

**King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee**  
**April 17, 2015 - 9:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m.**  
**King Street Center 8th Floor Conference Center**

Meeting Minutes

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>King County Staff</u>	<u>Others</u>
April Atwood	Jamey Barker	Doreen Booth, SCA
Jerry Bartlett	Alejandra Calderon	King County Councilmember Lambert
Elly Bunzendahl	Anna Fleming	Ross Marzolf, Councilmember Lambert staff
Joe Casalini	Jeff Gaisford	
Gib Dammann - <i>absent</i>	Beth Humphreys	
Jean Garber	Josh Marx	
Steve Gerritson - <i>excused</i>	Pat McLaughlin	
Stacia Jenkins	Bill Reed	
Kim Kaminski - <i>excused</i>	Diane Yates	
Kevin Kelly - <i>excused</i>		
Sean Kronberg - <i>absent</i>		
Keith Livingston		
Jose Lugo		
Barbara Ristau - <i>excused</i>		
Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann		
Stephen Strader		
Thomas Wray		
Bill Ziegler		

**Approve Meeting Minutes; Review Agenda**

The March SWAC minutes were approved as written.

**Updates**

SWD

The 7<sup>th</sup> floor of King Street Center is being reconfigured over the course of the next few months. SWD staff will be moving in stages to temporary spaces on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, and then eventually back to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Please continue to come to the reception desk on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor.

Work continues in Bellevue to replace the Factoria Transfer Station. At the end of March, the foundation of the new transfer building was more than 50 percent complete, a 1.1 million-gallon underground stormwater vault was nearly finished, and the temporary shoring wall between the existing station and the new site was completed. Site preparation work, including grading and leveling, is partially complete and will continue.

Discussions continue between the county and the City of Algona regarding siting the South County Recycling and Transfer Station.

A revised site development plan is being developed with the intention of extending the useful life of the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill beyond the year 2040. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will also be developed. The division expects to select consultants and execute the contract in July, with a preliminary report coming out in October.

The King County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facilities received a “Leader in Sustainability” award from Call2Recycle for the large number of recyclable batteries and cell phones collected in 2014. The Factoria and Wastemobile facilities received more than 10,000 pounds of recyclable batteries and cell phones that may have otherwise ended up in the garbage and represented a 77 percent increase in pounds collected in 2013.

[Threadcycle](#), a new campaign that educates residents that they can give all their unwanted clothes, shoes, and linens for reuse or recycling, launched on March 1 and will run through June 1. A collaboration between SWD and Seattle Public Utilities, Threadcycle 2015 is a partnership with Big Brothers /Big Sisters of Puget Sound, i:co, Seattle Goodwill, Northwest Center, Salvation Army, Sight Connection, TexGreen, Value Village, and USAgain. Partners promote the campaign message through a wide variety of communications tools.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Compost Days campaign was just completed. This month-long campaign celebrated the 350,000 tons of food, food-soiled paper and yard debris diverted from landfills through curbside composting in 2014 by offering discounts on compost and promoting the “Big Garden Give” compost drive.

SWD’s consultant team Colehour + Cohen received a Totem Award from the Public Relations Society of America for the 2014 Compost Days Big Garden Give campaign. The campaign was also awarded “Best in Show,” beating Boeing, Microsoft, and other major company campaigns. The campaign’s addition of a compost drive to raise compost donations to support community gardens that help feed the hungry was one of the reasons it was a standout success.

#### State legislation

The paint product stewardship bill (HB 1571) did not pass out of the Senate Committee on Energy, Environment and Telecommunications last week, and is effectively dead this year. The bill will be reintroduced next year, first in the Senate.

#### MSWMAC

MSWMAC liaison Stacia Jenkins provided a brief report from the March MSWMAC meeting, which included the following comments:

- Consider replacing “mandatory curbside garbage collection” with “mandatory curbside collection of garbage, recyclables, and compost” in the Transfer Plan Review Part 2 Draft Report
- Consider having a separate queue at the new Factoria Recycling & Transfer station for Bellevue residents

- Concerns about decreased convenience and increased costs for residents
- Concerns about environmental impacts not being a part of the initial analysis
- Include a statement about any potential impacts on the county's emergency response capacity
- Use "discounted" rather than "peak" rates to attract rather than discourage customers
- Consolidate all financial data into one or two tables in final report
- The Roadmap to 70 percent discussion brought up a lot of questions
- Mandatory collection is not the solution to everything

## Other

In recognition of his service and contributions, former SWAC member Craig Lorch will be sent a certificate of appreciation.

