Phase 3 will begin in September and will complete the cart deliveries to the remaining customers.

The main thrust of the program will be the educational component for Denver residents regarding the new program. Direct mail, free media, and other types of advertising will be used to educate the public. The following information was highlighted:

- ✓ Residents will be asked to set out their bins for collection and delivery of new bins in June;
- ✓ Residents will be asked to set out bins on their normal collection schedule;
- ✓ Residents that have alley collection will be asked to put their bins at curbside for one-time only and will resume alley pick up after that date;
- ✓ New service requests may be held until after the cart conversion is complete;
- ✓ Regular recycling collection times will change for residents – reminder to all residents that bins and carts must be set out by 7 a.m.; and
- ✓ Residents could find information about the program and scheduling on Denver's website: www.denvergov.org/recycle.

Councilmember Lehmann asked how the new program would be assessed. Ms. Pitt indicated that since June 2005, six thousand new customers have been added to the program. New customers and increased tonnage are good indicators for usage and value

of the program. Danamarie Schmitt, Solid Waste, indicated that quality of recyclables and contamination percentages are good indicators as well. The Councilwoman suggested that City staff inform Councilmembers when distribution occurs in their districts and Councilmembers would help with the communications for the neighborhoods. Additionally, she suggested the agency work with the Mayor's Sustainability Program and with Denver Public Schools (DPS) to promote the program through the youth. Ms. Schmitt indicated they were coordinating with the Mayor's program and would follow up with DPS.

Councilman Hancock requested a report of the percentage of recycle customers by district after Phase 3 is completed. He asked how new construction would be impacted by the program implementation schedule. Ms. Schmitt explained that Stapleton Development would continue to receive the recycling services, but other developments under construction would need to obtain a single-service operator due to safety issues. At Stapleton, a recycling center is open as well as a drop-off site at a local school.

Councilman Brown asked what assessments have been concluded based on market activity and if the product could be self-supporting in the future. Gary Price, Solid Waste, said he couldn't predict the market, but that the program does increase efficiencies and decreases injuries. The program is a service and not a business enterprise. Currently, the market is flat and the revenue per ton is at minimum level.