

MSWAC Advisory Committee Meeting

March 11, 2026 – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and King Street Center)

<u>MSWAC Members</u>		<u>King County Staff</u>
Troy Linnell	Algona	Ali Blum, SWD staff
Joan Nelson	Auburn	Shawn Carter, SWD staff
Jon Gire	Bellevue	Alex Chew, SWD staff
Carston Curd	Bothell	Jerome Cruz, Public Health – Seattle & King County
Emily Warnock	Bothell	Theresa Curry Almuti, SWD staff
Rocco Devito	Burien	Kinley Deller, SWD staff
Shellie Bates	Covington	Kristin Elia, SWD staff
Chris Searcy	Enumclaw	Aaron Evanson, SWD staff
Brian Spindor	Enumclaw	Christine Kim, SWD staff
Terrance Mayers	Federal Way	Patty Liu, SWD staff
Rob Van Orsow	Federal Way	Amy Ockerlander, SWD staff
Sam Tarvin	Issaquah	Dave Pierce, SWD staff
Tony Donati	Kent	Rebecca Singer, SWD Director
Jay Arnold	Kirkland	Chris Stubbs, SWD Deputy Director
Stacey Auer	Kirkland	Cailyn Torpie, SWD staff
Kelli Curtis	Kirkland	Isabelle Trujillo, SWD staff
Gena Jain	Kirkland	
Bennett Jonathan	Maple Valley	<u>Guests</u>
Daniel Becker	Mercer Island	Laura Belmont, Sound Cities Association
Alana DeRogatis	Mercer Island	Carolyn Bowie, Dept. of Ecology
Jesse Dunbar	Redmond	Genni Brookshire --
Aaron Moldver	Redmond	Joe Camero, Waste Management
Meara Heubach	Renton	Zach Dugovich, Pacific Public Affairs
John MacGillivray	Renton	Jeanette Jurgensen, Bin There Consulting
Colleen Minion	Tukwila	Kevin Kelly, Waste Management
Genivieve Rubinelli	Sammamish	Han Kirkland, Waste Management
Mason Giem	SeaTac	Linda Lagunas, City of Renton
Sarah Bruemmer	Shoreline	Adam Olen, City of Duvall
Jared Hill	Woodinville	Chris Reigelsperger, Waste Management
		Katie Stickels, Dept. of Ecology
		Hans Van Dusen --
		Wendy Weiker, Republic Services

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Gire called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Gire stated that he received two minor corrections to last month's minutes:

1. Correction to Kevin Kelly's affiliation
2. Correction to Arnold's comments about the regional waste summit

Hill moved to approve the February MSWAC minutes with the two corrections. Becker seconded. Minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Stickels shared two items:

1. Repair x Share Summit: Building a Care Economy

The virtual 2026 Repair x Share Summit is free to attend and will be held Thursday, March 19 – Friday, March 20. The summit will include presentations on community repair and reuse spaces, repair education, Washington's statewide impact calculator, Oregon Metro's innovative grant program, and more. To register, please visit: [Repair x Share Summit 2026: Building a Care Economy](#).

2. Compost Procurement Reports due March 31

Annual compost procurement reports are due by March 31. Any jurisdiction required to have a compost procurement ordinance (CPO) must submit an annual report.

Not sure if your city or county needs to report? Check your county's tab in the [local government workbook](#). The workbook says which jurisdictions need to report and if last year's report is missing.

You can fill out and submit the report through [Secure Access Washington \(SAW\)](#). The report due on March 31 covers activities done in 2025. Head to [Ecology's webpage for frequently asked questions](#) or read the [CPO Reporting Walkthrough](#) for step-by-step instructions on submitting your report.

SWD Updates

Singer provided the SWD update.

Tonnage update

Garbage tonnage through February was slightly above tonnage from last year (132k tons in 2026 vs. 128k tons in 2025).

The recycling tonnage collected and diverted at transfer stations was just below 2,000 tons in January 2026.

Flood debris disposal and debris disposal

I want to reiterate my recognition for the incredible work that's gone into storm clean up from the December flooding events.

Across 10 satellite stations, weekend events at transfer stations, and 45 employees stepping up, we've collected and moved over 800 tons of debris out of communities.

SWD is continuing to provide resources to communities that are continuing to recover from the December flooding events. We've extended free weekend disposal of storm debris, weekends through March 22 at three transfer stations (Bow Lake, Shoreline, and Factoria). SWD will also hold a second weekend popup collection event in Duvall on March 21-22, specifically intended to serve farmers in the Snoqualmie Valley.

Later this afternoon (March 11), SWD is hosting an After-Action Review with City Partners to help identify areas in our collective disaster debris management response that we want to build upon for future incidents and where we want to improve. We encourage you to join us from 3-4 p.m. Reach out to Blum if you need the invite. We will share the lessons learned back with this committee at a future meeting.

Built environment reuse ecosystem workshop

The King County Construction and Demolition (C&D) team collaborated with the Carbon Leadership Forum and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) on a 70-person workshop to map the regional circular economy for building materials on Feb. 12.

The workshop took place at BNBuilders on Elliott Avenue, a fitting example of adaptive reuse of the former Old Spaghetti Factory building.

The evening was an incredible network event attended by leaders from state and local government, deconstruction and salvage business, sustainability nonprofits, green building certifications, architects, engineers and builders.

This group put their minds together to give a physical depiction to the existing interconnections, opportunities and barriers to circularity in our built environment.

The facilitation team is currently processing data collected from this group of experts into a simplified visualization of the state of the network, available to all and editable in future efforts.

Originally planned for 50 attendees, we were amazed at the amazing turnout and enthusiasm. We plan to keep the momentum up through future "Reclaim the Grain" events focused on lumber salvage; supporting inauguration of the Carbon Leadership Forum Circularity Working Group; and network outreach about grant and contract opportunities related to circular lumber in 2026 - 2028.

