

One Less Truck Pilot Project



Seattle
 Public
Utilities

Seattle Considers Every-Other Week (EOW) Garbage

- **Saves up to \$5-6M per year**
- **Reduces truck impacts, traffic and emissions**
- **Encourages recycling and composting**
- **Implemented in other regional cities**
- **Potential for customer opposition and unintended consequences**

2012 Pilot Background

Council directed SPU to complete pilot to understand potential impacts

- **Feedback from Seattle customers**
- **Impacts on different neighborhoods**
- **Recycling and composting benefits**
- **Reactions to different rate options**
- **Operational issues**

Potential Citywide Context

Citywide service could be as early as 2015 (if chosen)

- Pilot report (June 2013) provides information, but not service recommendation
- SWAC and Customer Panel review and input by November 2013
- Mayor and Council decision by February 2014
- Notify contractors March 2014
- Possible citywide implementation April 2015

Pilot Overview

One Less Truck: July 1 to Dec. 31, 2012

- Four contiguous pilot routes
- 200 single-family houses in each route - 800 total
- Mandatory participation, with stipend
- Two customer rates tested (average 11% price break)
- Recycling, yard waste stayed the same
- Utilized Race and Social Justice focus



Pilot areas

- Diverse neighborhood representation.
- Feedback from each pilot route provides insight on different community impacts.
- Combined, the feedback provides results to mirror citywide impacts.

Project Findings

Two groups of findings, that inform:

- Whether to go Citywide: **customer satisfaction, neighborhood impacts, recycling potential**
- How to implement if desired: **rate options, customer outreach, operations and transition impacts**

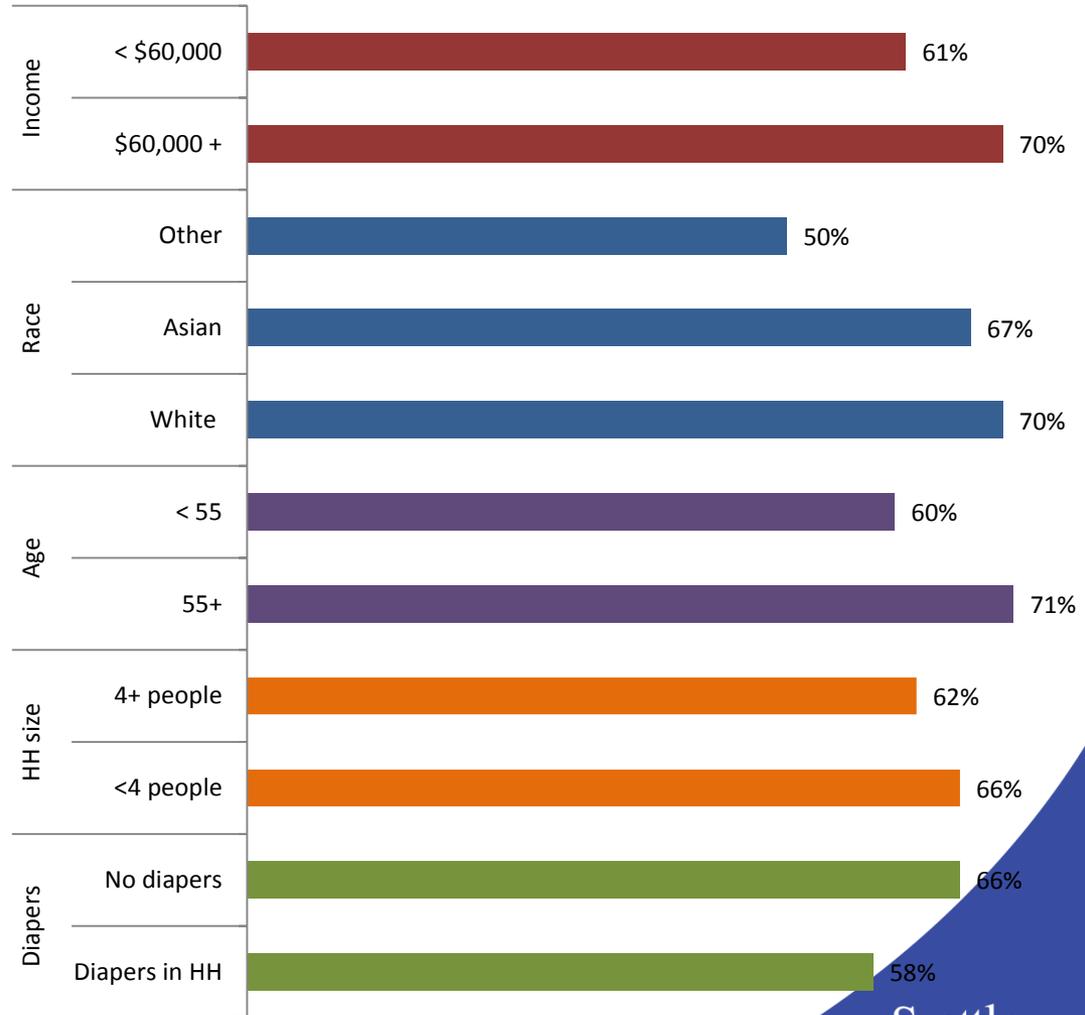
Whether to Implement: Customer Satisfaction