### **Draft Transfer Plan Review Report: Presentation/Discussion**

SWD Director Pat D. McLaughlin reviewed highlights from the Transfer Plan Review Part 2 Draft Report. All feedback received during the open comment period will be taken into consideration in the final report. Efforts will be made to translate the technical and data-heavy report into a document that is easily understandable to policy-makers.

The ordinance from council last year directed the division to do a full assessment of alternatives to building a Northeast Recycling & Transfer Station (RTS). The draft report confirms that there are viable alternatives that would allow the system to manage customer transactions.

Three concepts were evaluated and compared to the adopted Transfer Plan:

- Do not build a Northeast RTS
- Do not build a Northeast RTS; redirect commercial customers to balance demand
- Do not build a Northeast RTS; restrict self-haul customers and extend operating hours

Additional mitigation strategies to influence use or improve capacity were applied to these three concepts in multiple combinations in the analysis.

Analysis shows that the Renton and South County transfer stations are not expected to experience constraints that require mitigation. Bow Lake was designed to accommodate additional scales and onsite queuing space and would require such enhancements regardless of the chosen approach.

Factoria and Shoreline would require action to prevent substantial queuing and wait times. For the purpose of analysis, Bow Lake was used as a proxy model rather than Factoria's current design. The primary constraint identified at Factoria was the self-haul tipping floor, which could result in substantial off-site queuing, and longer service times. At Shoreline, the commercial tipping floor and outbound scale were identified as the constraints, resulting in service times doubling, and moderate off-site queuing. Possible mitigation strategies at Factoria include extending operating hours and instituting peak pricing. For Shoreline, adding additional staffing and an outbound scale could mitigate extensive wait times or off site queues. Possible concerns

with these strategies include increased afternoon traffic in Bellevue, equity concerns about peak pricing, and a possible modification of Factoria's conditional use permit.

Other concept and strategy combinations raise different concerns. For example, redirecting commercial haulers means increased costs and service times. Restricting self-haulers means less convenient access and longer service times. Banning materials may lead to concerns about the availability of alternative disposal options.

Given the complexity of the report and the importance of decisions to follow, the public comment period has been extended and now closes on May 6. The larger policy issues to be addressed in the planning process include maximizing landfill capacity, ensuring a sustainable rate model, creating a roadmap to achieve recycling goals, and achieving environmental and service excellence.

Discussion included:

- Bill Ziegler asked to what degree self-haulers have been involved in discussing potential changes to fees and access at transfer stations.
- SWAC Staff Liaison Diane Yates explained that the division has invited and encouraged feedback through its interactions with self-haul customers. Information is also available on the website, and cities and workshop attendees were notified.
- Elly Bunzendahl asked for more information on projected population growth in the Northeast region, and the associated impacts. McLaughlin explained that on a county scale, population growth will be highest in the northeast and south parts of the county. Growth in the northeast is projected to be centered around Redmond. One of the assumptions is that Houghton would close sometime before 2023. The report is intended to inform policy-makers, who will weigh the costs and benefits of various approaches to serve growing demand in the northeast.
- Keith Livingston noted the importance of keeping the lines open for self-haul customers. He also commented that having a different rate structure at just one of the stations may result in confusion.
- Stephen Strader noted that given the high rates of curbside recycling in Bellevue, instituting peak pricing at Factoria may be regarded by some as an additional tax on services, rather than a direct cost increase.
- Jose Lugo inquired into why the scale-to-scale time for self-haul customers at Factoria would increase if a Northeast station is built. McLaughlin responded that the projected increase is derived from population growth and is not a direct impact of building a Northeast station. The projected population growth may require additional mitigation strategies at Factoria, regardless of whether or not a Northeast station is built.
- While appreciating the complexity and understanding the challenge of implementing actions like mandatory collection and material bans, April Atwood underlined the importance of developing a plan that is consistent with the Roadmap to 70 Percent and the county's long-term goals. Keeping in mind the desired long-term direction is important as shorter-term challenges are faced. McLaughlin agreed that as operational and policy decisions are discussed, it is important to keep in mind larger objectives to

ensure actions are not counterproductive. He also noted that transfer stations will play an important role in the solutions.

