

SWAC Advisory Committee Meeting
 Sept. 15, 2023 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
 Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

SWAC Members Present		King County Staff	
April Atwood, Marketing and Education		Eyasu Ayalew, Public Health Seattle/King County staff	
Jay Blazey, Manufacturer		Nori Catabay, SWD staff	
James Borsum, Labor Representative		Kinley Deller, SWD staff	
Robin Freedman, Waste Industry		Brian Halverson, SWD Staff	
Amy Lam, Local Elected Official		Quest Joliffe, SWD staff	
Brett Lohrman, Labor Representative		Eliza Kruszynski, SWD staff	
Bill Louie, Citizen Representative		Canyon Little, SWD staff	
Laura Mork, Local Elected Official		Patty Liu, SWD staff	
Penny Sweet, Local Elected Official		Pat McLaughlin, SWD Director	
Heather Trim, Recycling Industry		Amy Ockerlander, SWD staff	
Wendy Weiker, Chair, Waste Industry		Elka Peterson Horner, King County PSB staff	
		Yolanda Pon, Public Health Seattle/King County staff	
		Andy Smith, SWD staff	
		Isabelle Trujillo, SWD staff	
		Dorian Waller, SWD staff	
		John Walsh, SWD staff	
Guests			
Stephan Banchemo III, Cedar Grove		Jeanette Jurgensen, Bin There Consulting	
Jon Gire, City of Bellevue		Tyler Pichette, Pacific Public Affairs	

Call to Order and Introductions

After introductions, Chair Weiker called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Sweet moved to approve the agenda. Louie seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Sweet moved to reelect Weiker as chair of SWAC. Louie seconded. Weiker’s reelection passed unanimously.

Sweet nominated Louie for Vice Chair. Weiker seconded. Louie was elected as Vice Chair unanimously.

Louie moved to approve the July minutes. Sweet seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

No Public Comment.

SWD Updates

McLaughlin provided the SWD update.

SAVVY Awards for MSWAC

King County’s Solid Waste Division won an award in the “Promotional Video” category at the 3CMA’s Tech Savvy Awards that took place on Sept. 8 in Orlando, Fla. The division entered its [Re+ Launch video](#) that explains program goals through

captivating storytelling highlighting employee perspectives and grassroots partner efforts. The 3CMA's Savvy Awards have represented the best in government communications for more than 30 years. King County is among hundreds of communication departments that competed to be honored for programs that have effectively engaged communities and elevated the role of professional communications. The Savvy Awards received a total of 878 entries in 2023.

Tonnage Report

According to the tonnage report garbage tons disposed at Cedar Hills decreased in July 2023 by about 3,000 tons (-4%) compared to July 2022. The effective difference when measured what was coming into the transfer stations (and what was generated in our service area) and adjusted for the numbers of weekdays and diversions to other places, was a decrease of about 2,400 tons (-3%) for the July comparison. The July tonnage was about 3,600 tons below the forecast (-5%). The largest drops in tons happened in self-haul tonnage and commercially hauled tons. Year-to-date reduction in self-haul tons is -12% (almost 13,000 tons).

K4C Elected Officials Committee

On Aug. 4, SWD staff presented on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and the WRAP Act (HB133) to the K4C Elected Officials Committee. The presentation included general information about EPR, an overview of the WRAP Act and the 2023 legislative session, an update on interim activities and a look forward to the 2024 session.

MSWAC Update

Waller stated that the agenda was the same different conversations. There was a conversation on the Organics Management Law which differs from this meeting.

Rate Restructure Check-in

Waller said that cities seem to be on track to meet the deadline and opened the floor to haulers.

Weiker stated that Republic Services is working with all the cities and are on track to be done by the Jan. 1 deadline.

Freedman commented that Waste Management cities are on track too.

Weiker said that Recology (filling in for Harvey) is on track too.

Single Family Organics

Kruszynski presented on this topic.

Based on the Single-Family Organics Outreach & Engagement survey, we learned that over 25% of household garbage is food waste, and of that, King County's single-family food scraps capture rate is only 18%. To achieve zero food scraps going to the landfill, we need to both:

- Increase subscription to organics service among those who do not subscribe
- Increase use of organics service by those who already subscribe to it

Our public engagement approach began in February with an online survey running through April for about 10 weeks. We received about 3200 respondents, with the highest group from unincorporated King County at about 10% of respondents. Moving forward, we conducted Focus Groups in May-June with representatives from historically underrepresented communities, residents from rural areas, cities that have the greatest potential to divert more waste based on population and current subscription rates (Auburn, Federal Way, Des Moines, Covington, and/or Kenmore), and residents in King County cities who have already implemented food waste policies (City of Renton). We had an opening meeting in July where we shared information from the Focus Groups and provided an opportunity for people to ask questions. We are currently focusing on the results and recommendations.

