

SWAC Advisory Committee Meeting

Aug. 8, 2025 - 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting (Zoom or King Street Center)

<u>SWAC Members Present</u>		<u>King County Staff</u>	
April Atwood, Marketing and Education		Eyasu Ayalew, Public Health – Seattle & King County	
Jay Blazey, Manufacturer		Kelsey Bailey, SWD staff	
Alissa Campbell, Waste Industry		Ali Blum, SWD staff	
Robin Freedman, Waste Industry		Sylvaine Bucher, SWD staff	
Amy Lam, Local Elected Official		Nori Catabay, SWD staff	
Bill Louie, Citizen Representative		Theresa Curry Almuti, SWD staff	
Laura Mork, Local Elected Official		Erin Hislop, SWD staff	
Leah Tischler, Public Interest Group		Morgan John, SWD staff	
Heather Trim, Recycling Industry		Christine Kim, SWD staff	
Wendy Weiker, Waste Industry		Patty Liu, SWD staff	
		Casey Mellnik, SWD staff	
		Mark Monteiro, SWD staff	
		Amy Ockerlander, SWD staff	
		Nina Olivier, SWD staff	
		Dave Pierce, SWD staff	
		Kerwin Pyle, SWD staff	
		Hannah Scholes, SWD staff	
		Fanny S. Gonzalez, Public Health – Seattle & King County	
		Rebecca Singer, SWD staff	
		Andy Smith, SWD staff	
		Rebecca Singer, SWD Director	
		Isabelle Trujillo, SWD staff	
		John Walsh, SWD staff	
<u>Guests</u>			
Laura Belmont, Sound Cities Association		Alli Kingfisher, Dept. of Ecology	
Katie Jerauld, Dept. of Ecology		Brad Lovaas, WA Refuse and Recycling Association	
Jeannette Jurgensen, Bin There Consulting		Chris Reigelsperger, Waste Management	

Call to Order and Introductions

After introductions, Weiker called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

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

Public Comment

Jerauld shared one item.

1. **WA Litter Tax Update** - Washington’s litter tax has not been updated since it was established in 1971. The tax applies to manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers of commonly littered products. Today, nearly half of the

litter that accumulates in Washington every year comes from items not covered by the litter tax, like construction debris and vehicle-related materials. Ecology proposes the following changes:

- i. Update [RCW 82.19.020](#) to include construction and motor vehicle products
- ii. Update [Chapter 70A.200 RCW](#) by removing youth employment language to reflect modern program operations

These changes will better reflect today's litter sources, reduce pollution, and support more cleanup efforts across the state.

For more information, please visit Ecology's webpage on [Washington's litter tax](#) and read their [focus sheet](#) and [draft legislative language](#).

You may submit written comments online through August 8, 2025, at 11:59 PM:

[Modernizing Washington's Litter Prevention and Cleanup Funding- Proposed Agency Request Legislation](#)

SWD Updates

Singer provided the SWD update.

Tonnage update

Garbage tons through June are slightly above the last two years. (418K tons in 2024 vs. 421K ton in 2025). The Black River (Republic) tons are included in the tonnage.

Recycling tonnage collected and diverted at transfer stations is at 14,400 tons through June. This is on par with year-to-date tonnage in June of 2024 (14,487 tons), but lower than the tonnage to date in 2023 (15,584). Transfer station recycling includes yard waste, clean wood, glass, cardboard, mixed paper, scrap metal, textiles, mattresses, appliances, bicycles, tires, mixed containers, and plastic.

Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) Plant Acquisition

On July 22, King County Council unanimously passed an ordinance that authorizes the County to purchase the renewable natural gas plant located at CHRL. The County has until Aug. 29 to sign the agreement to purchase the plant and settle the pending federal litigation between the County and BEW.

We are working to identify a third-party operator to operate the plant, and plan to have someone aboard by the end of August. We are doing an internal campaign to rename the new facility.

Once operational, gas from the RNG plant produces the energy needed to meet the natural gas needs of over 17,500 homes in King County and is anticipated to be revenue positive for SWD.

We are also working on legislation authorizing the County to sell the biomethane and environmental attributes to Puget Sound Energy.

Vashon Compactor Rebuild Completed

SWD recently completed the rebuild of the Vashon Recycling & Transfer Station municipal solid waste compactor.

The compactor is used to compact, load and transfer approximately 30 tons of waste per hour into transfer trailers which maximizes payloads for long haul transfer. Originally slated for replacement, Ops and Engineering determined

that the structural integrity of the compactors was in excellent condition so instead, they pursued a complete refurbishment of the compactor major components.

