



**King County**

**Reagan Dunn**

Councilmember, District 9

**Metropolitan King County Council**

June 7, 2021

Jim Chan  
Division Director for Permitting  
Department of Local Services Permitting Division  
35030 SE Douglas St., Ste. 210  
Snoqualmie, WA 98065

Dear Director Chan:

I am writing to raise a matter of urgent concern to the residents of Renton, Maple Valley, and surrounding unincorporated areas, including the communities of Fairwood, the East Renton Highlands, and Hobart. As you are aware, King County's Permitting Division is approaching a decision regarding Lakeside Industries' applications to build an asphalt plant on its property along SR 169 and across the street from the Cedar River. I am writing you as a final plea to consider the environmental damage and burden to the local community that a decision by King County to approve permits COMM18-0014 and SHOR18-0032 would cause.

As you may recall, I was successful in the unprecedented action of implementing a moratorium I drafted to stop the consideration of this asphalt plant. My legislation sponsoring the moratorium was, in fact, approved by the full King County Council. Following that moratorium's expiration, I even introduced a second moratorium for a vote of the Council which tragically failed in a closely divided vote. I have held numerous town halls where dozens of people communicated their concerns for the use of this industrial site to your office; I have written letters opposing this permit; made dozens of phone calls questioning the wisdom of this permit application; and have even stood on SR 169 with other members of the community picketing the use of this site as an asphalt plant, a shockingly bad example of land use policy.

At two recent town hall events for residents of the Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River and the Fairwood community service areas, it became apparent to me that the Permitting Division is anticipating approving the permits for the asphalt plant. I cannot emphasize enough that this would be a negligent and unjust outcome.

If you proceed with approving this permit, it would be an extremely poor decision of the executive branch of government, and its legacy would be traced back to your office forever. Approving a permit for an industrial use in the rural area just feet away from the Cedar River, at the gateway to Maple Valley and other south County cities is a mistake of monumental proportions—one that is out of compliance with King County's own growth management policy to preserve rural character and that flatly betrays the County's central value of respecting and protecting our environment. It is worth

considering that residents of Renton, Maple Valley, Fairwood, the East Renton Highlands, and Hobart have made it abundantly clear that an asphalt plant is an unwelcome intrusion. A petition opposing the plant, created by Citizens to Stop the SR 169 Asphalt plant, has attracted over 9,000 signatures. It's not difficult to see why there is so much opposition, as the harmful impacts would be numerous and severe.

The damage an asphalt plant could have on the local environment is of grave concern. The parcel that would host the asphalt plant is adjacent to the Cedar River—the drinking water source for 1.4 million people in the region and critical habitat for our vulnerable Chinook, Coho, Sockeye, and Kokanee salmon, as well as trout and other fish. Any contamination of the Cedar River would be disastrous for our struggling salmon populations as well as the safety of the drinking water so many rely on.

Other known impacts of asphalt plants are numerous—including toxic air pollutants, silica dust exposure, high levels of noise, noxious odors, increased traffic, and declining property values. These impacts would surely damage the quality and usability of nearby open space and parks that are cherished in the community. For nearby residents, these impacts will only add to the slew of damages they have already suffered to their health, welfare, and ecosystem for many years due to the proximity of King County's Cedar Hills Regional Landfill, which the County recently decided to expand. As one nearby resident aptly stated—they are “tired of being the dumping grounds for all things toxic and smelly.” But to me, it seems that their words continue to fall on deaf ears. I hope I will be proven wrong with the upcoming Permitting Division decision.

But if, as I suspect, the Permitting Division is going to decide to approve Lakeside Industries' permit application, I can only call on King County to hold the asphalt plant to the highest environmental standards and deepest scrutiny possible. There is too much at stake to be lenient. King County must require Lakeside Industries to shoulder the burden that their presence puts on the local community by imposing maximum mitigation measures—including but not limited to paying for the impact of their facility on infrastructure, for air quality monitoring, dust barriers, and other environmental mitigations.

You should know that, moving forward, I will continue to fight this siting and provide aid to the community in doing so. I hope you will feel the urgency of my requests and hear the pleas of residents of the greater Renton and Maple Valley areas to defend their home. I will make myself available at any time to discuss this issue further with you.

Sincerely,



Reagan Dunn  
Vice Chairman  
Metropolitan King County Council

cc: John Taylor, Director, Department of Local Services  
April Putney, Chief of Staff, King County Executive Office  
Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, King County Executive Office  
Karan Gill, Director of Council Relations, King County Executive Office