There are several more meetings and we are excited to see the visual outcomes.

Methane detection and capture at Cedar Hills Regional Landfill

Air regulations require agencies to report and correct areas where landfill methane emissions exceed 500 parts per million (ppm). The Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF) routinely uses equipment called Sniffer Drones to monitor methane levels at the site and ensure that the County is appropriately capturing the methane that is produced as trash decomposes.

During the February sniffer drone flights, CHRLF readings remained well below regulatory limits; in fact, the highest concentration detected was a negligible 11 ppm. This peak reading is remarkably low, underscoring the effectiveness of current containment measures.

These results indicate that landfill gas is being effectively captured and routed to the control system rather than escaping into the atmosphere, even at trace concentrations. This is a significant milestone that demonstrates the exceptional performance of the gas collection system. These outcomes are a direct result of the dedicated efforts of our in-house CHRLF staff, the successful closure of Phase 1 Area 8, and the ongoing, precise balancing of the collection network.

To meet regulatory requirements, we traverse the landfill surface in 25-foot intervals across the entire property to monitor for potential leaks—an effort that amounts to approximately 175–200 miles of manual monitoring every quarter. Over the last three quarters, our in-house compliance monitoring has shown no exceedances of the 500-ppm

regulatory limit. Furthermore, recent drone flights have only identified limited detections within the active cell top deck, an area where foot access is restricted.

Ultimately, these results protect air quality, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, ensure regulatory compliance, and reflect the strong coordination between operations, engineering — particularly the landfill gas (LFG) crew and their management of the gas collection system — as well as utilities (who assist with repairs) and the wastewater team at CHRLF. Together, these groups continuously balance all aspects that affect the gas collection performance with overall renewable natural gas (RNG) plant operations.

We are proud of these results, which validate our team's hard work and the system's overall effectiveness.

Supporting organics management law implementation in schools

SWD staff met with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) earlier this month to discuss Organics Management Law implementation.

SWD staff shared communications to King County schools about the organics management law (OML) thus far, and how the Green Schools Voucher Program has helped many schools make improvements to their organics management infrastructure.

In King County, our school and organics teams have provided guidance, indoor collection bins, signs, and educational tools to help students learn and implement effective strategies for composting food scraps and reducing contamination – we have a lot of lessons learned and insights to share!

Staff also helped OSPI understand the finer details of implementation – such as how to determine which service ware products are compostable and how bin liners can make a big logistical difference for janitorial staff. OSPI was grateful for the insights, and open to collaborating on communications in the future.

Creating solid waste and recycling career pathways

SWD staff regularly seek opportunities to connect with students and other young professionals to promote career opportunities in sustainability, solid waste, recycling, and government.

We participate in career fairs, conferences, and other events to showcase the variety of careers and internships available within the Solid Waste Division. This is critical work as we need to recruit, train, and mentor the next generation of leaders.

This past month, staff attended the 2026 UW Environmental Career Fair and sponsored the Washington Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference. In January, we also attended the JBLM Job Fair. These connections help give students and other professionals an idea of what careers are possible working for King County and to raise awareness of our internship opportunities.

We encourage attendance at the Women in Trades event on May 1.

Gire noted the value in showcasing the vast margin between the 11 ppm readings and the 500 ppm regulatory limit. Highlighting this gap demonstrates how leveraging technology to verify high performance directly translates into significant cost savings for ratepayers.

SWAC Update

No update.

Operations Update

Carter provided an update of construction projects at the transfer stations.

Current Construction: Transfer Station Impacts

- Complete:
 - Vashon tipping floor resurfacing project - open to normal operations for commercial and self-haul
 - Factoria tipping floor repair resurfacing project - open to normal operations for commercial and self-haul
- Underway: Enumclaw tipping floor repair and resurfacing – Feb. 16 through the end of March
 - This is standard floor maintenance, not a full reconstruction like the Factoria project
 - The project is on schedule
 - Stage one: no significant impact to self-haul or commercial
 - ♣ Phase one construction is currently underway on half of the floor, though we maintain access to the compactor
 - Stage two: transition to top loading due to lack of access to compactor chutes (minor delays possible)
 - ♣ Phase two is expected to begin next week, shifting operations to top loading once the chute becomes inaccessible. To minimize the operational strain of top loading, we are delaying this transition until the necessary materials arrive from Ohio. Given potential transport delays across the mountain passes, we will not begin the swap until the materials are physically on-site.
 - Last week, the compactor was down for several days due to a mechanical issue. After receiving the necessary parts, we have resumed full service.
- Station impacts: any impacts to hauler operations
 - Zero diversion of commercial haulers
 - Minimal wait times during Factoria floor project
 - ♣ Staff efficiently reduced hauler wait times, streamlining their entry and exit at the station.

2026 Construction Projects: Look Ahead

- Houghton Chute Scales
 - The Houghton Transfer Station currently operates as a top-load site without built-in scales, requiring operators to estimate trailer capacity based on experience. This often leads to under-filled payloads and an increased number of trips. To address this, we are installing scales at the station to provide real-time weight data. This project will maximize payloads, reduce the total number of hauls, and allow us to reallocate driver hours to support other stations more effectively.
 - Scheduled: 3/23 - 3/29
 - Public traffic will be diverted during commercial chute repairs; commercial access remains open.
- SCRTS Access Road via Broadway
 - Scheduled: April 6 through the end of the month
 - Monday-Friday: Open to commercial; closed to self-haul
 - Saturday-Sunday: Closed to commercial; open to self-haul
- Generator Tie Ins for Compactor Sites
 - During the October 2024 bomb cyclone, all our sites switched to generator power; however, compactors at the compactor sites could not operate on generator power. In response, we initiated a project to install tie-ins that allow mobile generators to be connected at those sites in the event of a power outage.

