

Transfer Plan Review Part 2

Advisory Committee Meeting Summary
September 26, 2014

MSWMAC members present	
Alison Bennett	Bellevue
Chris Searcy	Enumclaw
Rob Van Orsow	Federal Way
John MacGillivray	Kirkland
Mary Jane Goss	Lake Forest Park
Nina Rivkin	Redmond
Linda Knight	Renton
Chris Eggen – Chair	Shoreline
Paula Waters	Woodinville
SWAC members present	
Jean Garber – Chair	
Kim Kaminski	
Keith Livingston	
Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann	

King County staff present
Linda Bremer
Beth Humphreys
Lisa Huntley
Kevin Kiernan
Thea Severn
Diane Yates
Others present
Doreen Booth, Sound Cities Association

Chris Eggen, MSWMAC Chair, convened the meeting.

Review of August 15 Meeting Summary

Rob Van Orsow stated that an important interaction from the last meeting had been left out of the minutes. He thought that it was important to capture the conversation between Assistant Director Kevin Kiernan and Alison Bennett regarding equity. The brief conversation was in response to a question about whether Factoria would have to be bigger if there was no new Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station. Bennett remarked that there would have to be new permits if there was a change.

Rather than changing the meeting summary from August 15, it was decided that the discussion about the conversation would be reflected in the current minutes.

Questions:

Q: Linda knight asked if the glossary that Jean Garber had requested at the last meeting was for the report itself or if it would be available as we move forward with the discussion?

A: Garber said that she meant it to be for the report.

Comments:

- Knight said that the glossary would be helpful because some people define regional equity as X, and some as Y. Kiernan noted that the division did insert some things in the August 15 meeting summary to clarify what was meant – for instance the text from the King County ordinance regarding regional equity was added.
- Thea Severn, Planning and Communications Manager, said that she has heard regional equity defined by both impact and by service.
- Knight said that she had heard it used as being too many public facilities in one jurisdiction.

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- Eggen noted that staff has explained what they meant and that committee members should request clarification if they are confused.
- Eggen concluded the discussion by stating that he is considering the meeting summary approved by consensus.

Review of Identified Questions and Data to be Collected

Kiernan explained the handout titled [Transfer Station Study: Data Elements](#). He said that the division had collected questions that need to be answered during this review of the Transfer Plan and then identified what data we will need to answer the questions. He asked committee members to please let us know if there are other questions that we should be asking.

Severn went through the handout and summarized each question. There was a discussion after each question was explained.

Questions:

Q: On question #1, Keith Livingston asked whether the division was looking at configuration changes to a flat floor based on an existing flat floor or a new one.

A: Factoria will be the first King County transfer station with a flat floor. This floor will give more flexibility to configure the tipping area.

Q: Nina Rivkin asked why doesn't Shoreline have a flat floor?

A: At the time that Shoreline was built, the division wasn't confident that it was the right choice. During the last several years, the division has visited and researched other facilities using a flat floor and is now convinced that it will provide the best flexibility and efficiency on the tipping floor.

Q: Eggen said that he is not clear how redirecting commercial traffic to another transfer station will work for haulers. He stated that he couldn't remember whether the costs of dumping are included in the contract or if there is a negotiated price with the city.

A: Knight answered that collection and delivery charges are included in the contract. If there is a policy change and it costs the hauler, then the contract will be renegotiated. For instance, if the division were to redirect commercial traffic from Renton to Bow Lake, the amount of money negotiated in the contract for collection would change. If the disposal fee increases, it is considered a pass through and the contract does not have to be renegotiated. John MacGillivray added that in Kirkland's contract, the negotiated costs are based on the distances from the geographic center of the city. Kiernan added that the division will be talking to the haulers to understand how redirecting commercial trucks would impact them and their contracts with cities.

Q: Jean Garber asked about the Puget Sound Regional Council's demographic data. Where are the population centroids going to be?

