

Meeting Minutes

Van Orsow moved to approve the September MSWAC minutes. Hill seconded. Minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Jerauld shared a couple items.

1. Biosolids PFAS Sampling Study

In 2024, Ecology partnered with 44 wastewater treatment plants statewide to conduct voluntary, one-time testing for PFAS in biosolids. The sample group included facilities of varying sizes, upstream dischargers, and regions. Ecology staff worked with plant personnel to collect and analyze biosolids samples for PFAS using EPA method 1633, focusing on PFOS and PFOA — the PFAS compounds currently prioritized by EPA and other states.

You can read the full report, [Assessment of PFAS Levels in Washington State Biosolids](#), or the summary report, [Focus on Assessment of PFAS levels in Washington State Biosolids](#).

2. Single-Use Serviceware Law and Organics Management Video Resources

The Department of Ecology and the Department of Health have worked together to produce short two-to-five-minute educational videos aimed at local health staff and the food businesses (restaurants, grocery stores, etc.) they support within their communities. Local health staff can learn about environmental laws before they do site visits and inspections, and they will know the right person at Ecology to contact if the establishment has questions. Restaurants and food businesses can also use these videos themselves, by learning about how to use the ORCA and BOMA maps, and training staff about the single-use serviceware law.

- i. [The Basics of Washington's Single-Use Serviceware Law](#)
- ii. [Business Organics Management Areas \(BOMA\): What to know + how to use the BOMA Map](#)
- iii. [Organics Recycling Collection Areas \(ORCA\): The basics + How to use the ORCA Map](#)

SWD Updates

Singer provided the SWD update.

Tonnage update

Garbage tonnage through August is on par with last year (563K tons in 2024 vs. 562K tons in 2025). With four months remaining in 2025, we are almost exactly on track with our forecasted annual tonnage for this year.

In our 2024 official forecast, we estimated 840,950 tons for 2025, and we are currently on track to get to 839,830 tons this year. Please note that the Black River (Republic) tons are included in the tonnage.

The recycling tonnage collected and diverted at transfer stations is at 19,000 tons through August.

The chart shows declining tonnage in transfer station recycling, which includes self-haulers' yard waste, clean wood, glass, cardboard, mixed paper, scrap metal, textiles, mattresses, appliances, bicycles, tires, mixed containers, and plastic materials. Self-haul recycling is decreasing, but the downward trend in self-haul tonnage has been even more pronounced for garbage.

While self-haul tons overall have been decreasing, the proportion of self-haul tonnage that is recyclable has slightly increased.

As of August 2021, the percentage of self-haul tons that were recyclable was just over 15%. As of August 2025, 17% of self-haul tons were recyclable materials.

2026 Solid Waste Rate

The King County Council approved the 2026 rate proposal, establishing new solid waste rates that will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2026. SWD provided official notice to cities, haulers, and other interested parties on Sept 30. We will provide outreach to the public on the new rates starting in the middle of October and will continue through the end of the year.

SWD, Councilmembers, and hauler partners worked collaboratively on an amendment to the 2026 rate that helps ensure partners do not unfairly bear the burden of unexpected closures. The amendment allows DNRP to reduce the Regional Direct fee at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill in the event of the temporary, unplanned closure of two or more King County transfer stations.

The reduced fees are not applicable for closures resulting from causes outside of the division's control, like severe weather. A reduced fee will help haulers recoup the costs of extra labor, fuel, and inefficiencies in the event of a significant service disruption requiring haulers to take loads directly to the landfill

SWD recognizes the concerns of our hauler partners, and the challenges cities and haulers have faced this year with system unreliability. One of Singer's top commitments and priorities is to fortify service delivery and restore the reliability of our transfer station system. We are also undertaking a comprehensive review of our rates.

Cedar Hills Regional Landfill community meeting

As part of our commitment to ongoing communication with households living near CHRL, SWD hosts two annual in-person meetings for the public to learn and ask questions about what's going on at CHRL, including current and planned construction projects, environmental monitoring activities, and operational activities.

The next Community Meeting is on Oct. 9 at Maywood Middle School from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

SWD launches "Zero Waste Action Guide"

The Re+ Zero Waste Action Guide is an online resource within Re+ designed to guide individual actions to both minimize landfill waste and emissions that are associated with consumption. Developing this guide has been a partnership between SWD and the Executive Climate Office.