- Casalini reiterated the importance of evaluating the model according to some guiding principles that were established. He also suggested developing an informational one-page flier to distribute to self-haulers at transfer stations to ensure they know what is being considered. McLaughlin explained that the review included surveying at the transfer stations that engaged the self-haul community. The surveying provided some insightful and statistically significant reference points.
- Casalini pointed out that establishing rates that vary by time and location may cause confusion for small hauling businesses and their customers.
- Casalini also suggested the report be made more reader-friendly.
- McLaughlin explained that all comments – including those from advisory committee meetings, briefings for cities, the Regional Policy Committee, and the Sound Cities Association - will be incorporated in the final report, which will be transmitted to council on June 30 and will have greater clarity around recommendations.
- Livingston pointed out that material bans at transfer stations require enforcement, which involves additional costs.
- Stacia Jenkins noted that one of the positive impacts of not building a Northeast station is the \$97 million in county savings. The report, however, would benefit from a more extensive cost analysis. While some of the costs of investments and improvements are included, many externalized costs are not. For example, some smaller cities may end up needing to look at 100 million dollar transportation investments because of the traffic impacts. The long-term costs of increased carbon emissions from idling trucks should be considered, along with the long-term impacts to communities and businesses. A more thorough cost analysis may lead to the conclusion that it is a better to invest in a transfer station. Jenkins also noted that yard waste bans will require cities to take actions that may take a significant amount of time to implement. In addition, material bans at transfer stations seem to contradict the direction of the 70 percent recycling goal, which implies maximizing resource recovery at transfer stations. It is important to consider the costs that fall to cities and consumers, and not only the county's costs. McLaughlin noted that while calculating extended financial implications is not feasible, the final report will better articulate and consolidate financial data associated with each concept. The report will also illustrate the role the division can play in terms of resource recovery and achieving a 70 percent recycling rate.
- Jerry Bartlett echoed other members' comments that the Transfer Plan must be consistent with the Roadmap to 70 Percent being developed. At transfer stations that have yard waste collection available, yard waste bans should occur sooner rather than later. For transfer stations without capacity to collect yard waste, customers could be directed to local landscaping businesses that accept yard waste in the interim.
- Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann underlined the importance of considering a more holistic approach that addresses resource conservation and climate impacts rather than focusing on managing transactions at transfer stations. He noted that transfer stations are a large capital investment that can lead to debt, potentially limiting the county to the lowest-cost option of landfilling and resulting in an insufficient emphasis on recycling and resource recovery. McLaughlin agreed that the division must address these bigger policy issues and have clarity on the long-term operational roadmap. This

report, however, wasn't intended to answer those questions. When looking at transaction management, a lot of options are available. In the meantime, looking at the big policy issues is very timely.

- Thomas Wray noted that the division should begin thinking through how to implement a monitoring system at transfer stations, which could include penalties or even rejecting loads. McLaughlin pointed out that one of the five guiding principles in creating a Roadmap to 70 Percent is a robust enforcement program. Regardless of the path chosen, enforcement will be key.
- Wray asked if the five cities not signing the Amended and Restated ILA would have an impact. McLaughlin explained that the transactional and tonnage forecasts in the report assume that Bellevue and the four Point Cities will leave the system in 2028. If the cities choose to extend, that would not be problematic in terms of transactions.
- In her [comments](#), Jean Garber made suggestions on how to make the report more accessible, noted that there is no analysis of whether the guiding principles would be met by the concepts and mitigation strategies, and listed adverse impacts of the concepts that don't include building a Northeast station. Lastly, she stated that building a new Northeast station may be the least impacting alternative and the one most consistent with county policies. It could also be the most cost-effective alternative in the long-run, assuming the delay in building it is not severely prolonged.
- McLaughlin noted that a degree of environmental review was included in the draft report, but further and more in-depth analysis would need to be completed in advance of any decision. The goal of the report is to provide substantive information to policy-makers and to inform them about alternatives to the adopted plan.
- Bunzendahl recommended including a very robust infographic at the beginning of the report. This could include a map of the county, existing transfer stations, some of the findings from surveys, average wait times, etc. This could be a helpful way to compare the four concepts assuming each concept measures and articulates the same data. It could also include relative monetary impacts on cities.
- Livingston noted that the base plan included the Northeast station, and that this report is an interesting sidebar to explore alternatives to building it, but the report does not yet have a solid hypothesis and conclusion and as such, cannot serve as a valid planning document.

### **Roadmap to 70% Recycling: Presentation/Discussion**

Garber provided a [detailed report](#) from the last subcommittee meeting on March 20. Schmidt-Pathmann added that it is important to look at the whole system and to include companies that would buy the recyclable materials and make new products in discussions.

Director McLaughlin noted that as discussions progress, he has become increasingly confident in the direction the county is heading and the importance of addressing difficult policy decisions now. Conditions – both environmentally and economically – have changed in our region, and technologies have advanced. The longer decisions are delayed, the more limited and difficult they become. The landfill is the lowest-cost disposal method available that meets the county's environmental expectations, but it has a finite capacity. Extending the life of the landfill through operational practices and diversion of resources is a priority. While the county's recycling rate of 52 percent is admirable in the context of the U.S., data shows that the needle is not moving

and that a different approach is required to achieve a 70 percent recycling rate. The question remains - are we going to approach the challenge in a collaborative way or an individual way? Also, what are the consequences for failure? The system is comprised of the county, private partnerships, city operations, and a variety of customers. When looking at how to optimize the system and ensure it is both environmentally and financially sustainable, it is important to do so with a holistic view of the diverse participants in the system.

