

**Solid Waste Interjurisdictional Technical Staff Work Group
Meeting Summary
August 3, 2005
King Street Center**

Meeting Attendees:

City Staff:

Sharon Hlavka – City of Auburn
Alison Bennett – City of Bellevue
Susan Fife-Ferris – City of Bellevue
Rob Van Orsow – City of Federal Way
Elaine Borjeson – City of Kirkland
Nina Rivkin – City of Redmond
Desmond Machuca – City of SeaTac
Frank Iriarte – City of Tukwila
Valarie Jarvi – City of Woodinville

County Staff:

Peggy Dorothy – County Council Staff
Mike Huddleston -County Council Staff
Beth Mountsier – County Council Staff
Geraldine Cole - SWD
Theresa Jennings - SWD
Kevin Kiernan - SWD
Bert Tarrant - SWD
Gemma Alexander - SWD

I. SWD Updates

Engineering Services Manager Kevin Kiernan reported that the division’s consultants have begun data collection for the identification of alternative intermodal sites, as required by Ordinance 14971.

Assistant Division Director Geraldine Cole announced that the division has hired a new economist who will begin work September 1. He has taught environmental economics and worked for the British Columbia Ministry of Finance. He is new to garbage.

II. Export Model

Kiernan said the model looked at discrete questions and was based on information available at the time. The division will analyze new scenarios once they are defined using current data.

Cole said the division has been modeling waste export for ten years, and the model has gone through multiple iterations in that time. As assumptions such as the timing of transfer system upgrades have changed, the model has been adjusted. In every scenario analyzed thus far, early and/or partial export has been shown to be more expensive than using Cedar Hills.

ITSG discussed the importance of clearly defining the question the model must answer. Division Director Theresa Jennings said it is important to focus on which scenarios should be analyzed. Cole said some assumptions must be common to all scenarios, and then various scenarios can be defined within the basic assumptions. ITSG agreed that it would be helpful for the division to provide a list of inputs it needs to run the model for each scenario. The division agreed to provide this in time for ITSG’s August 17 meeting.

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County Council staff Mike Huddleston asked if the division could identify any rate-neutral scenario in which any amount of waste could be exported early. If the answer is no, he asked how close an early export scenario could get to being rate neutral.

The division agreed to provide copies of the export model on disks to anyone who requested it, with the caveat that they understand this model is quite large and complex, and is not designed for easy use.

ITSG discussed the possibility that the private sector has the capacity to initiate early export, and considered the difficulties involved in obtaining information about private capacity.

Kiernan presented a table illustrating the division's budget, and pointed out elements of the budget that would be affected by early waste export. Most operating costs would be unaffected, except for equipment operator staffing and disposal costs. The division has a total of 407 employees. If 25% of the system tonnage were exported, roughly 6 of the 24 equipment operator positions could be eliminated, leaving 401 employees. Disposal costs would increase.

ITSG discussed the issue of reserve funds. Currently, about \$9/ton of the tipping fee goes into reserve funds. The division currently pays into multiple reserves, including federally mandated reserves for landfill closure and post-closure maintenance, as well as policy reserves for equipment and new area development at the landfill. As long as the landfill remains open, the division must pay into the closure and post-closure reserves. After the landfill closes, all costs will be covered by the post-closure maintenance fund.

Other significant variables relate to debt funding for capital projects. So far, the division has operated on the assumption that all debts will be paid off by the time of Cedar Hills closure. The combined savings from elimination of debt service and landfill reserve contributions would offset much of the expected increase in disposal costs at the time of export.

III. Report Four Assumptions

Landfill Capacity Assumptions

ITSG agreed assumption #11 should be moved to the end of the section, becoming #13.

ITSG approved by consensus to forward the Landfill Capacity Assumptions as amended to MSWMAC for their August 12 meeting. The division will highlight that #9 relating to early export is subject to change following further analysis.

Waste Stream Assumptions

ITSG agreed to the following changes to the Waste Stream Assumptions:

- The second assumption should be first, and should read, “The system will need capacity for approximately one million tons/year, and the division will develop annual tonnage forecasts for disposal and recycling streams through the 20 year planning horizon based on forecasts of population growth, annexations, regional economy and recycling rates.
- Add “Waste reduction and recycling will continue to be the top strategies for managing solid waste per the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan and state law,” as #2.
- Replace #3 with, “The CDL waste stream, currently __ tons per year, is currently managed separately from MMSW under 10-year contracts with private companies. The division plans to continue to keep CDL waste out of the King County solid waste system through the planning horizon.”
- Add #4, “Yard waste, projected to be __ tons/year, is currently and will continue to be managed by the private sector throughout the planning horizon.”
- Add #5, “Food waste, projected to be __ tons/year, will be removed from the MMSW stream and managed by the private sector over the planning horizon.”
- Add #6, “Vactor waste, at __ tons/year, is currently managed separately from the MMSW stream and requires monitoring to determine long term projections.”
- Amended from the original #1, #7 will read, “Annexations will not affect the King County’s solid waste system tonnage except the annexation of White Center into the City of Seattle by 2012 per the Growth Management Act, which will remove __ tons.”

ITSG approved by consensus to forward the Waste Stream Assumptions as amended to MSWMAC for their August 12 meeting.

ITSG agreed to add place holders for self-haul and gap-service related assumptions to the Transport Assumptions section.

IV. Next Steps

ITSG agreed to meet again on Wednesday, August 17 in Bellevue from 10-12 in order to complete the assumptions.