This tool is part of a comprehensive approach to reducing emissions, as outlined in the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan and the 2025 update. The guide is organized into target categories, such as food waste and repair/reuse.

Each target category provides information about King County's efforts and resources, community organizations, and recommended actions individuals can take to reduce their emissions.

We invite you to check out [the guide](#) and share it with your networks.

International Repair Day is Oct. 18

In honor of International Repair Day, I wanted to share a recap of SWD's sponsored repair events.

This year, SWD held nine repair events located throughout King County (Burien, Redmond, Mercer Island, White Center, Skyway, Bellevue, Tukwila, Sammamish and Renton). At these events, 35 skilled fixers successfully repaired and mended 600 items resulting in an estimated 1,000 pounds diverted from landfill. Fixers were able to give diagnosis and advice on

repair for an additional 188 items. When appropriate, events also had in-language support for Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Arabic. The 2025 repair event series has concluded. We will share the 2026 schedule with the Advisory Committees as soon as it is finalized.

Gire extended kudos to SWD for the successful partnership with the haulers on the rate amendment. He appreciated their collaboration and the quick solution that was found.

SWAC Update

No update.

Operations Update

Monteiro and Blum provided an overview of recent disruptions at the transfer stations.

Transfer Station Updates:

- Algona – reopened to commercial on Sept 15; reopened to self-haul on Sept. 22; closed to self-haul as of Oct 7
- Vashon – will be closed to commercial from Nov. 17-Dec. 3 for tipping floor resurfacing; the station will remain open to the public
- Bow Lake – compactor rebuild is delayed until March. We were unsuccessful in coordinating with SSI to get on their November schedule. While this is an unfortunate setback, we don't anticipate a huge impact on the overall timeline, as the necessary work should only take about three to four weeks once started.
- Recruiting for additional truck driver term-limited temporary positions.
 - We are currently in the subject matter expert (SME) review phase, and the candidates are looking promising. We will provide updates as we onboard new hires and clarify the expected impacts on our team's capabilities.

Factoria Tipping Floor Resurfacing and Repairs

1. Why resurfacing and repairs are needed
 - a. Why is resurfacing needed?
 - i. Tipping floors are built with a 'Sacrificial Surface'
 - ii. 2-3" of tipping floor surfaces are reduced over time due to 'garbage juice' (leachate) on the floor and scraping of loaders. Despite adding a rubber lip to the loaders, the equipment continues to damage the floors, which is compounded by the highly chemical-rich environment.
 - iii. Life cycle of a transfer station includes recurring need for floor resurfacing
 - iv. Cadence for resurfacing dependent on frequency/number of tipping loads and residence time of leachate on floors.
 1. We have installed wear indicators at every site to trigger our maintenance process. Once these indicators show wear, our TSOs notify supervisors, who then engage engineers to assess the damage and develop a resurfacing plan.
 - b. Why are repairs needed?
 - i. Transfer station personnel reported cracks on the underside of tipping floor
 1. These were noticed during the 5-day pilot project
 - ii. Follow up inspection and investigation by structural engineer determined structural integrity of the floor had been impacted
 - iii. Safe loading of floor was determined and design for repairing the floor initiated
 - iv. Structural repairs were rolled into the already awarded contract for resurfacing the floors as a change order.

2. Process and schedule
 - a. PHASE 1 (Sept. 22- late Oct.)
 - i. Place Fiber Reinforced Polymer (FRP) on underside of tipping floor (26 days)
 - ii. Clear and clean floor(s) (1 day)
 - b. PHASE 2 (Dec. 1 – Jan. 12)
 - i. Hydro- demo (jetting) of old concrete around rebar (10 days)
 - ii. Concrete placement (5 days)
 - iii. Concrete curing (28 days)
 - c. PHASE 3 (January 13 – February 8)
 - i. Prep, placement, and cure sacrificial surface for tipping floor (27 days)

3. Transfer station impacts (December – Mid February)
 - a. Garbage and recycling will be closed to self-haul customers Monday-Friday. On weekdays, self-haul customers can use nearby Renton and Houghton stations for garbage and recycling services.
 - b. Yard waste will not be accepted at Factoria station throughout this period. Yard waste can be taken to the Shoreline and Bow Lake stations.
 - c. The Factoria station will remain open Monday-Friday for commercial haulers.
 - d. On Saturdays and Sundays, the Factoria station will be open to the public for garbage and recycling services (excluding yard waste). The Factoria station will be closed to commercial hauler traffic over the weekends.
 - e. Household hazardous waste drop-off will remain open, with no service impacts, throughout the project.