This new approach SWD, and ratepayers, approximately \$900k to \$1M.

MSWAC and SWAC members toured Strategic Materials Inc.

We enjoyed being able to see the process and we appreciate all that attended the tour.

Mork shared her surprise that much of their glass is sent to Oklahoma, expressing hope for new technology that could increase its purity and marketability. She noted that glass is sold to both Oklahoma and British Columbia. Mork found the tour very informative, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity, and hoped more such tours could be arranged for the group.

Atwood also appreciated the opportunity to see the local organization's work firsthand. She was particularly struck by the high level of contamination and garbage in the materials. She noted that the facility had an unexpected landfill-like odor. This experience prompted her to wonder about alternative methods for handling glass, such as refill operations, rather than the current process of crushing, sorting, remelting, and remaking it. She thanked SWD for organizing the tour and was grateful for the chance to attend.

Singer thanked everyone who participated in the tour.

Reminder: WRR Grant LOIs due

Quick reminder that Letters of Intent are due by August 19 for SWD's WRR Grant Program, the allocation-based grant program for cities in King County's solid waste system.

Applications aren't due until October, but submitting Letters of Intent allows SWD to determine the grant allocation for each city.

Progress continues on SCRTS!

In late June, a weekend closure of West Valley Highway South allowed crews to successfully complete the installation of a new culvert beneath the roadway adjacent to the facility site. This culvert is designed to support stormwater drainage in the area by protecting roadways and nearby infrastructure from flooding, and will help aid in fish passage.

The highway has reopened to traffic and a single-lane closure is now in place as the installation of remaining underground utilities in the roadway takes place. Curb placement also began last month near the existing Algona Transfer Station and is progressing northward along West Valley Highway South.

At the transfer building, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work is now underway inside. Interior framing in the administration building is complete, and crews are installing window framing at the household hazardous waste building.

Work also continues to progress as crews prepare for the construction of the scale house, which will weigh vehicles entering and exiting the transfer station. Pits have been cleared to make way for the installation of the industrial scales and underground electrical and communications systems are being installed to support the payment and traffic systems that the building will house.

SWD in the Community

- Auburn Farmers Market – 8/10 & 9/14 - SCRTS outreach

- Algona Day – 8/23 - SCRTS outreach
- Thrift & Threads Festival (Redmond) – 8/24 - Re+ outreach
- Repair Event (Renton Library) – 9/6 - Community repair event
- Federal Way Farmers Market – 9/27 - SCRTS outreach

Lam reported on a highly successful repair event held in Sammamish on Saturday. According to the event report, 97 items were brought in, and 68 were successfully repaired, to the great satisfaction of the attendees. She noted the strong turnout of people fixing items and the positive atmosphere. Given the last repair event was six years ago, many participants expressed a desire to see it return next year. Singer responded that if the community is genuinely interested, they could work toward organizing another event.

MSWAC Update

No update.

Operations Update

SWD response during service disruption caused by hauler labor actions:

- SWD launched Incident Command System (ICS) for daily planning and internal coordination
 - The ICS is a structured framework that we use for a coordinated response. It includes an incident commander and representatives from key sections like communication and operations to ensure a smooth and efficient effort. Participating in this system is an addition to everyone's normal duties, and these tasks are expected to take priority. We held daily calls to facilitate this process.
- Operations team began site preparations and completed extra special hauls
 - Site preparations involved identifying and completing any projects or maintenance that could interfere with operations. This included special hauls from the landfill, such as moving rock and bark, as well as relocating equipment. We had 5-8 drivers dedicated daily to these special hauls, which we completed in advance to ensure maximum resources were available for refuse collection.
- Regular communication with Republic Services and cities
- Friday, 7/18 & Saturday, 7/19, had a high volume of self-haul customers, collection events, and picketers resulted in extended wait times
 - The picketers were not overly disruptive. Monteiro spoke with them in Factoria, and while they were very personable, they felt they had a job to do. We understood their position and worked to cooperate with them.
- On Saturday, 7/19:
 - Due to picketing activity and Renton's single entry/exit point, commercial haulers were diverted as they were unable to access the station. The decision also considered high projected system-wide and self-haul volumes. The station remained open for self-haul customers all weekend.
 - Extended at Bow Lake, Factoria, and Houghton (40 additional customers bringing 11 tons)
 - 38% increase in self-haul customers

These types of exercises are highly valuable. They reveal what we can handle and plan for, as well as how we perform in unplanned situations. Examining how our facilities respond, what they can accommodate, and comparing data to actual operational performance provides an excellent learning experience for our TSOs, scheduling and logistics personnel, and Monteiro himself. This was a very effective exercise for us to better understand our operations and system.

