

Siting a New South County Recycling and Transfer Station

To Replace the Algona Transfer Station



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the purpose of a transfer station?

A transfer station is an intermediary site where many small loads of garbage and recyclables are consolidated into fewer larger loads before being transported to a disposal site or to processing facilities. Garbage and recyclables are brought to transfer stations by commercial garbage haulers and by the public. In King County, garbage is transported from transfer stations to the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill in Maple Valley. Recyclable materials are transported to processing facilities throughout the region. King County operates eight transfer stations and two drop box facilities that are geographically dispersed throughout the county and provide convenient access for the communities they serve.

2. Why is a new South County Recycling and Transfer Station being considered?

In 2007, the King County Council adopted the *Solid Waste Transfer and Waste Management Plan*. That Plan documents the need for new transfer stations in King County to replace outdated and inefficient stations such as Algona. The Plan was the result of work done by an advisory committee comprising representatives from cities that are part of the County's solid waste management system.

The Algona Transfer Station was built in the mid-1960s and lacks many key features of a modern recycling and solid waste facility. A new south county facility would provide the following features:

- Room to offer recycling services for materials such as yard waste, wood, appliances and scrap metal
- Room to install trash compactors to accurately and efficiently load the collected garbage, thereby reducing the number of trucks hauling garbage from the recycling and transfer station to the landfill by as much as 30 percent
- Adequate space for customer vehicles on-site
- An enclosed transfer building, which contains noise, odor and dust

The new facility would continue to serve the residents and businesses in and around the cities of Algona, Auburn, Federal Way and Pacific.

3. Has King County evaluated the environmental impacts of this project?

Yes. In accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the King County Solid Waste Division issued a *Final Environmental Impact Statement* (Final EIS) on September 20, 2016. The Final EIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of siting, constructing and operating a new recycling and transfer station associated with each alternative. It covers aspects of the built and natural environment including, but not limited to, the following areas: earth, air, water, plants, animals, energy, natural resources, environmental health, land use, transportation, public services, and utilities.

Comments that were received from agencies, Tribes, and members of the public on the draft EIS and responses to those comments are included in the Final EIS.

4. What sites were considered in the Final EIS?

The two action alternatives considered in the Final EIS are properties located at:

- 901 C Street SW, Auburn 98001
- 35101 West Valley Highway S., Algona 98001 (next to the existing Algona station)

A no action alternative that would retain the existing Algona Transfer Station at 35315 W. Valley Highway S., Algona was also considered.

5. What type of measures would be used to mitigate for environmental impacts?

While it is too early to tell which mitigation measures will be implemented for a south county facility, examples of past mitigation have included:

- 1) Replanting of disturbed perimeter areas with native trees and shrubs
- 2) Stream and wetland restoration and enhancements
- 3) Sustainable building design for transfer building and other structures
- 4) Enhanced aesthetics – selection of materials and colors compatible with surrounding areas
- 5) Street, sidewalk and walking path improvements
- 6) Road improvements as needed

6. Is there a public comment period on the Final EIS?

In accordance with SEPA, there is no public comment period following the issuance of a Final EIS. However, there is an appeal process for those who wish to appeal the adequacy of the Final EIS.

7. Did anyone file an appeal of the Final EIS?

Yes. The City of Algona filed a Notice of Appeal regarding the adequacy of the Final EIS, however the City and the County have requested that the hearing dates be extended for 60 days (until about mid-May), to allow time to negotiate an agreement that addresses project development and mitigation. This agreement would resolve the City's pending EIS appeal before the Hearing Examiner. At this time, the parties have reached tentative agreement, but the agreement has not yet been approved by the respective City and County councils.

8. When will King County make a siting decision?

King County made a siting decision in February 2017. The County selected the site at 35101 West Valley Highway South, next to the existing Algona Transfer Station, as the location for the new facility which will serve south county residents and businesses for years to come.

9. How much will the new station cost and who will pay for it?

The preliminary total project budget is approximately \$100 million. This includes property acquisition, environmental review, site development, permitting, design, and construction for a facility that is expected to last about 50 years.

All King County residents and businesses (excluding those in Seattle and Milton) that generate garbage pay for facility improvements through their monthly garbage bills and fees when they use a County transfer station. Part of those fees pay for long-term bonds that cover the costs to upgrade or build facilities. Property taxes will not be used to pay for the cost of building or maintaining this new facility.

10. Will disposal fees go up to pay for this new facility?

Yes, disposal fees will increase to pay for the cost of this new facility and the projected monthly cost for the average single family household would be approximately forty cents per month.

11. When would construction start?

Construction is anticipated to start in 2020 and last approximately two years.

12. How can I stay informed about this project?

Visit the project website <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/facilities/algona/index.asp> and sign up for updates.

King County Solid Waste Division www.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste, 206-477-4466, TTY Relay: 711
Alternate formats available