Blum shared a couple of slides outlining our external communications plan for this project.

4. Engagement and communication
 - a. External Communication Plan: cities and hauling partners
 - i. On Oct. 2, SWD provided notification about the construction period:
 1. Impacted cities
 2. Council offices
 3. Haulers
 - ii. In mid-October, SWD will provide official Title 10 notices of intent to change operating hours
 - iii. Opportunities for collaboration on message amplification
 - b. External Communication Plan: self-haul customers – *providing information to customers on site is one of our key communications activities*
 - i. At Factoria Recycling & Transfer Station:
 1. Printed materials for scale house operators to guide interactions with customers
 - a. Flyers with resources to redirect customers
 - i. We will have flyers for our scale house operators with resources to redirect customers. We will start handing these out at least two weeks prior to closure to help make repeat customers aware. These flyers will also be available during the closure period if a customer arrives when the station is closed.
 - ii. Renton / Houghton for garbage/recycling and Bow Lake / Shoreline for yard waste
 2. Similar messaging shared with SWD Customer Service to guide phone interactions
 3. Minimum 2 weeks before closure
 - ii. Signage to guide customer traffic and divert during weekdays

1. Roadside before turning into transfer station
 2. At the facility itself, e.g., scale house
 - a. We find these “at-site” strategies to be extremely effective when communicating with customers who make regular trips to the stations.
- c. External Communication Plan: Self-haul customers
- i. Digital and other external:
 1. Updating hours and closure notices on public-facing sites
 - a. Google business hours
 - b. King County websites
 - c. Social media
 - ii. Neighbor mailing list updates (1 month, 2 weeks and day before closures):
 1. Factoria
 2. Houghton and Renton (garbage and recycling)
 3. Bow Lake and Shoreline (yard waste)
 - iii. Media engagement
 1. Partner with "Reporter" newspaper chain reaching Bellevue, Kirkland, Renton, Issaquah, and Redmond with closure notices

You, as our city partners, also have your own channels and know best about how to reach your communities with information. It’s important that we partner together on notifications and Blum would be happy to facilitate connections between your comms team and SWD’s comms team.

Gire opened by thanking the county for the update and for their investment in the project.

Moldver then asked Monteiro about operational best management practices (BMPs), specifically querying if frequent flushing or washing of the surface is done to manage leachate over time and prolong the floor's life. Monteiro confirmed that they hose down the floor, especially on weekends, and focus on directing the runoff into the sewer system. He stressed that their primary goal is to keep the floor clear daily at all sites, acknowledging the work environment is extremely difficult, noting it's even worse at the landfill.

Van Orsow noted that the station's closure seemed unusually long for a retrofit, suggesting the procedure might differ from past SWD practice. He asked whether other transfer stations would require the same lengthy closures and if this new approach is part of a long-term maintenance plan to implement rolling closures that distribute the system impacts over time. Monteiro clarified that they would not close two sites simultaneously and explained that the Factoria closure is unique because it addresses a combination of structural issues and floor wear, unlike their other flat-floor facilities. Crucially, the Factoria floor is suspended, which contributes to its degradation.

Van Orsow followed up by asking if the suspended floor design was causing concrete flexing that led to weakening. Monteiro clarified that flexing isn't the issue. The problem lies with cracks in the bottom layer, which is the structural piece being addressed in the first phase of the work.

Stubbs added that SWD is developing an RFP (Request for Proposals) to hire a consultant for a new Asset Management Plan. This plan will assess the condition of all major equipment and assets, develop a comprehensive maintenance and repair schedule, and evaluate the necessary staffing levels. In direct response to Van Orsow’s concerns, Stubbs confirmed that the plan will incorporate the operational impacts related to the sequencing and timing of major repairs.

Gire stated that it’s important to have proactive, "front-end" maintenance investments to avoid extended, costly closures and impacts later. He thanked the county for providing these operational updates, noting that they help

illustrate that the system is often taken for granted and that the public rarely understands the complexity involved in its management and operation.