An average household could divert 40-70 lbs. of organic waste each month. The policy options that have worked elsewhere for diverting organic waste that we presented to groups are:

1. Require all households with garbage service to subscribe to curbside organics. This would create new subscribers.
 - o New curbside organics service typically costs \$9-14/month
 - o Possible savings by reducing garbage can size, \$7-14/month
 - o Possible cost reduction for those with existing service (economy of scale)
 - o Key points:
 - Strong overall support, “everyone does their part”
 - Feedback indicates more cost concern vs. other policies

2. Reduce garbage to every-other-week (EOW). This would encourage utilization of service. Households set out garbage cans every other week, like recycling. Food/yard waste bins would be set out weekly. The City of Renton has had this policy in place since 2008. Recycling increased by 27%, organics collection increased by 44%, and garbage decreased by 18%.
 - o New curbside organics service typically costs \$9-14/month
 - o Potential reduction of collection costs
 - o Potential need to increase garbage can size
 - o Encourages reduction of garbage to landfill as well as organics
 - o Key Points:
 - Majority of all subgroups support EOW service
 - Complements existing policy in Renton
 - Concerns regarding smells, container weight, alternative schedules, illegal dumping and contamination

3. Implement a food waste disposal ban. Food waste should not go into the garbage. Households could manage food waste via curbside pickup, composting or another method. This would encourage utilization of service. The City of Seattle has had this policy since 2015. Single-family food waste collection is 3x higher than the county as a whole.
 - o New curbside organics service typically costs \$9-14/month.
 - o Possible savings by reducing garbage can size, \$7-14/month
 - o Provides more immediate options to divert organics vs, curbside pick-up service
 - o Key points:
 - Falls in the middle across subgroups
 - Maintains multiple diversion options
 - This policy landed the best with the Focus Groups
 - Complements existing Seattle policy

We received a lot of open response questions from residents. Many expressed concerns about:

- Wildlife carts and safety. Organics collection might attract more pests and we need to make sure that the carts are widely available.
- Supporting groups sensitive to cost changes like senior citizens or those on a fixed income.
- Emphasis on multilingual outreach.

We also asked for any ideas that residents may have, and these are common themes:

- Assistance with composting supplies
- Training and led by community members like free trainings by students or volunteers.
- Community compost sites
- Publicity: uses of compost, competitions across other jurisdictions/states. People want to hear more about how this would impact them and their community.

Moving forward, we will do a further evaluation of responses and options and bring proposals to a future advisory group meeting. The highlight we want to share out are the lessons learned and resources. There will be survey data available for interested jurisdictions. For any questions, please reach out to Project Manager Eliza Kruszynski at EKruszynski@KingCounty.gov.

Trim wanted to know if there is a report people can look at to see everything. Kruszynski said that we shared this dashboard as an external item, but there is an internal report.

Trim followed up asking how SWD explained the cost differential to residents in survey. Kruszynski said she will send the text that was shared with residents after the meeting. It wasn't explained as cost neutral but often as cost savings. We didn't want to make any claims that the bill will go up or down because everyone's bills vary across the county.

Louie commented that there must be a variety of billing because his organics is zero and garbage is higher. Kruszynski replied that the City of Redmond is contracted, and the rates shared out were part of the Utilities and Transportation Committee (UTC) area. In Redmond, the organics and recycling services are embedded in the garbage rate. So, garbage rates will probably higher than in a city where everything is broken out.

Blazey asked how this embedded issue could be included in county work. If residents don't currently know what they're paying for and things are embedded in the rate, it is very complicated to make future decisions. Kruszynski answered that we tried to guide people to where their rate payment structure was currently based on their jurisdiction and how they compare to their neighbors.

Smith added that one of the things we started off with was just thinking of unincorporated King County (UKC) rates and subscription rates. The bulk of opportunity lays here because UKC accounts for about 50% of the subscription rates. In UKC, they have to break out rates and can't bundle things together. With Re+, we will move towards targeted city engagement, and this will help us see what each city needs. We see this dashboard as the beginning of the conversation with our city partners.

Comp Plan Subcommittee

Liu led this section.

The subcommittee's purpose is to help focus the conversations at MSWAC/SWAC so that we aren't taking up too much time and provide insight to how these conversations might go. Weiker added that the subcommittee is to help with the framing of the advisory committee discussions and the and the waiting of the final decision.