A: The division will be looking at the census data to reflect the population centers.

Q: Bennett asked if when we talk about Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) does it include all impacts, including regional equity.

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A: When talking about ESJ, the division is specifically talking about impacts to communities that are identified by such things as ethnicity or race, languages spoken, and income.

Q: MacGillivray asked how we would create a model with so many different inputs.

A: The division has a consultant working on the model. We are now waiting for the data to be compiled before we can start on further analysis.

Q: Mary Jane Goss asked what the priorities are of the lines that are drawn regarding ESJ?

A: ESJ is an Executive and County Council priority. Projects and programs need to evaluate ESJ impacts, but there is no set prioritization.

Q: Goss asked what the radius of the traffic study will be.

A: The traffic study will look at the intersections around the stations and what the probable routes that people will take to the different stations will be. Because traffic is heavy in general, however, the additional traffic from the transfer stations is not expected to contribute significantly.

Q: Following question #5 in the handout, Bennett asked if only self-haulers can use the Cedar Falls Dropbox.

A: There is a one ton weight restriction at Cedar Falls and only self-haulers can use it. There is one scale operator working at Cedar Falls.

Q: Rivkin asked if the division will be looking at population data and who would be using any proposed drop box facility.

A: The division is collecting information about where people are coming from in the on-site surveying that is being done. If we find that many people that use the transfer stations are coming from the more rural areas, it will indicate whether or not a drop box facility might be necessary.

Q: Eggen asked if the division would rent land for a drop box and if the division would be subject to County permits.

A: If the decision is made to move forward with a drop box, it would require a siting process, although the required amount of land would be smaller.

Q: After question #8, Livingston asked if the division implemented higher fees, would we expect illegal dumping to go up as well.

A: The division has not observed an increase in dumping following rate increases.

Q: In response to question #9, Eggen asked if the flexible pricing would be for self-haul only.

A: This is still being analyzed. The division's economist is looking at a number of factors including price elasticity and peak pricing.

Q: Question #10 prompted MacGillivray to ask if King County has the ability to direct cities to have mandatory collection.

A: Mandatory collection could be included in the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; through the Interlocal Agreements, cities have agreed to abide by the adopted Comp Plan.

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Q: Goss asked if the division is asking people their age when doing the survey.

A: The division is not asking for this information.

Note: After the meeting, the division checked if this information was available on the census maps, but it is not.

Q: In response to question #11, Philipp Schmidt Pathmann asked how customers would know if the hours at certain transfer stations were extended?

A: The website has the hours posted. Also people call for the information. We have about 130,000 unique web hits each quarter on the transfer station web pages. In the past, Factoria had extended hours, but very few self-haul customers used the station during the extended hours.

Q: During the discussion of question #12, Livingston asked about whether or not there was a cut-off time for customers to be admitted to a station (i.e., do customers have to be in the station by 4:45 if the station closes at 5?)

A: No, if closing time is at 5, customers are admitted until then. They are encouraged to unload quickly, but staff is scheduled to be at the stations after the gates are closed.

Q: In response to question #13, Eggen asked what the minimum fee is tied to?

A: The minimum fee is for loads of 320 pounds or less. The minimum fee also includes the taxes and local Hazardous Waste Management Program fee, and is then rounded up to the nearest 25 cents.

Q: Eggen asked if the scale operator estimates the weight of the load.

A: No. Sedans are not weighed and are charged the minimum fee. All other vehicles are weighed.

Q: Van Orsow asked if self-haulers were subsidized. What would it do to the overall rate if you eliminated self-haul?

A: This depends on the way costs are calculated. If stations were not required to handle self-haul traffic, construction costs would be about 15% less and operating costs would be about 13% less. However, self-haul transactions bring in more than 15% of transfer station revenue.

Q: In response to question #17 regarding changing the regional direct rate, Knight asked if it was still a subsidized rate.