- o Anticipated timing: 3/2026 - 6/2026
 - ♣ Bow Lake will be the first station addressed, starting March 23.
- o No anticipated impact for haulers or the public
 - ♣ Bow Lake is equipped with two compactors, so we are experienced in maintaining operations using a single compactor when necessary.
- Bow Lake Compactor Rebuild
 - o Anticipated timing: Delayed to Q4 to accommodate for upcoming busy season
 - o Minor impact anticipated
 - ♣ During this time, one compactor will be rebuilt while the other remains in operation. The operating compactor will be fully inspected and repaired as needed to ensure it remains functional throughout the project. We often run off one compactor and if needed, we can top load.

Operations Updates: Look Ahead

- Operations All-Staff Meeting: Sunday, March 22
 - o SWD facilities will have a delayed opening to allow all frontline Operations staff to meet with senior leadership. This session will include updates from Director Singer, as well as an opportunity for staff to provide feedback and ask questions.
 - o Majority of sites will be opening at 11:30 with some opening at 12:30
- Bow Lake South Processing Area
 - o Timing TBD – contract currently out for bid
 - o Impact TBD – impacts will likely be contained to recycling area
 - ♣ Work will be divided into two halves; we will complete one side before transitioning to the other, following the same phased model as the floor resurfacing
- Hiring transfer station operators to transition from Algona Transfer Station to SCRTS
- Hiring truck drivers to decrease reliance on overtime

In February, we had zero service disruptions for commercial haulers.

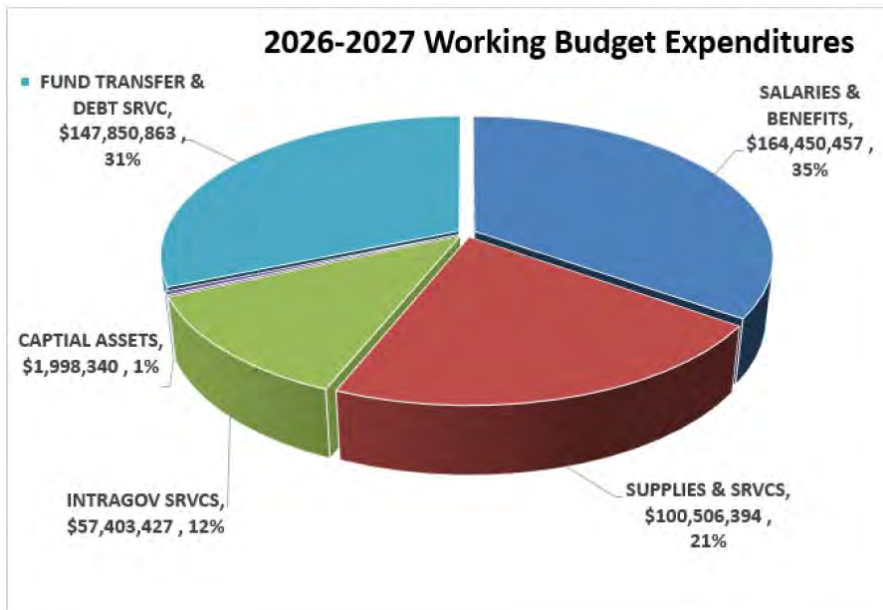
In response to Curd’s inquiry regarding weight versus volume at top-load stations, Carter explained that while top-load packers are used to tamp down "fluffy" self-haul waste, commercial loads arrive already densified by the haulers' own equipment.

2026-2027 Budget Overview

Pierce led this overview.

Following up on feedback from our last meeting, this update provides a breakdown of our adopted budget, including expenditures, revenues, and key focus areas. We will also review definitions and the rate development timeline for the 2027 proposed rates and projections through 2032.

2026-2027 Budget Overview (Expenditures)



Our expenditures are primarily driven by two categories that account for 66% of the total budget:

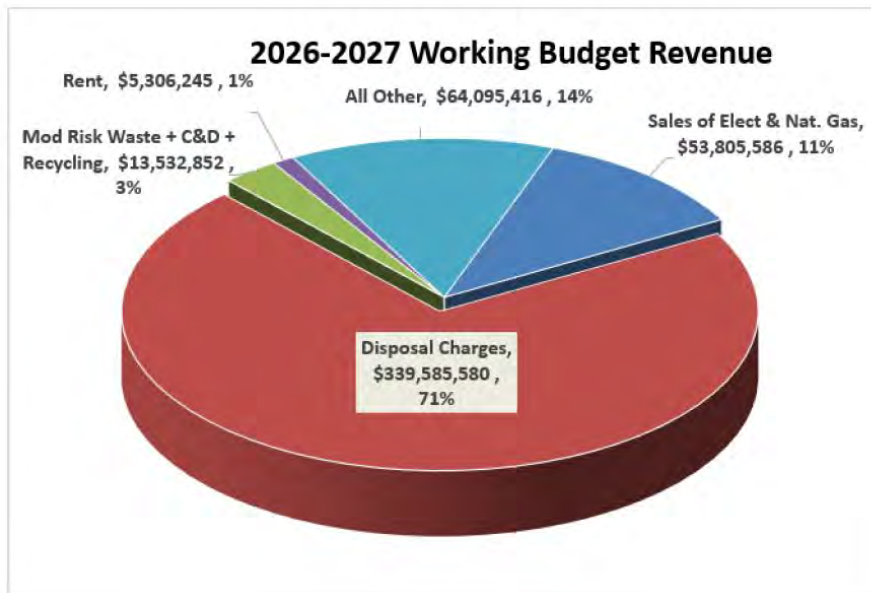
- Salaries and Benefits (35%): As a labor-intensive department, personnel remain our largest investment.
- Fund Transfers & Debt Service (31%): As an enterprise fund, our revenue supports several critical capital programs. This category includes debt service on bonds and cash transfers to four primary funds:
 - SURP Fund: Capital Equipment Replacement Program for existing machinery.
 - Capital Project Fund: For new infrastructure and facility development.
 - Landfill Reserve Fund: Long-term capacity management.
 - Post-Closure Maintenance Fund: Ongoing environmental stewardship.