This subcommittee was officially convened in August. The membership for the subcommittee will be:

- Mayor Penny Sweet, Kirkland
- Chris Searcy (Hauler and City), Enumclaw
- Heather Trim, Zero Waste WA
- Bill Louie, Resident
- Wendy Weiker, Republic Services
- Diana Wadley, Ecology
- City of Redmond – Rotating members

The topic schedule will be as follows:

Month	Topic
Oct. 2023	Long Term Disposal Matrix Criteria Ranking
Nov. 2023	"Loaning" Capacity to other jurisdictions
Dec. 2023	TBD

Jan. 2024	Long Term Disposal Options – Pyrolysis, Gasification, RDF
Feb. 2024 *	Long Term Disposal Options – Waste Export, Waste to Energy
March 2024 *	Final Long Term Disposal Decision Matrix
April 2024 *	Re+ Actions
May 2024 *	Re+ Actions
June 2024 *	Finalize Long Term Disposal Decision

The months with an asterisk mean that there will be a rate restructure conversation too.*

Sweet wanted to know what kind of comparative data we will have when we get to the long-term disposal options. Liu responded that this information will be available in the future and will check the project schedule to see when that will be. She does not believe that the subcommittee will be getting into that, and the consultant is working on a deeper analysis. When we talk about the criteria, we just want to get an unbiased opinion and see that any existing biases don't leak into these conversations. McLaughlin added that we will have side-by-side analytics to understand the final choice, and this will be like how we presented side-by-side analysis in 2019.

Blazey said he'd love to join the subcommittee if possible. Liu will reach out.

C&D Rate Update

Deller, Little and Joliffe gave this update.

Deller gave an overview of the King County Construction and Demolition (C&D) Materials Management, which is where materials flow within the county.

- Construction site with single stream materials e.g., metal or new gypsum scrap → Single commodity Recycling Facility → Recycling/Commodity processor or end market
- Construction site with materials thrown together → Comingled Processing Facility
 - Waste is sent to landfill
 - Materials with markets sent to respective markets
- Construction site with non-recyclable material → C&D waste transfer stations (we monitor what goes in and out of these facilities)
 - New option – waste materials can go directly from job site to an intermodal rail yard and then landfill

We don't work with or monitor facilities with single stream materials often. We work with, monitor, and have contracts with comingled processing facilities, and C&D transfer facilities. We do annual assessments of processing residuals coming out of the facilities and make sure that what is going to the landfill is allowed to go there.

In 1993, the C&D program began with King County having control of these materials as a commodity. We put two contracts in place: 1) Waste Management and 2) forerunner of Republic. These contracts were just for disposal of C&D material with materials being directed away from Cedar Hills and diverted to privately owned landfills. We charged a fee of \$4.25/ton on all C&D that went to one of their landfills and 0% was being diverted at that time.

In 2003, the contracts were renewed with both companies, but we added in an incentive structure – if they could pull out recyclable materials or woods burned as hot fuel, King County would give them credit. This brought some success and through this process, brought diversion rates up to ~12%. The fee stayed at \$4.25/ton but there was a rebate for recycling and beneficial use.

In 2016, we broadened who was able to contract with us and a new C&D program began. Now, we have contracts in place with three companies – one does C&D processing and the other two do C&D waste transfer. Through these contracts, we have about a 60% diversion rate. The fee stayed at \$4.25/ton but now it was only on what was sent to the landfill and not all C&D.

We still charge \$4.25/ton that goes to the landfilled. Other places don't have a fee but a tax – Seattle C&D Transfer Tax: \$13.27/ton, and Portland's C&D Fee is ~\$30/ton. Based on the way our system is set up, the fee is on any C&D materials generated at job sites in King County and outside the City of Seattle and Milton. The C&D Annual income usual varies from about \$800,00 to \$1,000,000 a year.

In 2016, King County Council approved a new C&D program via ordinance and had four main components:

- 1) Banned C&D materials with stable markets
- 2) Established designation of King County C&D processing and waste transfer facilities
- 3) Established a C&D enforcement program
- 4) Program became self-funded through the \$4.25/ton fee

The C&D materials banned from disposal in a landfill are:

- Clean wood
- Cardboard
- Metal
- Gypsum scrap (new)
- Asphalt paving, bricks, concrete

It's possible to add/take materials off the list.

Designated C&D Material Recovery Facilities can be [found here](#). Tonnage received varies by facility and where they are located.

Little runs the C&D Enforcement Program and shared that he pulls demolition permits, goes to different job sites and inquires where the C&D waste will be going. If he does not receive a clear answer, he will do a follow up. Through this, he sometimes comes across projects that qualify for direct disposal with criteria being at least 6,000 square feet or multiple properties together. A diversion plan specifies where all the material on site will go and within 60 days must follow up with a report and verify where the material went. He does quarterly inspections at the waste transfer stations run by Republic and Waste Management and ensures that the materials are C&D waste and don't hit the action level threshold of 20%. As well as inspections at Material Recovery Facilities to monitor for compliance.

The Enforcement Program is a progressive enforcement. We start by educating and making sure people are aware of the latest county ordinance. Our fine is not very great, but the threat of citation is normally enough. Weiker added that this includes partnership efforts to ensure that this great work happens.