Renewable Gas Plant Update

Stubbs and Honaker provided this update.

SWD finalized acquisition of the RNG plant from BEW on Aug. 28. We spent August finalizing the agreements required to operate the gas. SWD entered into agreements with PSE and Williams Pipeline and the pipeline RNG plant began injecting product gas into the pipeline on Monday, 9/28. SWD hired ESI to operate and maintain the plant.

The plant began injecting product gas into the pipeline on Sept. 29.

Milestones

- 8/28 - SWD acquired plant
- 9/15 - Finalized sales agreement and pipeline access agreement with PSE
- 9/22 - Executed operator contract with ESI
- 9/24 - Plan restarted. TSA with BEW was terminated.
- 9/25 - Finalized gas quality agreements with PSE and Williams Pipeline.
- 9/29 - Began injecting product gas into pipeline.
 - This is a huge milestone for SWD. Reaching this point was a complex process involving many people from across the county.

Honaker stated that the immediate focus is maintaining operational continuity, especially within the landfill gas team. We are leveraging strong resources: this is ESI's 16th similar plant, and we have retained much of the knowledgeable former BEW staff. We will ensure close coordination through monthly meetings with SWD and ESI teams, combining external expertise with essential existing knowledge.

We have several key projects underway or scheduled. There are a lot of capital improvements being implemented with the resulting benefits anticipated to start next year. The four-header replacement project is also in progress. Furthermore, the implementation of additional vertical wells is scheduled to begin this spring. We will be working closely with ESI to assess both the environmental impact and the financial benefit these initiatives will bring to SWD

Looking forward

- Integrating landfill gas collection system with plant operations to optimize collection and production
- Standing up Operating Committee with SWD and ESI
- Capital Improvements to maximize ROI
 - Area 8 Closure (underway)
 - 4 Header replacement (underway)
 - Phase 2 vertical well installation (begins Q2 2025)
 - Planning RNG plant capital improvement needs

Gire began by acknowledging that ESI appears poised to bring substantial value to the plant and asked whether the current estimates and projections are on track to achieve a positive net return on the product gas, or if it is still too early to tell.

Honaker responded with a detailed outlook. She stated the plant is currently producing around 112 MMBTU per hour, which translates to approximately \$50,000 per day under the PSE contract. This revenue is primarily driven by the environmental attributes (\$18 per MMBTU) rather than the fluctuating commodity price. Honaker explained that a

second contract is planned later to broker any additional gas volume on the open market, which is where valuable RINS credits will be captured. While it is still too early to finalize the facility's operating costs against this revenue, she affirmed that the team remains on track to meet the conservative estimate of a \$5 million net positive return for the ratepayer after all biennial operating costs are covered. The project continues to be a positive investment for the county, and a new dashboard is currently being built to help monitor performance.

Heubach asked about the relationship with PSE and how customers receive the Renewable Natural Gas (RNG). She understood that the RNG is fed into a main PSE line, meaning customers buying gas from PSE are now receiving some of the landfill gas, and she questioned whether we sell gas directly to customers or if it simply feeds into the pipeline for general distribution. Honaker clarified that a dedicated line carries the gas from the plant to the Williams Northwest Pipeline, where it is injected. Since the RNG molecules are virtually identical to conventional natural gas, they mix within the main feeder line. Later, the PSE South Lateral line draws off that gas. In the past, most of that volume ended up in the nearby Fairwood neighborhood, but Honaker noted she would confirm if that is still the case with PSE. While dispensing gas directly from the station is possible, it is a much more expensive option that would require future consideration.

Stubbs added that cogeneration—where gas is both injected into a pipeline and used to generate electricity on-sites is a common practice at gas-to-energy plants that SWD is actively exploring for its cost-benefit potential. We see a significant opportunity to upgrade, optimize, and modernize the plant's equipment to boost gas production and greatly increase the overall value of this asset. We are very excited about this line of business.

Gire asked whether the investment process will involve different tiers or a collaborative recommendation from ESI, and what the update schedule for the committee would look like. Stubbs responded that he and Honaker are currently developing the business plan for working with ESI and establishing the structure of the Operating Committee. This committee is key, as the contract is designed to facilitate a collaborative relationship between the plant owner and operator, minimizing potential conflicts of interest. Since ESI has extensive experience across many areas of the industry, they can offer significant value to the solid waste system. Stubbs confirmed that he and Honaker are working on a plan to engage ESI, seek their recommendations, and then develop a timeline for plant improvements, a process that will help define their capital program and prioritize future investments.

