

**Solid Waste Interjurisdictional Technical Staff Work Group**  
**Meeting and Governance Discussion Summary**  
**October 24, 2006**  
**King Street Center**

**Meeting Attendees:**

City Staff:

Sharon Hlavka – City of Auburn  
Tom Spille – City of Bellevue  
Debbie Anspaugh – City of Bothell  
Rob Van Orsow – City of Federal Way  
Elaine Borjeson – City of Kirkland  
Nina Rivkin – City of Redmond  
Jerome Jin – City of Redmond  
Linda Knight – City of Renton  
Amy Ensminger – City of Woodinville

County Staff:

Beth Mountsier – Council Staff  
Mark Buscher - SWD  
Diane Yates – SWD  
Gemma Alexander - SWD  
Jeff Gaisford – SWD  
Jane Gateley – SWD  
Josh Marx – SWD  
Kevin Kiernan - SWD  
Sandra Matteson - SWD

**I. Review Agenda and Finalize Notes**

The draft October 3<sup>rd</sup> minutes were unanimously approved.

**II. Updates**

Copies of the revised Comp Plan schedule are available. Comments from MSWMAC and SWAC have been incorporated.

**III. WRR Milestone Report**

ITSG reviewed the draft outline. The division noted that the first section deals with legal definitions of recycling and related terms. These definitions have practical significance because there is some question whether waste materials used as hog fuel or alternative daily cover at the landfill should be considered to have been recycled. Historical changes in the materials that can be recycled would be addressed in Section 3. ITSG discussed whether materials that have traditionally been recycled outside of the municipal solid waste stream, such as concrete and auto bodies, should be included in the recycling rate. Several members of ITSG commented that the recycling rate should be a measure of the region's progress towards achieving its recycling goal and extending the life of the landfill. Members agreed it is important to be clear when communicating about recycling, because recycling rates are often used for comparison between jurisdictions that may not include the same materials in their calculations.

Tom Spille of Bellevue said that while he agrees with the concept of Zero Waste as a mission, the term does not work. He indicated it is difficult to explain to policy makers and the general public. Rivkin agreed, saying that the term carries connotations that do not encourage support of the proposed improvements to the transfer system.

Spille said that Bellevue would like to eliminate the overall numeric goal in favor of commodity and sector-based goals that are achievable within the Comp Plan cycle. He said that a single, overall goal masks both the success of single family recycling and the

failure to achieve recycling goals in the commercial sector. In addition, the existing per capita disposal goal is useful as an indicator, but is not a good goal.

ITSG members noted that multifamily and commercial recycling programs are likely to be key targets for improvement during this Comp Plan cycle. These sectors will each require specific strategies, but are very difficult to track separately, especially as mixed use development becomes more common. Buscher commented that there are two issues to address relative to multifamily and commercial recycling. First, how should resources be utilized to increase recycling service to these sectors, and second, how can the results be measured?

ITSG generally agreed that more specific goals would encourage more aggressive recycling by presenting clear program priorities. Some members felt that specific goals should be in addition to, rather than instead of, an overall goal. Division staff Josh Marx said the City of Seattle has set commodity goals which it uses to calculate an overall goal.

Council staff Beth Mountsier commented that elected officials are interested in a pragmatic approach to goal-setting. They want to know what short and long term savings will be generated by aggressive recycling.

ITSG agreed by consensus that the milestone report should focus on materials and sectors, rather than packaged alternatives. Rivkin suggested the description of the status quo should be included, not as an option, but to illustrate that if nothing changes, current recycling rates will not be maintained.

ITSG members suggested describing materials and sectors initiatives that can be added to the status quo, their intent and expected outcomes. Linda Knight of Renton commented that the report should remain broad enough to allow for future innovation, without locking the region into using only the strategies that have already been identified. ITSG agreed that the Comp Plan must be directional with being directive.

ITSG discussed the balance between independence and uniformity among the cities. Many innovations in recycling have resulted from independent pilot programs. However, the biggest changes in recycling have resulted from collective action. Members agreed that sometimes a prescriptive approach is appropriate, as when the 1989 Comp Plan called for curbside recycling. The ITSG/MSWMAC process has created the opportunity for such a step to be a collective decision rather than one imposed by the county.

Jerome Jin of Redmond commented that specific strategies may not be universally applicable, given the wide variety of existing conditions among the cities.

Rivkin asked to see city recycling data again.

Gaisford said that cities' curbside recycling programs tend to fall into a few groups; those with higher recycling rates and those with lower recycling rates. Several years ago, a consultant analyzed the factors that help to explain the different recycling levels.

ITSG agreed that waste reduction should be one of the terms defined in Section 1, and a discussion of it should be included in the section on strategies. Knight added that product stewardship should also part of the discussion. She said that it is important to keep asking the question, “What should the public sector be responsible for?”

The division confirmed that bottle bills and bag taxes significantly impact recycling of those products.

Hlavka noted that the outline does not provide the criteria that will be used to select strategies in the Comp Plan.

ITSG discussed the connection between hauling contracts and recycling rates. Contract terms such as which materials are included in curbside recycling programs, and whether commercial recycling is included in the contract, can improve recycling rates.

In addition to the Comp Plan informing cities’ contracts, cities informally share information about contract negotiations. The division has provided a notebook with contract information, as well as copies of recent contracts to any city that is negotiating a new hauling contract.

ITSG agreed that a revised version of the outline should be reviewed before the outline proceeds to MSWAC. Because there is not enough time for this to happen before MSWAC’s November meeting, the outline will have to be removed from MSWAC’s agenda. MSWAC may decide to meet at its regular time to caucus on governance issues instead of meeting at 11 as previously planned.

ITSG agreed that the revised outline does not need to be annotated for MSWAC. A simple outline will be easier to read, and will encourage more discussion than one that is crowded with notes.

## **VII. Next Steps**

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 25 from 10-12, and will continue the cities’ caucus on ILA issues.