Additional expenditures:

- Supplies and Services (21%): Covers the high cost of maintaining trucks, rolling stock, and heavy equipment, as well as consulting contracts.
- Intragovernmental Charges (12%): Costs for services provided by other county departments.
- New Capital Assets (1%): Dedicated funding for the purchase of new equipment (distinct from the SURP replacement fund).

We have worked diligently to align our actual spending with these adopted categories to ensure a balanced and transparent budget for the 2026–2027 biennium.

2026-2027 Budget Overview (Revenues)



Disposal charges currently account for 71% of our revenue, though this figure would be significantly higher if the FAC were moved from the "All Other" category to disposal. These two streams remain the primary drivers of our revenue and core business support. With the CHRGE plant now operational, we anticipate approximately 11%—or \$54M—in revenue from natural gas sales, while our Harbor Island property generates roughly \$5.3M in rent. Finally, specialized streams including Moderate Risk Waste (MRW), Construction and Demolition (C&D), and recycling collectively contribute the remaining 3% of our revenue.

Gire asked for clarification on the “all other” category and what would be in there. Pierce said if we take out \$57M of the \$64M for the annual charge, we have interest income that comes in, some federal grant and state grant money and about \$2M comes in from investment growth income.

In response to Gire's request for clarification, Pierce explained that the \$64M "All Other" category is primarily composed of:

- \$57M from the FAC.
- The remaining balance includes interest income, federal and state grants, and approximately \$2M in investment growth income.

Rate definitions

Rate Type	Definition
Commercial Fixed Annual Charge (FAC)	Instead of all the revenue being generated by a single per-ton-fee, a portion of the revenue (20%) is recovered through the FAC, and the larger portion is still recovered through the per-ton-fee. Comprehensive explanation of the Fixed Annual Charge https://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/solid-waste/facilities/fixed-annual-charge-details-faq.pdf
Commercial Per Ton	For the purposes of K.C.C. 10.12.021, "solid waste collection" entity is limited to certificated haulers, contract haulers, and any city using its own employees. Calculated by using customer allocation % applied to the revenue requirement and associated estimated tonnage.
Regional Direct	Title 10 LLLL. "Regional direct" means any solid waste, except C&D waste, generated and collected in King County and transported to Cedar Hills regional landfill by conventional long haul transfer vehicles from privately owned solid waste transfer stations or intermediate handling facilities permitted by the health department as provided for in King County board of health regulations. Calculated as 85% of the Self Haul per ton fee.
Cedar Hills Other excludes Reg. Direct	Applies to waste brought directly to Cedar Hills by a "solid waste collection" entity. Rate is the same as Commercial Per Ton.

The Fixed Annual Charge (FAC) was established to decouple a portion of our revenue from tonnage, creating a "base fee" that allows for a reduced per-ton rate for commercial haulers. A comprehensive explanation of the rationale and calculation methodology for this charge can be [found here](#). Please direct any outstanding questions to Pierce.

The commercial per-ton rate is determined by distributing our total revenue requirement after the FAC has been subtracted. This rate is calculated using customer allocation percentages within our cost model. While typically charged at the transfer stations, this same commercial rate applies if a vehicle tips at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF).

It is important to distinguish this from the Regional Direct rate, which is governed by Title 10. Regional Direct applies to waste transported to the landfill in long-haul transfer vehicles rather than standard commercial collection trucks. This rate is calculated at 85% of the self-haul per-ton fee—a slightly higher figure than the standard commercial rate. To ensure a fair distribution of the FAC, Regional Direct tonnage is excluded from FAC calculations and managed as a separate revenue stream.

Heubach inquired why curbside waste from cities diverted directly to the CHRLF is charged the "Cedar Hills Other" rate rather than the Regional Direct rate. Pierce clarified that the "Cedar Hills Other" rate is identical to the standard commercial per-ton rate. He emphasized that the higher Regional Direct rate applies exclusively to waste transported in specialized long-haul transfer vehicles; therefore, standard collection trucks diverted to the landfill should see no change in their invoiced rate.

Heubach further questioned why a rate discount is not applied to these direct-to-landfill loads, noting that bypassing the transfer station system reduces the number of "touches" and operational resources required. Pierce noted that SWD leadership would need to provide further technical justification for the lack of a discount, as he did not have that specific information available. Gire concluded the discussion by thanking Heubach for the input and noting that this point would remain a priority as the rate package development continues.

Rate Development Next Steps

Timing	Process Milestone
Today	Early Rate Outlook (MSWAC/SWAC)
By 2/27/26	Rate Model and Forecast Development Complete
By 3/31/26	Rate Decision Making Complete
By 3/31/26	Preliminary Rate Briefings Complete
By 4/30/26	Final Rate Agency Proposal Complete
By 5/13/26	Draft Support Letter Shared at SWAC/MSWAC meetings (5/8 and 5/13)
By 6/12/26	Final Support Letter Approved at SWAC/MSWAC meetings (6/10 and 6/12)
By 6/15/26	Executive Proposed Legislation transmitted; Council deliberations begin
By 8/31/26	Fixed Annual Cost Allocation Transmittal Complete
By 9/30/26	Council Rate Adoption

We are currently finalizing the 2027 rate proposal and projections through 2032, with internal decisions anticipated by March 31. These figures will be ready in April, and we plan to share the draft support letter and rates during our May meetings. Following refinement, the final letter will be completed by mid-June to meet the June 15 transmittal deadline. Once the 2027 rate is transmitted, we will finalize the FAC cost allocations based on finalized tonnage data. Our goal is to achieve rate adoption by September 30, at which point we will immediately begin developing the 2028-2029 rates. To improve efficiency, we aim to submit a comprehensive proposal for the 2028-2029 biennium that covers both years simultaneously; this differs from the current cycle, where the 2026 and 2027 proposals were developed separately.