SWD response after service resumes:

- Reopened Renton Transfer Station to commercial haulers
- Implemented diversion plans to maintain system-wide functionality
 - Diverted Republic Services from Bow Lake to Cedar Hills Landfill from 5 a.m. to noon on 7/23
 - This is one of our last-resort contingency plans, implemented only when absolutely necessary. We do not make these recommendations lightly; we always do our best to keep our services operational and manage issues within our own system.
 - Diverted Republic Services to Black River from noon on 7/23 to 6 p.m. on 7/24
 - This is a contingency plan we implement only as a last resort. We did our best to minimize its duration, managing to keep it to about 30 hours, in contrast to previous incidents that lasted for days.
 - Singer added that this was a collaborative effort with Republic. Constant communication, with multiple daily updates on anticipated volumes, allowed them to keep the diversion window much smaller than initially expected. She thanked Weiker and her team for their partnership, which enabled them to manage the material volume in the least disruptive way possible.
 - Recorded an average of 14% increase of incoming tonnage to transfer stations on 7/21-7/25, even with Black River diversion
- SWD drivers worked 56 overtime shifts and numerous transfer station operators and drivers extended hours to operate the system with minimal disruptions

SWD lessons learned:

- Timely, transparent communication is critical, especially across jurisdictions
 - Advance communication about collection events and service adjustments is critical for SWD to allocate resources, plan for facility throughput, and coordinate internally
 - Key takeaway: partners should work together to formalize expectations for timely communication, especially regarding major service changes, tonnage projections, or community events during disruptions
 - This information allows us to plan for resources, ensuring we have enough for both the next day's operations and the week ahead.
 - We run this data through our model, which provides an estimate of the number of drivers needed, helps us assess our special hauls and overall staffing, and indicates if we need to extend operating hours at our sites.
- Emergency planning should include scalable contingency measures
 - More robust contingency planning is needed for longer disruptions or overlapping impacts
 - Key takeaway: future planning should include pre-defined contingency measures that cities, haulers, and the County can activate quickly, such as backup collection sites, hauling adjustments, and cross-jurisdiction coordination frameworks

Monteiro asked the members what went well in their jurisdictions and with their work with King County. He also asked for feedback on what could be improved and any challenges faced both within their own jurisdictions and in working with the county.

Lam reported that Sammamish had a positive response from SWD. The city requested extended hours for the Factoria station, and shortly after the City Manager's request, they received confirmation that the hours would be extended. She noted some challenges with Republic but will be addressing those with Weiker directly.

Weiker noted that this was an isolated event, as Republic serves only about one-third of the cities in King County, with the other two haulers covering the rest. She thanked the county for their collaboration, which mirrors how Republic assists SWD with its own operational issues, all to minimize customer disruption.

Monteiro stated that they take these situations seriously and are always ready to respond, doing our best to keep services running smoothly. We now track storage and floor space daily, weekly, and on weekends—a practice learned from past operational difficulties. He believes they are better prepared than ever before. While exercises are helpful, nothing compares to real-world experience, and now the entire team, not just key personnel, have been exposed to and involved in the response. He acknowledged that while there will be learning experiences, there will also be successes, and we will conduct a thorough review to improve their processes after the event.

Weiker emphasized the power of relationships and understanding each other's operations. She suggested that as winter approaches, the team should review and test emergency plans, possibly through a drill for an event like an earthquake. Everything's fine when things are working—it gets tough when they're not.

Singer agreed, stating that the group needs to consider how they would respond to a major natural disaster, specifically how to manage material movement during the cleanup and repair phases. She suggested that at some point, a collective drill exercise would be beneficial to assess their readiness.

Weiker followed up by mentioning that King County Emergency Management conducted a similar drill a few years ago, called Cascadia Rising. She described it as both "enlightening and alarming," as it highlighted how the region would respond to a large-scale natural disaster.

Seattle Public Utilities Assistance

From Aug. 4-30, SWD will accept self-haul loads from SPU customers at King County transfer stations (Bow Lake and Renton). SPU is replacing the floor at their South Transfer Station and must close to self-haul traffic.