- **63% satisfied (a 5+ rating on 1-7 scale)**
- **Higher than 33% satisfaction in 2011 citywide survey**
- **Satisfaction higher for participants after pilot than in early stages**
- **Still much lower than with weekly service (89%)**
- **Recycling/yard waste satisfaction stayed high (89%)**

Satisfaction by Key Demographics

Higher satisfaction with **whites and Asians, higher income, older and smaller households, no diaper usage.**

These demographics contributed to higher satisfaction for respondents on the **Leschi** and **Wedgwood** pilot routes.



Reasons for Satisfaction

Of those satisfied:

- 89% liked improving efficiencies and cutting costs.
- 80% liked the \$100 payment for participating.
- 73% did not experience rats or other pests.
- 73% felt there was less truck pollution in the neighborhood.
- 71% did not experience smells or odors.
- 65% said there were fewer trucks on the road.
- 60% said they were saving money on their bill.
- 55% reported their current garbage can worked well.

Reasons for Dissatisfaction

Of those not satisfied:

- 76% did not like having garbage on their property for that long.
- 72% felt the change increased smells and odors.
- 66% had to work harder to get garbage to fit in the can.
- 62% reported an increase in rodents and pests.
- 62% didn't like having to wait two weeks to have their garbage collected if they missed a collection.

Participants Recommendation for citywide change

- **53% pilot respondents recommended citywide implementation (80% of satisfied participants recommended)**
- **33% opposed citywide (88% dissatisfied recommended against citywide)**
- **Demographic responses aligned with satisfaction feedback**

Whether to Implement: Diversion Potential

- Pilot households reduced garbage by 15% more than citywide households
- Recycling increased. Food composting diversion was difficult to measure.
- 30% survey respondents reported more food composting and 20% reported more recycling.
- Estimated potential to reduce garbage disposal 9,000 tons per year – and add 1.3% points to city recycling rate.

Whether to Implement: Neighborhood Impacts

Neutral Impact:

39% said they did not notice any difference in their neighborhood

Positive Impacts:

