



Williamson County Landfill Site Development & Master Recycling Plans Open House & Survey Summary

Open House Overview

On June 8, 2010, Williamson County hosted an Open House from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Hutto Middle School, 1005 Exchange Boulevard, Hutto, Texas 78634, to gather feedback on the proposed Site Development and Master Recycling Plans for the Williamson County Landfill. Notices of the open house were distributed to local papers. Additionally, on June 7, County officials met with members of the local media to encourage coverage of the Open House in order to promote attendance by interested community members. The media included: Hutto News and Taylor Daily Press, Williamson County Sun, Community Impact, Round Rock Leader, Austin-American Statesman and News 8 Austin (Appendix II).

Information about the Open House – including its purpose, location and time, presentation materials, visuals and survey were also posted on the County's website and on Waste Management's Williamson County website. The public comment period for submitting feedback and completing the survey was from June 8 to July 8.

The Open House, held in the school cafeteria near the building entrance, was designed to be an informal review and discussion of the plans, providing an opportunity for community members to obtain information, share concerns and ask questions.

Forty-six (46) people attended the Open House, including 36 community members and 10 Williamson County and Waste Management representatives (Appendix III).

Thirteen (13) exhibits included an aerial view of the landfill, proposed entrance widening and design options, pilot recycling projects, garden and restoration projects, household hazardous waste plans, landfill filling sequence, and more (Appendix I).

Guests were given a landfill and recycling center brochure, survey and comment card, to provide feedback and/or ask questions.

Following the Open House, Williamson County officials sent attendees a letter reminding them to submit feedback and questions via comment card or online via the survey.

Summary of Written Comments

In total, the County received 10 written statements about the landfill recycling and site development plans.

Five (5) comments were submitted at the Open House. Feedback from comment cards included: traffic concerns, safety concerns for residents and environment, and add more recycling services (Appendix V).

The other 5 comments came after the open house via publicinformation@wilco.org (Appendix VI).

The Hutto Citizen's Group submitted a 16-page document in response to the plans (see attached). Their comments addressed the implementation timeline for the Site Development and Master Recycling Plans, recycling plans, the pilot Construction and Demolition Debris pilot project, the Asphalt Shingles Recycling pilot project, beautification efforts, and educational programs.

The Williamson County Public Policy Coalition recommended a timeline, budget estimates and funding sources for implementing both plans. This group also supported increased recycling efforts, and shared concerns about the height of the landfill, which is part of the state permit and not part of the Site Development plan.

A respondent expressed interest in assisting with rebuilding the old house on the southeast portion of the landfill, if that is something the County pursues.

Another respondent suggested the County establish a landfill community oversight committee, and asked to improve its education outreach and recycling efforts, especially in Hutto.

Williamson County Recycling and Landfill Survey Results

Eleven (11) surveys were submitted at the Open House. Throughout the course of the public comment period, 22 additional surveys were submitted via the website (Appendix IV).

All but one respondent stated they lived in Williamson County. The majority of the respondents lived in the Hutto area. However, Taylor, Georgetown, Round Rock and Liberty Hill residents also completed the survey. Fifty-nine (59) percent of the respondents have taken trash to the Williamson County Landfill. Thirty (30) percent have taken household hazardous waste to the county-wide biannual events.

Recycling

One-hundred (100) percent of respondents stated recycling is very or somewhat important with 87 percent of these respondents stating it is very important. The majority

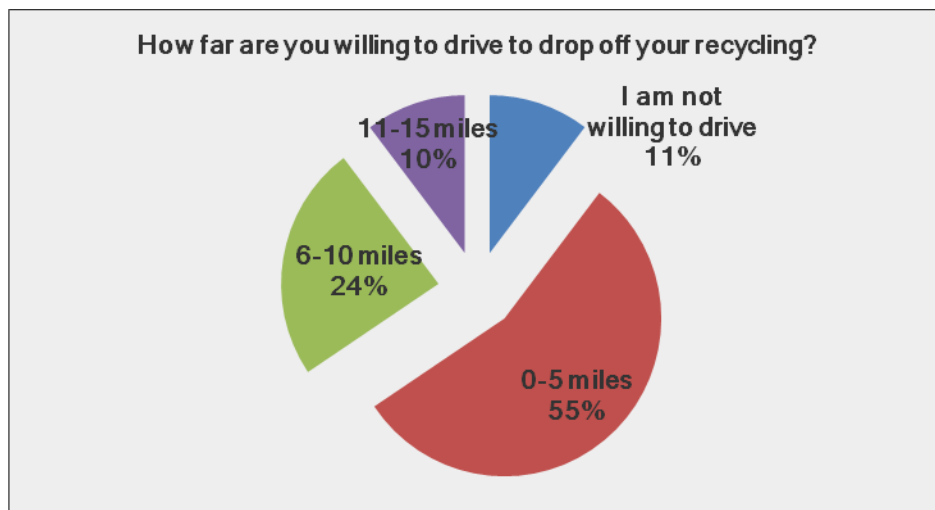
of survey respondents do have recycling services available through their regular trash services. However, many of the respondents still bring items to the County's drop off center.