Honaker emphasized that we are operating the plant with a sharp focus on Return on Investment (ROI), considering both financial and environmental benefits. We are committed to a strong business mindset while maintaining equal focus on environmental stewardship. For RNG, these two goals often align, which makes this such an exciting asset for us to manage. We were particularly impressed that ESI had clear ideas on how to optimize the existing equipment and configuration to maximize this mutual value.

5-Day Pilot Program: Lessons for What's Next

Kim provided this section.

The pilot began on Jan. 13, 2025, with weekend operations suspended to evaluate efficiency gains. Due to persistent capacity constraints and related challenges, it concluded early on April 4, 2025.

Planned vs. Actual

- Planned vs. Actual outcomes, underscoring factors behind early end of the pilot program

Financial impact

- An overview of the costs incurred during the pilot program and the budgetary implications

Looking ahead

- Using pilot insights to strengthen planning and financial recovery strategies

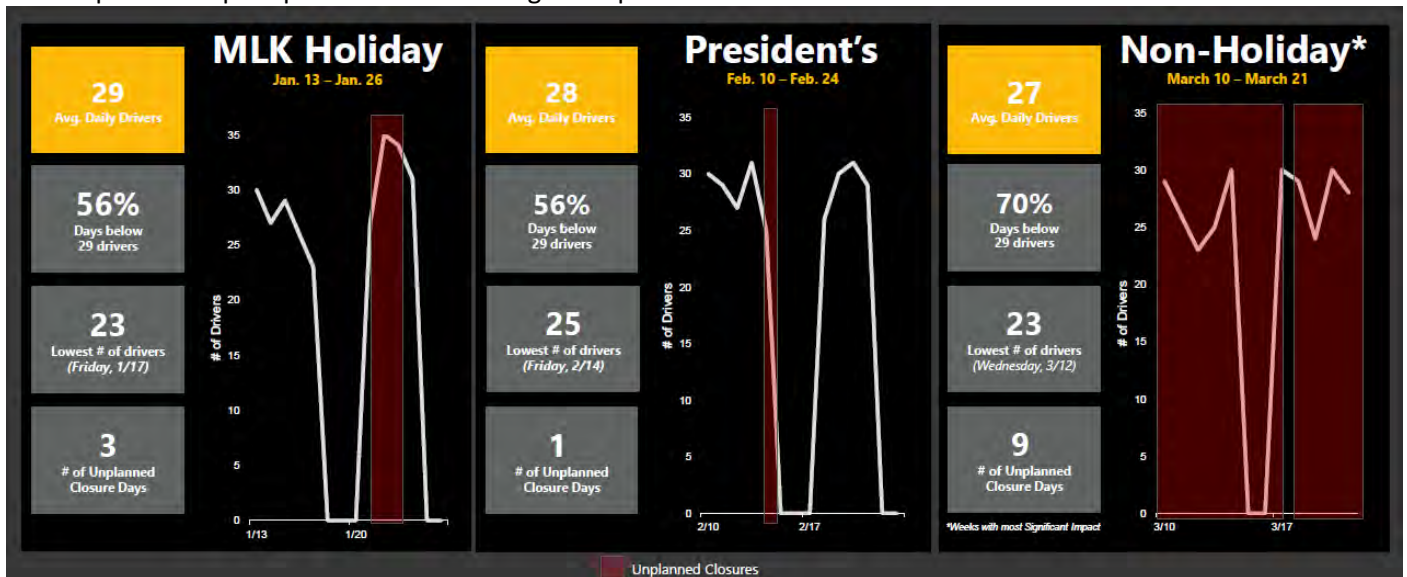
Planned vs. Actual: Understanding variances and contributing factors

PLANNED		ACTUAL
MLK Day Prediction Model was developed with 35 daily drivers as the baseline	➔	Lower than expected driver availability resulted in unplanned interruptions
President's Day Prediction Model was developed with 29 drivers as a baseline	➔	More than half of days faced staffing shortages, with inconsistent compliance compounding operational impact
Staffing challenges persisted; additional planned closures began March 22 with hauler input	➔	No further plans were developed outside of the holiday week
Additional risks such as operational errors and maintenance schedules were not factored into the planning period	➔	Limited margin for error in planning left King County with few options for resolution

Staffing availability trends

- 60% of days per week had fewer than 30 drivers (not counting the weekends and holidays)
- We constantly had to focus on the leftover trash from the previous week instead of the upcoming holidays

Critical periods of pilot performance: staffing vs. unplanned closures



We had one unplanned closure over the President's Day weekend, which taught us an important lesson we'd missed during the MLK holiday.