Van Orsow noted that the Harbor Island property was originally acquired for an intermodal facility when waste export was the primary strategy for the anticipated closure of CHRLF. He inquired whether an analysis has been conducted on the potential ratepayer relief—specifically, if selling the property and amortizing the revenue could reduce overall costs. Stubbs replied that the department is currently drafting a feasibility study regarding the property's use as a solid waste facility, in response to a council proviso from late last year. This study, which includes technical and financial evaluations, will be transmitted to the Council in June, and findings will be shared as they become available.

Additionally, Gire asked for a six-year forecast and a look at the "outyears" before the committee begins focusing on the rate letter. Pierce confirmed that this information will be provided soon, noting that current projections are trending slightly above 7%.

Capital Project Update – NERTS and SCRTS

Evanson provided this section.

SCRTS project summary

As many of you know, the South County Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS) will replace the current transfer station in Algona. The new station will serve Algona, Auburn, Pacific, and Federal Way. Services will be expanded from those currently offered at the Algona Transfer Station, to include hazardous waste disposal and full spectrum recycling, as well as appliance and mattress disposal.

New station offers:

- Recycling services and moderate risk waste disposal for households and small businesses
- Sustainable building features

- Off-site improvements
- On-site creek enhancements
- Public art
- Other community benefits (community meeting space)

The project includes environmental enhancements to the site, realigning a small stream and improving the habitat through riparian plantings and making it a fish bearing stream. In addition, the SCRTS project improved a section of West Valley Highway South by realigning a dangerous curve and adding guardrails, reflective striping and new asphalt. We included concrete aprons in front of the facility to make sure it reminded viable and more durable where the big trucks enter the facility.

The project greatly improves stormwater management in the area. It provides over 1.3 million gallons of stormwater capture, detention and treatment for the site and the culverts west of HWY 167.

The building is also built sustainably; we are on track to achieve the International Living Future Institute’s Living Building Challenge Petal Certification. We did this by including solar panels, sustainable construction materials, natural light and native plant life. The project provides some really exciting public art by a number of artists.

SCRTS enhancements:

- Controlling air: walled-in structure to control odors
- Misters: suppress dust and odors
- Lighting: natural light through skylights and lots of windows
- Containing sound: reduce noise from equipment and vehicles with walled-in structure and sound absorbing landscaping
- Traffic mitigation: compacting equipment and additional drive lanes allow vehicles to move quickly through the site and reduce the number of trucks coming to and from the facility

Artwork is to be installed in the Administration Building.

- Sam Obrovac: wooden sculpture, paddle etchings and medallions
- Evan Blackwell: ceramic and carved alder pieces
- Cast ceramic hard hats

SCRTS project timeline



We are anticipating a soft opening in June 2026 with a full open in July 2026.

To ensure a smooth transition, we are splitting the soft opening into two stages:

- Early-mid June: SCRTS is open for commercial waste only. All self-haul customers should continue using the Algona facility.
- Late-June to early July: SCRTS expands service to include self-haul, MRW, recycling, and yard waste.
-

This two-week soft opening allows crews to swap from Algona to SCRTS to get comfortable with the new facility.

The Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station (NERTS)

Existing Houghton Transfer Station

- Built in 1962, beyond useful lifespan
- Vibrant and growing neighborhood
- Lacks the infrastructure or space for recycling or material reclamation
- Community concerns about odors, noise, traffic, views and vectors

Design expectations

- Sustainability
- Community engagement and space
- Public art
- Full-service recycling
- No household hazardous waste disposal
- Coordination with Kirkland for additional amenities and mitigations based on the settlement agreement

2026 Siting Decision

- King County made a siting decision in March 2025 for the new NERTS facility, and the City of Kirkland filed a Notice of Appeal to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) citing:
 - Analysis of transportation impacts
 - Hazardous waste risks and mitigation resulting from the proposed facility's excavation into the undeveloped portions of the closed landfill
 - Procedural errors in the FEIS and addendum
- A pre-hearing Conference is currently scheduled for March 24, 2026.

Settlement Agreement

- King County continues to work with the City of Kirkland to negotiate a settlement agreement for their appeal of the FEIS.
- A settlement agreement would enable the County to move into the preliminary design phase of the project.

Next Steps – Design Advisory Group (DAG)

- When a settlement agreement is reached, King County will develop a draft Design Advisory Group (DAG) workplan.
- The DAG workplan identifies key stakeholders such as Kirkland staff and other municipality representatives; hauling partners; nearby residential, commercial, and other affected groups.
- High level regulatory, technical and safety requirements are determined prior to convening the DAG.
- When convened, the DAG members will be active participants of the project throughout the entire design process.

Estimated timeline

1. Settlement Agreement with Kirkland (Q3 2026)
2. Design Advisory Group Convene (Q3 2026 – Q2 2027)
3. Preliminary & Final Design (Q2 2027 – Q4 2029)
4. Bidding, Construction & Closeout (2030 – 2035)

Moldver inquired about the selection process for the DAG members. Evanson explained that the group is expected to represent all municipalities impacted by the NERTS. Given the station's broad service area, the department anticipates extensive stakeholder representation. Engagement with the DAG is slated to begin once a settlement is reached with the City of Kirkland.

Organic Waste and Construction & Demolition Waste Briefing

Singer gave this briefing.

SWD presented this update to the Economy, Transportation, and Environment Committee in February; we are now bringing that same discussion to our members.