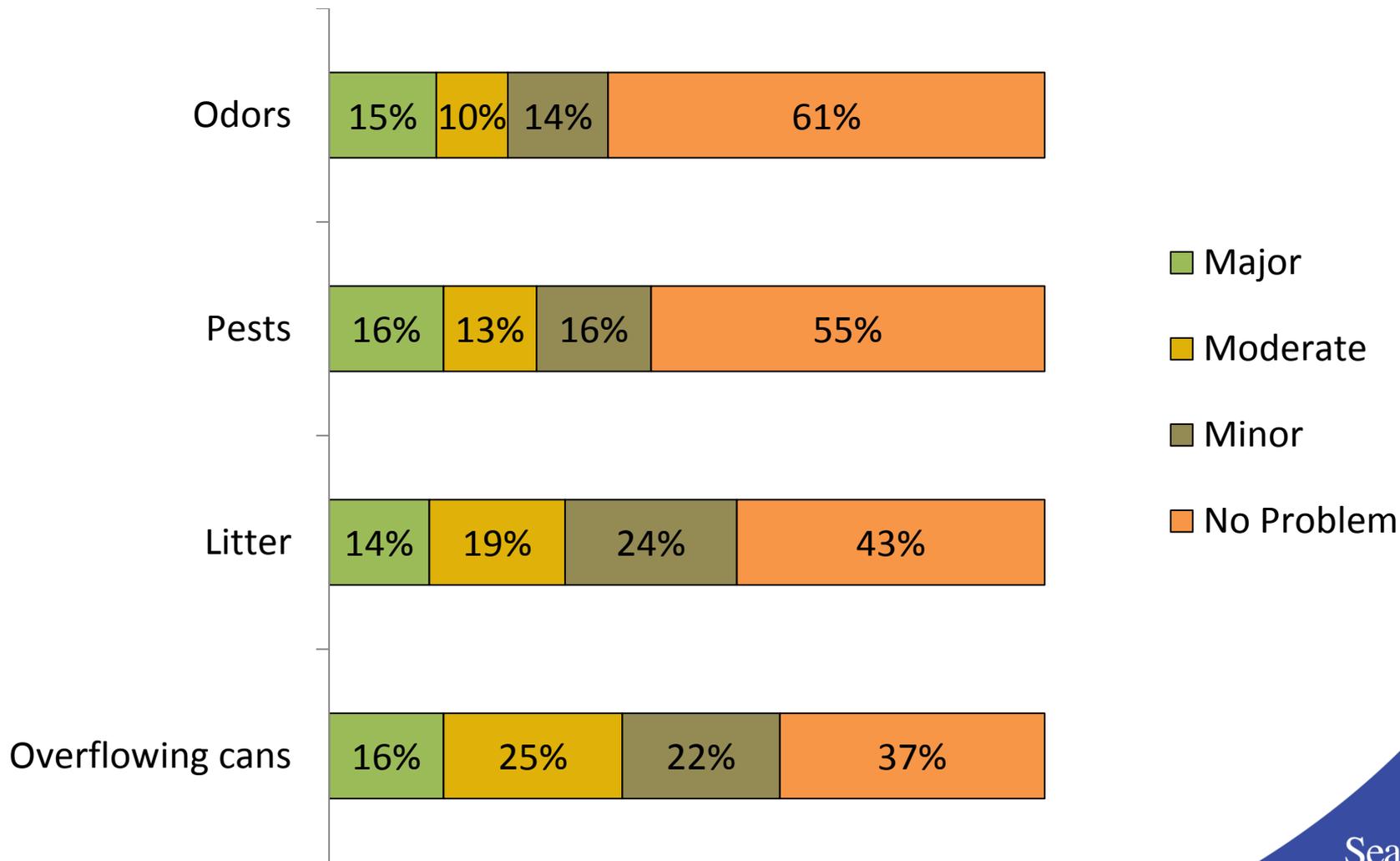
34% noticed less truck traffic

Negative Impacts

36% said there were more overflowing garbage and recycling containers

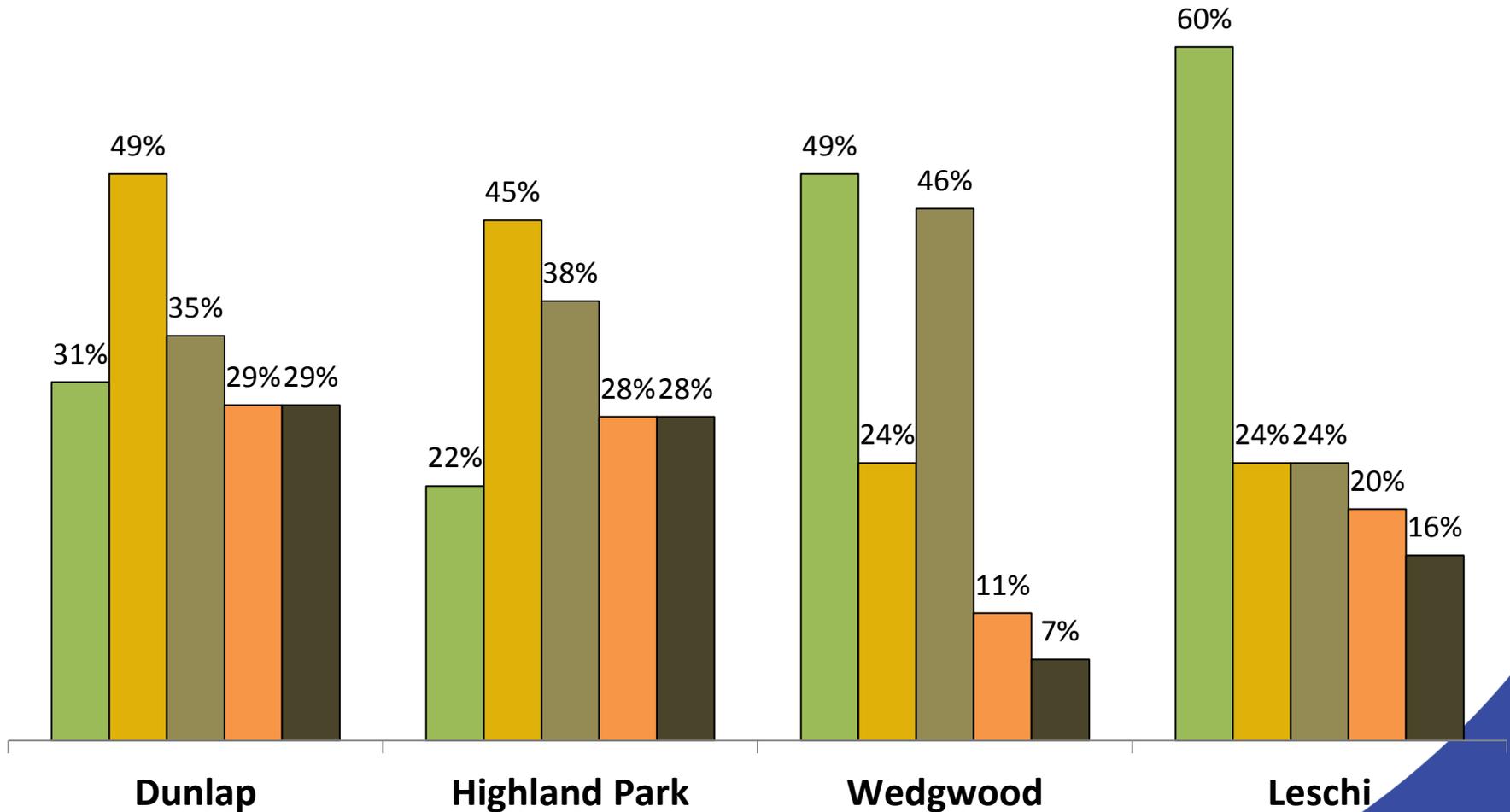
20% said their neighborhood look messier

Degree of Concerns



Differences in Neighborhoods

None Overflow Fewer trucks Cans at Curb Messier



How to Implement: Operational Elements

- **Customers want same week pick up of recycling and garbage**
- **Significant outreach and logistical challenges to implement citywide**
- **Need effective outreach to reduce potential for increased contamination of recycling and food/yard carts**

How to Implement: Financial Impacts

- **Policy and customer trade-offs for “steep” vs. “shallow” rates**
- **The 2 rate paths had no effect on pilot satisfaction**
- **Projected 10% - 30% can changes by customers with citywide service**

How to Implement:

Potential Transition Measures

- **Participants identified potential improvements for citywide service, such as free extra garbage or pickups, weekly recycling, diaper pickup, and new containers.**
- **All these measures could ease a transition, but could also reduce truck benefits, cut into potential savings or eliminate customer bill discounts.**

Key Policy Considerations

- 1. Is projected customer satisfaction high enough?**
- 2. Can projected lower satisfaction for key demographics and potential neighborhood impacts be addressed?**
- 3. Is this the best program to boost composting and recycling?**
- 4. What rate path should be used?**
- 5. What transition measures are reasonable or affordable?**

Next Steps

- **Solid Waste Advisory Committee input 3Q13**
- **SPU Customer Panel input 4Q13**
- **Mayor and Council consider and make final decision by February 2014**
- **SPU will notify collection companies by March 2014 of any changes planned for April 2015**