From March 10-21, we saw nine unplanned days.

Financial impact summary: ~\$2.6M

- Diversion to Black River
 - 10, 139 tons reported as a diversion to Black River during this period which was about \$1.65M
- Labor costs
 - Financial impacts included one-time retention payments to support frontline staffing, ongoing wage adjustments with annual cost implications (excluding overtime), and estimated overtime savings due to reduced staffing this period to about \$921, 130
- Rate adjustment
 - Rebate to the hauling partners on 19, 436 tons diverted to CHRL during capacity challenges if the requested information is received before the deadline at about \$55, 672

Turning setbacks into financial strength

- These measures outlined create a comprehensive system wide framework focused on mitigating future risks and supporting financial recovery by capturing efficiency gains to offset the impacts of the five-day disruption
 - **Smarter scheduling:** ensure driver coverage aligns with tonnage needs, preventing costly gaps during high-demand periods.
 - **Maximize trailer utilization:** reduces underfilled trips and unnecessary hauls, cutting waste and improving cost recovery.
 - **Cross-station coordination:** reduces downtime and lost loads through flexible resource allocation
 - **Recovery protocols:** establish proactive communication with haulers to anticipate emergency tonnage shifts, avoiding last minute disruptions.
 - **Standardize best practices:** driving consistency across stations, streamlining workflows and reducing turnaround times.
 - **Continuous improvement:** create a feedback loop from the pilot program and build long-term resilience where we won't be facing these long-term impacts.

In conclusion, while the pilot was challenging for many involved, it yielded important insights into system resilience, staffing, and communication. These findings will be crucial for informing stronger planning, supporting cost recovery, and strengthening our collaboration with partners moving forward.

If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to Kim at chkim@kingcounty.gov.

Heubach asked for the specific steps we're taking to avoid future disruptions. Her main takeaway was that the schedule change upset drivers, highlighting a failure to gauge the attitudes of labor and drivers. She is now curious about the division's plan to better understand labor sentiment moving forward.

Singer said that upon joining the pilot program late, her first priority was to assess and connect with the drivers. This assessment revealed a critical flaw in the original staffing model: The pilot model was built on the flawed assumption that staffing levels could be kept deliberately low because drivers would reliably volunteer for overtime (OT). However, OT cannot be mandated; it must be voluntary.

This model failed due to a fundamental shift in the current workforce compared to five years ago:

- Employees are prioritizing work-life balance and are not taking as much voluntary overtime as they traditionally have.
- The strategy of purposefully keeping staffing levels low to drive overtime is no longer a sustainable business model.

Adding to the staffing problem, drivers felt that management failed them in several ways:

- They were not communicated with or included in the decision-making process.

- They felt their expertise was not valued, which meant they were less willing to voluntarily help during crunch times (i.e., by taking overtime).

The division is actively revising its staffing and business practices in response to these findings. Singer has tasked Monteiro with conducting a new staffing model analysis, and we are testing a potential new structure by introducing additional Temporary, Limited-Term (TLT) drivers. Crucially, we are now integrating team members into front-end discussions and decisions. As frontline workers, their voices and expertise are invaluable, and we must ensure they feel both heard and valued. The overall disruption was not simply due to "disgruntled" drivers, but rather a multitude of incorrect assumptions made by management.

Van Orsow highlighted that haulers and, by extension, ratepayers were the other severely impacted parties. To maintain service, haulers absorbed a huge volume of extra work, essentially operating their packer trucks as highly inefficient transfer trailers. Despite the obstacles they faced, the level of service they delivered was commendable. He noted that the division partially addressed this by using a rate amendment to compensate them through the regional direct rate—a positive step forward. However, haulers also reported significant financial losses, and he was uncertain if they conveyed these losses to SWD or if a reimbursement discussion was planned. While viewing the flexible regional direct rate as a great first step, Van Orsow believes other mechanisms could optimize the system should this scenario arise again, and he specifically inquired if the division plans to resuscitate this operational approach in the future. Singer replied no.