Ordinance 19861 established that a Construction and Demolition (C&D) proviso be put in place to evaluate C&D flow control and enforcement efforts.

The proviso requested an evaluation of overall flow control compliance for C&D material throughout our system, focusing on four specific elements:

- Flow control methods: An inventory and descriptions of existing flow control methods applicable to C&D materials
- Enforcement efforts: A summary of enforcement efforts undertaken by the county related to its flow control methods for C&D materials
- Key findings: From the evaluation of flow control compliance for C&D materials
- Policy direction: Recommended actions and policies the county could take to improve flow control compliance for C&D materials

King County mandates the recycling of specific C&D materials, including metal, cardboard, wood, concrete, asphalt paving, and new drywall scraps. Any C&D loads containing non-recyclable materials must be directed to a County-designated facility. Legally, the County may implement flow control to serve a legitimate public purpose, provided it does not unfairly favor in-state private entities over out-of-state competitors. This authority is supported by extensive case law and documentation included in this report.

While flow control authority exists at federal, state, and county levels, regional impact is maximized when participating cities adopt policies that align with the County's C&D flow control system. Issaquah and Redmond have already implemented such policies. These methods utilize legal authority to designate specific locations for waste consolidation, transfer, processing, treatment, or disposal. This analysis evaluates existing flow control methods, compliance data, and diversion performance to recommend future regional actions and policies.

C&D Proviso – inventory of existing flow control methods: regulations

- Federal:
 - Commerce clause and federal court cases
 - Support local authority for flow control
- State
 - Revised code of Washington Chapters 36, 70A, 81
 - Dictate how specific waste must be handled
- County
 - King County Code Title 10
 - Specifies roles for facilities and haulers

King County has implemented enforcement measures to support its C&D flow control program, ensuring compliance with County ordinances and the achievement of waste diversion goals. Parties found in violation are subject to enforcement actions and civil penalties, while designated facilities that violate their agreements are subject to contractual repercussions. The County enforces flow control through the following six primary methods:

- C&D waste transfer station reporting and inspections
- Mixed C&D facility reporting and inspections

- Demolition site inspections using permit data
- Job site verification of adherence to C&D requirements for projects requesting direct haul to the landfill or an intermodal yard
- C&D residuals testing at mixed C&D facilities
- Special waste monitoring – an issuance of unacceptable waste reports

In 2024, SWD's C&D enforcement lead conducted 385 site inspections, all of which were related to demolition permits. Additionally, on-site walkthroughs were performed quarterly at all three active C&D facilities, and a residual testing session was conducted at each of the seven C&D material recovery facilities. No audits were performed and no citations were issued during this period. In addition to demolition sites, SWD conducted regular inspections of designated facilities and haulers.

Key findings

- The 2021 diversion rate for C&D materials generated at job sites in King County was 81%
 - This covers materials sent to designated C&D and single-commodity facilities
- 1,898,687 tons of C&D materials were diverted from disposal while 499,385 tons were sent for disposal

Due to reporting delays at the state level and with the Department of Commerce, 2021 remains our most recent complete data set. However, preliminary 2023 data indicate a diversion rate of 53%, down from the previous 81%. This decline is attributed to operational and staffing challenges among industry processors. To address this, C&D rate increases approved in 2025 will be used to fund expanded outreach and compliance efforts.

In response to a question from Arnold regarding city-specific data for the countywide C&D diversion rate, Singer noted that while some cities have adopted local flow control ordinances, the current data is aggregated. Singer committed to following up with the specific methodology for data collection, noting that SWD does not collect this information directly, but relies on data provided by the Department of Ecology.

Van Orsow inquired whether the King County diversion rate includes unincorporated areas, the City of Seattle, or all incorporated cities excluding Seattle. He also requested clarification on the methodology used to calculate the 81% figure. Singer clarified that the rate encompasses all cities and unincorporated areas within the county.

Key Findings: Non-compliance and System Leakage

- Failure to use designated facilities
 - Mixed C&D materials and waste continue to be diverted to unauthorized locations or to facilities designated for different waste streams.
- Noncompliance with waste diversion plans approved for landfill direct disposal
 - Projects utilizing the direct-to-landfill option don't always follow their diversion plans or provide the required C&D waste documentation
- Inappropriate use of King County transfer station C&D exemption
 - Transfer stations are receiving significant volumes of C&D waste due to the misapplication of exemptions and the improper use of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) containers. For example, people will use smaller rental trucks (such as U-Hauls) to bypass restrictions on larger containers, disposing of C&D debris on the tipping floor as if it were standard waste.
- Improper on-site practices
 - Comingling and recyclable/non-recyclable C&D materials at jobsites
- Delays in access to permitting data
 - Current data constraints hinder our ability to inspect demolition sites prior to activity. Access to permit data is managed through a third-party provider, which typically carries a 10–12 day reporting delay.

Furthermore, some jurisdictions do not require demolition permits at all, while others aren't available on the online database. This lack of real-time visibility is significant; by the time the department is notified of a permit, the demolition has often already occurred, eliminating the opportunity for a pre-demolition inspection.

Recommended policy direction

- Gather input from across the industry
 - Work collaboratively with C&D industry representatives to better understand challenges to flow control and develop a plan to overcome challenges.
 - ♣ To address these challenges, our C&D team maintains ongoing dialogue with facility operators, regional public agencies, and green building certification entities. We host regular C&D stakeholder meetings to facilitate this collaboration; the next session is being held March 17.
- Pursue actions and policies
 - Propose language to Council to require salvage assessments and building deconstruction (rather than demolition) of County-owned structures.
 - ♣ This initiative focuses on the intentional deconstruction of buildings within the county as an alternative to traditional demolition.
- Pursue actions and policies
 - Encourage and support King County cities (and unincorporated King County) in adopting C&D and deconstruction related policies. And providing SWD with timely deconstruction permitting notifications.
 - ♣ This is a key area for collaboration. We can assist you in developing related policies, while your timely notifications will ensure we are synchronized in our efforts.
- Improve communications and refine incentives:
 - Increase outreach, education, and incentives with contractors, haulers, and facility operators
 - ♣ The Q2 rollout will focus primarily on job-site compliance, specifically the separation of C&D recyclables from non-recyclable materials. This initiative aims to achieve several key outcomes: strengthened collaboration with cities on demolition permitting and more intentional communication with industry stakeholders. Together, these efforts will produce measurable results for our diversion goals.