What Types of Commodities do you recycle?

Aluminum cans	93.1%	Aluminum cans, paper, plastic and cardboard were the commodities that most respondents recycled. Electronic waste, used oil, batteries, paints, appliances and florescent light bulbs were also listed. Nearly 40 percent of respondents brought wood and tires to the landfill to be
Steel cans	62.1%	
Paper	86.2%	
Plastic	79.3%	
Cardboard	79.3%	
Paint	44.8%	
Batteries	51.7%	
Florescent light bulbs	31.0%	
Used Oil	51.7%	
Electronic waste such as computers, printers, telephones, etc	62.1%	
Appliances without refrigerants	37.9%	reused.

Although several respondents mentioned that they would like to see glass recycled, the majority of respondents (64%) would not be willing to pay a fee to recycle glass. Other items that were mentioned as potential recycled items included plastic bags and wrappers and more items picked up through residential curbside collection.

Fifty-five (55) percent of respondents said they would drive no more than 5 miles to drop off recycling commodities and another 11 percent said they were not willing to drive at all to drop off recycling commodities. This suggests recycling works best when it is convenient for the resident.



Many of the respondents were not aware of the Construction and Demolition or Asphalt Shingles Recycling pilot projects at the landfill. In regard to general comments regarding the recycling plan, one resident stated, “*We need to be proactive in recycling.*” Another resident said, “*I don’t want a recycling plant in my backyard. We have enough traffic going up and down 1660.*” Other comments encouraged the landfill to build a gas to energy plant as soon as possible. Several respondents provided suggestions regarding the types of materials picked up at their houses for residential recycling including adding cardboard to the collection, and providing the ability for single stream recycling. Several respondents said the county should be more proactive in advertising the recycling drop-off center. Another respondent said there should be no charge for brush, but charge for the mulch to encourage people not to drop brush off at the side of the road.

Site Development Plan

Eighty-five (85) percent of the respondents were very supportive or somewhat supportive of improving safety and traffic flow at the landfill and recycling drop-off center.

Nearly 68 percent of the respondents selected the Eco park theme with the native stone columns as the entrance design they liked best.



Sixty-six (66) percent of the respondents wanted an eco/education facility at the old house in the southeast corner of the landfill. Several respondents were not in favor of restoring the house. One respondent stated, “*I would not be in favor of restoring the house.*” Another respondent stated, “*Sell it and move it.*”

In regard to the 1,000-foot buffer area, the two most popular options were creating an Eco Business Park to attract new green businesses, and using the buffer area as green space. Community gardens and a wildlife park with hiking trails were also very popular choices. Other functions included a community athletic facility. Survey respondents were supportive of vegetable gardens, flower gardens and butterfly gardens. An herb

garden, native tree farm, Christmas tree farm and teaching gardens were also mentioned as possibilities.

Other comments received included:

“I think a recycling transfer station on the west side of the County would be advantageous.”

“Expedite the plan.”

“I really like the idea of incorporating all three features eco park, gardens and restoration.”

“Build berms where appropriate.”

“Master plan needs more details and how are you going to pay for it.”

“How about some trees, shrubs or wild flowers similar to some of the landscaping the state has done on the toll roads. At least block the view of the buzzards, gulls and crows feeding on the site.”

Appendix

I. Open House Materials

- Fact Sheet
- Press Release
- Comment Card
- Survey
- Thank you letter
- Display Boards
- Presentation

II. Media Coverage

III. Open House Sign-in Sheet

IV. Full survey Results

V. Written Comments from the Open House

VI. Additional Comments received from publicinformation@wilco.org