Moldver highlighted a key missed lesson: The project kickoff caught many cities off guard. Moving forward, it is crucial to include cities early and often. While King County generally maintains good engagement, this specific instance was a miss—possibly due to prior background work with unions. He appreciated the update, noting that the many lessons learned will help us become better county partners. Ultimately, when all stakeholders are on board, they actively help push initiatives that benefit the entire region.

Singer appreciated the specific feedback regarding communication, particularly with the cities, and emphasized the importance of using platforms like this one, as well as SWD's discussions with SWAC, to maintain direct contact. Her goal is to ensure a continuous two-way dialogue. She invited attendees to flag any communication gaps immediately, assuring them that the team will try to address every possible element to keep the lines open. However, recognizing that they might miss something, she encouraged everyone to proactively reach out and connect.

Nelson appreciated the detailed explanation regarding labor issues and inquired whether the division considered implementing mandatory overtime during specific circumstances, noting that other essential services industries utilize it. Singer responded that mandatory overtime is not currently being considered or directly planned. She clarified that any such mandate would require a lengthy negotiation process to implement, stating that while the option is not entirely off the table, it is not an immediate focus.

Comp Plan Draft Chapter 3 Discussion and SEPA Update

Liu and Torpie led this discussion.

The goal is to hand off the Comp Plan chapters to SEPA consultants in a complete state as possible. We want to know what areas you want to tackle and what it could look like. This goal was set to seamlessly create and adopt a Comp Plan that aligns the goals of SWD, ILA cities, and other partners.

We want to focus on language that allows SWD to act – what is the umbrella language that makes key strategies and tactics possible? And consider the costs of potential policy changes.

Chapter 3: Data and Forecasting Changes

- Updated numbers and figures to illustrate latest data

- Added SWD service area demographic data
- Added relevant studies, took out irrelevant studies
- Added language that explains the pivot away from using Ecology recycling data
 - This is a larger change to this chapter

Torpie stated that we are using data from haulers.

The primary reason for the data change is that Ecology no longer reports data using the residential/non-residential split because that classification had become unreliable. Furthermore, the available data had a multi-year lag, though Ecology is currently working to correct this delay. For the comprehensive plan, we prioritized using the most accurate, up-to-date data available.

Another factor impacting data reliability is that Ecology's data is self-reported. While regulated facilities are required to report, the rate is only about 90% compliance. Additionally, the data indicates whether materials originated from the City of Seattle or the general service area.

When we received the 2023 data, we observed significant swings (for example, a 400,000-ton decrease from 2022). Upon following up, Ecology attributed these swings to incorrect self-reporting and specifically recommended using only the combined total tonnage.

When we initially engaged our SEPA consultant, the original assumption was that a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be required. However, after consultation with our legal counsel, we determined that we will move forward with a Supplemental Comprehensive Plan EIS instead. Since the core elements of the plan have not substantially changed, a full EIS is unnecessary.

Gire asked if the division has conducted an exercise to look at past practices and determine the accuracy of previous forecasts versus the lessons learned. Torpie confirmed that the team internally reviews and evaluates historical forecasts against prior years, though no official reports are published. Torpie offered to share the internal evaluation process and the factors that influenced those forecasts if there is interest.

Van Orsow opened by asking about the 400,000 ton swing—specifically, what caused the deviation, and which facilities were responsible for the tonnage. Torpie responded that it was impossible to pinpoint exact facilities, as several of them accept that volume of material. Instead, the team noted a general increase in regional tonnage that corresponded to a 400,000 ton decrease reported by Seattle.

Van Orsow then asked whether the 400,000 tons had been misreported previously or if the current figures were accurate. Torpie suggested the fluctuation was likely specific to this year but emphasized that there is significant variation between the tonnage reported by King County overall and the tonnage reported by the City of Seattle specifically.

Van Orsow found it interesting that Ecology was reportedly advising against using their own numbers. Torpie clarified that Ecology's instruction was to use their data, but to do so carefully, which underscores the need for precision when preparing the comprehensive plan. She confirmed that the division does and will continue to use Ecology data for other analytical purposes.