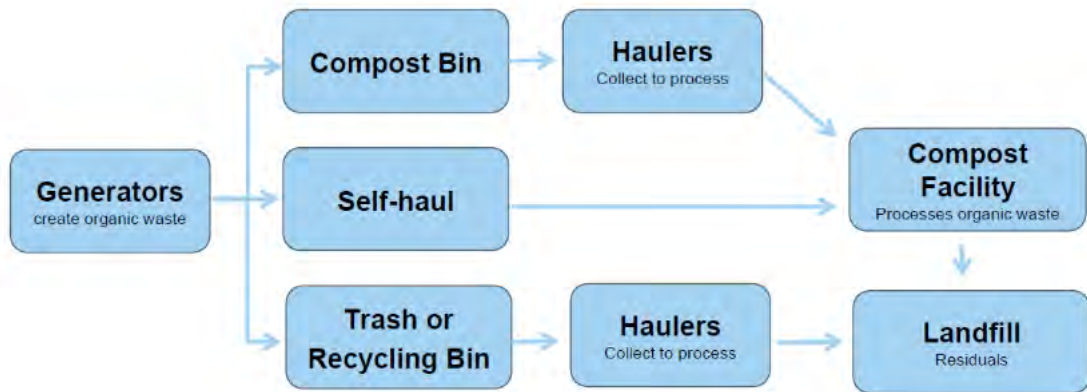
Organics System Mapping and Policy Report Overview

Ordinance 19861 included an Organic Proviso requiring a system mapping and policy report. This report was requested to enhance the Council's understanding of organic waste flow within King County's solid waste system, all in support of the region's zero-waste goals.

Organics system mapping and policy report

- System visibility
 - Build a strong understanding of the organics system & flow control framework
- Compliance & risk
 - Identified gaps and areas of noncompliance risk
- Key insights
 - Distilled system findings and relevant best practices
- Policy direction
 - Defined actionable policy options to strengthen organics flow control

Organic system & flow control flow chart



Organic waste is generated across a vast landscape, including households, farms, restaurants, and food processors. The complexity of the system is compounded by diverse disposal methods such as curbside collection, onsite composting, and self-hauling. Furthermore, an emerging industry of specialized companies—such as Mill, which focuses on food dehydration—is beginning to capture significant market share.

Organics Regulatory Framework

System visibility – requirements by generator type

Generator Type	State Requirements	King County Requirements	City Requirements
Single – Family (SF)	Organics collection must be offered in ORCA (Organics Recycling Collection Areas) areas	Yard/Organics service required in unincorporated areas (KCC 10.18)	Service requirements vary by city, including availability-only and mandatory participation
Multifamily (MF)	New solid waste plans must include source separated organics	Participation not required	Some cities require organics service
Commercial	Organic waste management required	No countywide requirement (open market)	Some cities only require to food service establishments

Current organic collection requirements remain inconsistent across King County and its cities, particularly following the approval of recent state legislation. While the goal is to expand composting access and simplify organic service options, significant policy gaps still exist.

**Additional information not pictured in the graphic*

- Single-Family (SF)
 - State requirements:
 - ♣ By April 1, 2030, collection services must include food waste, and all single-family (SF) residents will be required to utilize source-separated organic waste collection.
 - King County requirements:
 - ♣ County code requires jurisdictions to provide yard waste collection services for both single-family and multi-family properties within Unincorporated King County (UKC). While participation is not mandatory, yard waste is prohibited from single-family garbage containers. Consequently,

residents must either subscribe to organic collection services, compost on-site, or self-haul materials to a transfer station.

- Multifamily:
 - State requirements:
 - ♣ Jurisdictions submitting a draft Solid Waste Management Plan after July 1, 2026, must include specific programs and timelines for the mandatory collection of source-separated organic waste from multi-family residents. These requirements will initially apply to newly constructed and substantially remodeled multi-family buildings.
- Commercial:
 - State requirements:
 - ♣ State law requires businesses to participate in an organic waste management program. Compliance can be achieved by subscribing to an organics collection service, managing waste on-site, self-hauling to a managed facility, or selling/donating food and fiber waste to another entity

System visibility – organics service delivery

Organic service entities

- County facilities with yard waste and clean wood collection programs (e.g. Bow Lake, Enumclaw, etc.)
- Commercial haulers (Recology, Waste Management, Republic Services, Divert, Cedar Grove, etc.)
- Enumclaw & Skykomish manages their own organics collections

Governance structure for Organics – compliance and risk

Regulations & enforcement

- Federal
 - Regulations - not organic specific
 - Enforcement – there is no federal law enforcement pertaining to organics
- State
 - Regulation – reviews/approves solid waste management plans & requires counties/cities to adopt compost procurement ordinances
 - Enforcement – prohibits penalties on individuals & authorizes jurisdictional health departments to enforce requirements for businesses
- County
 - Regulation – KCC 10.14 sets countywide goal to achieve zero waste by 2030 & 10.18 outlines yard waste/organic collection requirements
 - Enforcement – adopted compost ordinances and/or solid waste codes may include reporting requirements. There are currently no enforcement methods and enforcement best practices are under research.