SWD Recycling & Environmental Services Manager Jeff Gaisford reviewed the five guiding principles for the roadmap, presented background information on the county's generators and what has been done to date, and asked the committee to consider whether the region should pursue collective or individualized action. Information presented included:

- The top 12 (by weight) recyclable materials disposed at Cedar Hills, the largest of which is food and food-soiled paper. The top 8 are all readily recyclable materials and make up 69 percent of tons disposed at Cedar Hills.
- What has been done to date for each generator type (single-family, multi-family, non-residential, and self-haul) in the categories of collection infrastructure, education, incentives, policies, and product stewardship to achieve a 52 percent recycling rate.
- The amount of diversion needed to reach 70 percent for each generator type, including the needed reduction in tons of each generator's top readily recyclable materials. Analysis shows that focusing solely on readily recyclable materials can have huge impacts.
- A list of collective actions that could be taken to reach 70 percent, sorted from greatest to smallest impact. For example, instituting mandatory separation of food for the non-residential generators is expected to increase the county current recycling rate by 4.5 percent. Instituting mandatory separation of food for single-family generators would translate into a 3.2 percent increase. It is evident that actions targeting all generators must be taken. Numbers were calculated conservatively based on the county's own experience as well as that of other cities.
- An individualized action plan, where cities and the county would implement strategies to increase recycling. By 2020, the city and unincorporated single family recycling rate would need to be at 61 percent. If the rate were less than 61 percent, mandatory separation or incentive-based disposal fees would be pursued.

Discussion included the following comments:

- Casalini noted it is important to distinguish between the authority of the division and that of the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission.
- Gaisford explained that the path chosen will be incorporated into the Comp Plan. Then each city would take action.
- Livingston encouraged the division to consider how to answer the consumer's question of "what's in it for me?" He also cautioned against using "rate" as a recycling term and a cost structure term because of the confusion that may arise.
- Gaisford noted that more consistency in collection across the region would result in less confusion.
- Bunzendahl noted that the listed collective actions directed at self-haul customers would result in a total 3.5 percent increase. While there may be challenges, there may be some steps the division can take immediately to increase recycling at transfer

stations. For example, mandatory separation of yard waste and clean wood could be pursued at stations that have yard waste and clean wood collection available.

- Ziegler added that incentives and education need to be a part of efforts if mandatory separation at transfer stations is instituted.
- Jenkins agreed that it is important for the county to set an example for the cities. It would be beneficial for the county to clearly outline the steps cities should take, along with the tools needed to implement the steps. Tools may include contract, code, and policy language, as well as supporting data to demonstrate why these steps are needed.
- Garber agreed that policy language would be helpful. This could include language for utility sections for city Comp Plans. For multi-family housing, this could include code language that requires developers to work with the hauler and city to make sure there is adequate capacity in units and on the ground to separate materials. Language could be developed through the Regional Code Collaboration.

By unanimous consent, SWAC agreed to extend the meeting by 10 minutes.

- Schmidt-Pathmann commented that if the metals currently disposed at the landfill went to waste-to-energy, nearly all 6 to 6.2 percent of the total waste stream would be recovered. He also noted that it may be worth trying to influence waste stream composition through product manufacturers.
- Casalini suggested a multi-pronged approach in which the county does what it can at transfer stations, and then focuses on supporting the 10 cities with the lowest recycling rates. There may be cities with high recycling rates that become upset and resistant when they are asked to do more.
- Gaisford agreed that there is a lot of variation among cities and the unincorporated area, but one thing everyone has in common for the single family sector is that there is significant room for improvement in food recycling.
- Livingston noted that the more one gets into source separation, the more it costs, and that these costs must be built into the rate structure.
- Bunzendahl suggested moving the fifth key principle listed into first place to emphasize that the division is setting an example first. Bunzendahl also noted a tool for solid waste similar to the “eco cool remodel tool” may be a technological fix versus a huge infrastructure fix.
- Gaisford noted that the website is being revamped based on feedback from focus groups.
- In response to an inquiry, Gaisford explained that incentive strategies include grant dollars, higher disposal fees for garbage versus recyclables or yard waste, giving away kitchen containers and compostable bags, etc.
- Schmidt-Pathmann underlined the importance of measuring the real costs of our resource consumption and waste. It gets consumers’ attention when it goes to people’s wallets. A well-designed infrastructure pays for itself.