Van Orsow concluded by requesting that any relevant data be shared offline.

We initially hired our SEPA consultant to conduct a full EIS, but based on advice from our attorneys, we shifted to a Supplemental Comprehensive Plan EIS. Since the plan hasn't undergone substantial changes, there's no reason to complete a full EIS.

Shifting to supplemental Comp Plan EIS

- Builds on the work done in the 2019 EIS
- Puts more focus on environmental impacts of long-term disposal
- Provides the same opportunities to comment and engage
 - It is looking around mid-2026 that we will have our draft supplemental comment period
 - Everyone is allowed to comment and ask questions. This will be identical to how a full EIS process would be conducted.

Van Orsow inquired about the current status of the planning process, specifically noting the discussion about integrating the Long-Term Disposal (LTD) decision. He wanted to know if there was still an intention to negotiate the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) and how that negotiation would align with the LTD decision.

Liu responded regarding the Comprehensive Plan, stating that she is currently reviewing all submitted comments and will address them as adequately as possible, provided they are relevant to the respective chapters. Since the draft is not intended to be a final decision, it will include information on both mass burn and Waste-to-Energy (WEBR) technologies. This ensures readers of the Draft EIS will have necessary references to formulate questions. Liu anticipates having the draft completed by mid-2026. She noted that she was unsure how the ILA incorporation would be managed. Blum added that moving the ILA forward remains a high priority, but they have heard from city partners that a long-term disposal decision must be made before ILAs can be renegotiated or signed.

2026 State Legislation Update

Ockerlander gave this update.

The 2026 legislative session will be a short session (60 days). There have been some updates since our last meeting.

General outlook update:

- Monitoring actions at the federal level
- State revenue forecast \$417M lower than expected for 2025-27, \$477M lower than expected 2027-29.
 - We will continue to monitor this forecast.
- Policy work continues to move forward
- Recycling Reform Act Celebration

Solid waste-related bills expected in 2026:

- EPR for Textiles (building on HB 1420)
- EPR for Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) – incl. vapes
- Improving the End-of-Life Management of Electric Vehicle Batteries (building on HB 1550 / SB 5586)
- Amending Safe Medication Return (Agency Request building on JLARC legislative report)
- Amending the Litter Tax (Agency Request) - *NOT MOVING*
- Increasing Solid Waste Collection Tax (building on HB 2018)
- Deposit-Return System (DRS) for Beverage Containers
- EPR for Mattresses (building on HB 1901)
- EPR for Sharps (building on Safe Sharps Advisory Group)
- Better bag ban

Gire asked if Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for mattresses was moving to the top of the County's priority list. Ockerlander confirmed that both EPR for mattresses and EPR for sharps are now top priorities. She added that the team will begin to set the stage for this legislation over the next couple of legislative sessions, though they don't expect it to pass in the upcoming one.

Heubach commented specifically on EPR for sharps, noting that Renton residents would greatly appreciate it. She has received feedback from residents that there are currently no public drop-off locations for sharps in the area.

2026 MSWAC Workplan and Schedule

Blum gave this update.

Per bylaws, we established the coming year's schedule in October. In 2026, MSWAC will continue to meet the second Wednesday of the month. Everyone will receive Outlook holds.

The process to develop the 2026 work plan will commence in November. The division's goal is to be narrower and more intentional, focusing on topics that are highly engaging and would benefit significantly from the group's input. Blum opened the floor for suggestions, noting attendees could also email ideas directly.

In response, Van Orsow suggested prioritizing updates on the Comprehensive Plan, the Interlocal Agreement (ILA), and the SEPA process, as these will be major focuses for the advisory committees, recommending that more frequent discussions are better.

Gire added that the work plan should include the Organics Management Law (OML) and EPR for packaging, emphasizing the value of hearing directly from state representatives on these items and the importance of meeting critical deadlines. He also stressed sharing OML best practices and lessons learned. Furthermore, Gire challenged the cities to increase their engagement—particularly by getting on camera—to foster mutual learning during this complex implementation phase.

Moldver mentioned that Redmond is currently dealing with confusing variety in cart/container colors (two colors for both garbage and organics) and suggested it would be worthwhile to pursue regional consensus on cart colors for garbage and organics. Gire echoed this sentiment, urging the group to seek harmony in their collaborative work throughout 2026.

Member Comment

No comment.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.