Leakage pathway & compliance vulnerabilities

- Leakage refers to organic materials not being managed in accordance with existing applicable regulations
- 2022 waste characterization study – conducted to understand the number of compostable organics being disposed by generators in King County
 - Generators disposing of organic material into garbage or recycling bins become lost in the waste stream
- Organic materials transported by haulers to unknown or unauthorized facilities are classified as 'leakage' if they are not processed through approved facilities within the King County system
- Residual leakage—defined as garbage or recycling contaminants found within organic waste—remains a significant challenge. Because these residuals are not currently subject to King County's flow control policy, the County lacks the regulatory authority to manage them. Consequently, residuals generated from King County

organics is often processed inappropriately, such as being transported to facilities outside the County's jurisdiction.

- Leakage identified in the 2022 waste characterization study
 - Compostable materials accounted for over a third of the waste from both commercial and residential waste generators
 - 35% of commercially collected residential waste generation and 6% of self-haul rate
 - Next waste characterization study will be completed in June 2027

Potential policy & regulatory enhancements: Key insights and policy direction – strategies to strengthen reporting, prevent bypass and fair cost recovery

- Currently, King County Title 10 flow control does not extend to organic materials; however, state organics laws are evolving rapidly. During the implementation of these new laws, we identified several potential policies and regulatory enhancements that could mitigate further system leakage. These concepts are currently in the preliminary stages and are rooted in rigorous research. Any future policy direction will only be advanced following comprehensive stakeholder engagement, additional technical analysis, and a formal equity impact review.
- Update definitions & Reporting
 - Clarify what constitutes as organics materials and require detailed data on tonnages and contamination
- Preventing Leakage
 - Conduct outreach to generators and haulers and propose common sense policy to minimize and mitigate leakage
- Fair cost recovery
 - Require facilities disposing of residuals outside King County to remit the difference in tipping fees

Through these strategic changes, we anticipate several key outcomes: a significant reduction of organics in the landfill, the establishment of fair and transparent policies, enhanced data and reporting capabilities, and measurable progress toward our zero-waste goals. This information is derived from the proviso report recently presented to the Council Subcommittee, and we wanted to ensure these insights were shared with this group as well.

Dunbar provided an update on Redmond's C&D program, since its May 2025 inception. Currently, Redmond is achieving a commendable 70% overall diversion rate. While the ETG diversion rate has dropped to approximately 25%—lower than initial development projections, the team has successfully mitigated this by partnering with the in-house concrete crew. These specific projects are seeing a 95% diversion rate at local facilities, which has bolstered the city's overall performance in recent months. Moving forward, the focus remains on aligning all city projects with these standards, including upcoming coordination with the Capital Projects team to further optimize C&D waste management.

Moldver reiterated that during the program's development, Redmond chose to prioritize a C&D program in lieu of a broad Zero Waste Plan. This strategy was informed by California jurisdictions, where C&D recovery drives 80–85% of total diversion. Upon the program's implementation, increased scrutiny of local recyclers, such as DTG, led to a correction of reported diversion rates. Following DTG's recent re-acquisition by its original owner, there is renewed hope that a return to localized, smaller-scale ownership will foster improved diversion performance and greater operational accountability. Currently, the Redmond facility does not perform on-site sorting; while the long-term permitting goal included a dedicated sorting line, most material is currently being diverted to a C&D landfill in Yakima.

Moldver noted that while salvage assessments are now free and mandatory for every project, the city has only seen one completed salvage project to date. Although these assessments are quick, they represent an additional regulatory step

for contractors. However, the outcomes can be financially beneficial if the assessment identifies cost-saving opportunities.

In response to Curtis's inquiry regarding long-term savings for developers, Moldver clarified that while savings are possible, contractors often view the requirement as an unplanned administrative hurdle. Success depends on early planning and diligent data collection—specifically tracking tonnage and inputting it into the Green Halo system. While some resistance persists, larger contractors have generally adapted. The primary challenge lies with 'mom-and-pop' operations handling smaller renovations; in these cases, Dunbar and Moldver have provided direct technical assistance to ensure compliance.

2026 State Legislation Update

Ockerlander gave this update.

The 2026 legislative session will adjourn on March 12 after the longest debate in history.

- House of Origin Policy: **Feb. 4 - PASSED**
- House of Origin Fiscal Policy: **Feb. 9 - PASSED**
- House of Origin: **Feb. 17 - PASSED**
- Opposite House Policy: **Feb. 25 - PASSED**
- Opposite House Fiscal: **March 2 - PASSED**
- Opposite House: **March 6 - PASSED**
- Sine Die: **March 12 – TOMORROW - PASSED**

Solid waste related bills in process 2026:

- **PASSED:** Providing local governments tax resources and fund flexibility (HB 2442/SB6294)
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Textiles (building on HB 1420)
- Improving the end-of-life management of Electric Vehicle Batteries (building on HB 1550/SB 5586)
- Increasing Solid Waste Collection Tax (building on HB 2018)
- Deposit-Return System (DRS) for Beverage Containers (HB 1607)
- EPR for Mattresses (building on HB 1901)
- EPR for Sharps (building on Safe Sharps Advisory Group)
- Amending the single-use plastic bag ban (HB 2233)

We will soon begin preparing for the next legislative session – most likely next month.

Gire inquired about potential legislation to track heading into next year. Ockerlander identified the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) bills for textiles and mattresses as key priorities. Additionally, the County will lead on a "Sharps" bill to address health and safety concerns regarding improper disposal, which will also follow an EPR framework.

Member Comment

Heubach announced that the Renton City Council approved a contract with Recology two weeks ago, which took effect this week. Starting in April 2026, Recology will officially become the new service provider for the City of Renton.

Gire expressed appreciation for everyone who has joined the effort to help fill the void left by Penny Sweet.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.