Deller said there are several things we have done recently to move the C&D program forward:

- Set up a Central Procurement C&D Specification Template for internal King County projects to ensure that every capital project is using the same language and has the same requirements
- Working diversion requirements: 85% diversion by 2025 and Zero Waste Resource by 2030
- Between 2019-2023, we've distributed >\$600,000 in grants to support C&D market development
- Provide assistance to King County projects each year
- Conduct trainings and distribute materials through permitting agencies
- SCAP Priority Actions
- WA State Building Codes

Joliffe shared the C&D challenges:

- Over 1 million tons of C&D generated in King County every year
 - Any time we exceed/miss our marks, it's significant gain/loss
- Recycling markets have been in decline
 - Sometimes it's faster for them to do less recycling

- Diversion rates have begun to decline
 - Outlets might not think it's worth it to engage in reuse
- Increased commingling of C&D materials increase contamination and decreases material value (ex. Gypsum drywall)
- Majority of C&D processing facilities owned by one company (DTG Recycling)
 - They have a monopoly and can choose what's good for them and not what's good for the community
- King County C&D rate has remained constant

For the (near) future, we are focusing on:

- BIPOC and frontline community partnership
- Sustainable economic development and job creation
- C&D separation innovation
- Market development (especially circular economies)

Trim asked for some examples of the C&D separation innovation. Joliffe provided examples of AI, robotics, and machine developers that are pushing the boundaries of machines.

For the (not-so-distant) future, we are focusing on:

- Flow control code compliance
- Reduce King County legal and financial liability
- Ensure sustainable funding to meet growing needs
- Continue collaborative engagement with industry partners

Deller shared the salvaged lumber opportunity:

- Around 7% (61,600 tons) of material going to CHRL is clean wood
- Around 350,000 tons of clean wood flows through King County and Seattle every year
 - We have flow control over about 101,000/350,000 tons. Of this, 54% is landfilled and the rest goes through the C&D process (fuel 43%, Reused/Recycled (2%), and other 1%).
- Majority of clean wood can be processed into new building products
- Current wood market = lowest value and most harmful option
- Re+ to focus more directly on salvaged wood.

Salvaged Lumber: Moving forward:

- Catalyzing development of a salvaged lumber warehouse and a sustainable wood business park
- Salvaged Lumber Summit (Feb. 2023)
 - 12 presenters addressing the different stages of a circular salvaged lumber economy
 - 170 participants from 11 countries, 24 states/provinces, and 4 King County cities
- We are becoming a national leader in development/design of a circular economy for salvaged wood.

Trim commented that SWD did not mention the \$4 million dollars from the federal government that was given to the wood facility. Deller replied that we partnered with the City of Seattle and both of us applied for grants. The City of Seattle received a grant, and we did not. Trim asked what the price tag was. Deller answered that we've been looking at about \$14 million for a facility. We (the City of Seattle and SWD) wrote our grants complimentary of each other. We hope that the City of Seattle funding is sufficient.

Blazey was taken aback by the recycling rates and is curious if any work will be done to set standards. Joliffe replied that one of the things we are working on is our C&D rate which is about 1/10th the national average. We now recognize it as a resource, and it has value. The current national average is about \$70/ton. One of the strongest ways we can push this work is to make the cost higher because people will be more likely to separate the materials. The same for DTG as they will have to pay for the residuals. They don't pay that for anything that gets diverted.

Blazey followed up with Snohomish County's garbage bin and recycling bin requirements and asked if King County has the same thing. Deller responded that this is a state code requirement, and we have this language in our policy but the enforcement of it at the state level is non-existent. We don't have the authority over what happens at job sites, and we have incorporated this into our language with the cities and the permitting language. We hope there will be change after the cities have adopted it.

Weiker thanked the team for presenting these materials and commented that DTG became the go to source over the past couple of years and we should have them come present to us. The greatest opportunity is at the job sites and having places to put things on job sites so that there is not contamination. Also, if there's nowhere for these materials to go, there are no end markets. This work takes partnership and collaboration.

Trim wanted clarification on the rate. Joliffe answered that our rate is \$4.25/ton.

Blazey asked what is preventing the county from raising the rate. Smith responded that we have had an effective C&D program for years and are now in a place where we are asking ourselves how we can really be transformative – with material diversion, climate, equity, and community participation. We've concluded that our rate does need to be revisited to hit that transformational goal and we will be coming back to both advisory committees with what ideas/work we could be doing and what an increased rate could look like for the region. Weiker added that there's an accelerated fine process that has more attention now and fines are starting to get people's attention.

Member Comment

Weiker said the county did a great job at CHOMP! in August.

Trim stated that there's controversy about the Organics Management Law next year. There is a twice a month (1st and 3rd Wednesday) stakeholder meeting to address any concerns. Let Trim or Waller know if interested.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.