A: It is no longer a subsidized rate. The regional direct rate is a rate for commercial haulers when they use their own transfer stations to consolidate loads, and then haul transfer trailers directly to Cedar Hills. Most of the loads that previously came regional direct now go to the Bow Lake Transfer Station, so it is not likely that a lower regional direct fee would remove commercial loads from the Factoria Transfer Station. Since the rate changed, most of the commercial haulers use King County transfer stations and have repurposed their private transfer stations for other uses. It may be that there is not the capacity anymore to accommodate regional direct loads. Rivkin stated that she thought it would be important to ask the haulers if they would use a lower regional direct rate if there was one.

Q: Asking about question #18 regarding curbside collection of bulky waste, Knight wondered if the division was only looking at UTC regulated haulers or were we also considering private collectors such as Got Junk?

A: Yes, the division is looking at both types of haulers and at price elasticity.

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Q: Van Orsow asked how a city would subsidize the costs of curbside bulky waste collection.

A: The division would look at self-haul fees and attempt to even out the costs, recognizing that if one fee is lowered, another might have to go up.

Q: Schmidt-Pathmann asked if the division knows how many loads with bulky wastes are coming in.

A: The waste characterization study tells us what type of material is being brought in – furniture, metal, etc. – but does not tell us how many loads contain those materials.

Q: Livingston asked if we should be considering household hazardous waste in this discussion.

A: Household Hazardous Waste collection is being built into the new Factoria. The division is looking at the number of transactions, how it affects self-haul hours, etc.

Comments:

- Rivkin commented on questions #1 that ESJ is three dimensional. It is important not to look at things in silos. Will need to be balanced – the flip side of impacts is the cost impacts. Will need to figure out how to make it fit together in an equitable way.
- Eggen stated that the division should also consider the effect of mandatory collection when considering redirecting commercial trucks (questions #1 and 10).
- Bennett said that when the division looks at costs and trade-offs, we should also be looking at the mitigation costs.
- Livingston stated that this is a strategic analysis of the system. We need to ultimately determine what the system needs, then we can balance the equity issues.
- Commenting on question #5, Rivkin stated that as a rural resident, she would like a drop box. She said that she does not go to the urban stations.
- Commenting on question #6, Rivkin suggested that the division contact the King County Transit Division regarding their pilot program for park and ride facilities. She said that they are trying out an application that lets people see if there are available parking spaces.
- Question #8 prompted Mary Jane Goss to comment that the division should be looking at housing types. Apartments sometimes restrict moving times and could adversely impact certain populations.
- Responding to question #10, Rivkin said that the perception is that we would get certain results by implementing mandatory collection. She stated that we really need to see data before reaching any conclusions.
- Joan Nelson stated that the City of Auburn has mandatory collection, but a recently annexed area doesn't have mandatory collection.

Traffic and Service Time Study

Planning and Communications Program Analyst Lisa Huntley gave a presentation on the Traffic and Service Time Study that is being conducted at the Shoreline, Houghton, Factoria, Renton, and Bow Lake Transfer Stations (see [handout](#)).

Questions:

Q: Livingston asked what is the duration of the study?

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A: Information was collected at different times throughout the month of September. The timing of the study is driven by the time that we have available to us. Patterns are fairly consistent on an annual basis, so we are confident that we are getting a representative sampling.

Q: Rivkin asked if the division would be doing onsite work?

A: Yes, each site will have on-site surveyors there one week day and one weekend day. The collected data will provide us with a snapshot from which to extrapolate.

Q: Livingston asked when we talk about “what if” scenarios, will there be several scenarios?

A: Yes, there will be different concepts to show impacts under a variety of scenarios. Once the model is built, we will be able to apply changes to see how that impacts the different concepts. It is a very visual way to see what happens under various conditions.

Wrap Up

Kiernan wrapped the meeting up by thanking members for their participation and saying that the division wanted to try having the advisory committee meeting at Bow Lake. He said that members should let us know what they thought of this location.