Multiple coordination meetings have occurred between King County and SPU. Operations is making any potential staffing adjustments to ensure maintaining good customer service to our existing customers. Due to increased volumes, we have 3 scale operators working across two sites, with two on the swing shift at Bow Lake to manage the additional traffic. We are currently seeing about a 25% increase in volume on weekdays.

The biggest anticipated change is longer waiting times at Bow Lake, as we must interact with each customer. The number of available service slots is limited at both Bow Lake and Renton. To address this, we've added extra scale and transfer station operators at Renton, and we are bringing in one additional operator for both the day and swing shifts at both sites. While wait times will increase, the impact at Renton should be less severe due to lower traffic volume.

Another concern is that larger vehicles with trailers may occupy two service slots when backing in or obstruct the exit due to their length. This will require SWD employees to perform traffic control.

Weiker thanked Christine Kim for continuing to send communications and updates about the system.

Organics Management Law Implementation & Rulemaking

Alli Kingfisher from the Department of Ecology provided this section.

What is in OML 3.0? Washington state has passed a suite of 3 major laws with the aim to control uncontrolled methane.

- State building code obligations

- New multi-family residential and commercial buildings must allocate sufficient space for solid waste storage, including for source-separated organic materials.
- Possibility for building owner/operator obligations
 - Local governments have the option to require owners and operators of new or existing multi-family buildings to provide adequate space for garbage, recycling, and organics collection containers. They can also mandate signage and occupant education. The specific requirements are flexible, allowing local governments to tailor them as needed.
- Food waste in schools and how schools operate in four different ways
 - These sections will be managed by either the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction or the Washington State Department of Agriculture. The requirements focus on four key areas:
 - ♣ Integrating food waste into the school curriculum.
 - ♣ Identifying best practices for managing food waste.
 - ♣ Using the "farm to school" program to increase schools' procurement of Washington-grown food.
 - ♣ Reducing food waste by purchasing Washington-grown food that might have otherwise gone to waste.
- One adjustment to the compostable product labeling update
 - Parchment paper and other paper-based sheets intended for cooking are now exempt from on-product marking requirements, such as logos, specific coloring, or wording. However, the on-packaging label requirements still apply to these products
- Adds requirements for organics grant program eligibility
 - The 2024 OML established five grant programs for food waste and organics management. Due to state budget issues, including a contracting and hiring freeze, there has been a delay in launching the required two-year rulemaking process. However, the Department of Ecology has reallocated internal resources and appointed Jade Monroe as the rulemaking lead.
 - The department anticipates filing the CR 101 to begin rulemaking in November 2025.
 - One of the new requirements of this law is that future grant recipients must be in compliance with collection bin and label requirements to be eligible for funding.
- Establishes bin color standardization and labeling
 - These regulations impact containers purchased after **August 1, 2025**. Containers must now adhere to a standard color-coding system:
 - ♣ **Grey/Black:** Non-recyclable/non-organic waste
 - ♣ **Brown/Green:** Organic waste
 - ♣ **Blue:** Source-separated recyclables
 - By Jan. 1, 2028, all containers used for curbside commercial or public waste collection must also have clear and conspicuous labels on both the container and its lid. This labeling requirement does not apply to containers a jurisdiction plans to remove from service by January 1, 2030. However, perfectly functional containers that don't comply with the new color standards don't need to be replaced if they are still in use.
 - The Department of Ecology may grant exemptions, such as for a jurisdiction that proposes an alternative transition plan and timeline. The department is currently developing the specific details of these exemptions. Patrick Merscher is the lead on the bin color and labeling standardization project.
- Business Organics Management Areas (BOMA) updates
 - Ecology is required to publish an annual list of businesses likely to be subject to compliance. This list is not definitive and will need local verification. The purpose of this list is to facilitate education and

outreach from solid waste companies, local health jurisdictions, and local governments, and it may also be used for enforcement.

- Enforcement will be carried out by jurisdictional health departments or a jurisdiction that implements penalties.
 - ♣ Starting July 1, penalties may be issued.
- Establish penalties
- Maximum penalties for small businesses
 - ♣ Penalties begin at \$500 per day for a first violation. This amount increases to \$1,000 per day for a third or subsequent violation. For small businesses, there is an annual cap of \$10,000 for penalties in any single calendar year.

Beginning in January 2026, the volume metric for businesses required to comply with organic material collection will be 96 gallons per week. This threshold has progressively decreased from 8 cubic yards, and then to 4 cubic yards, before dropping to the upcoming 96-gallon requirement.

Organics Recycling Collection Areas (ORCA) and Business Organics Management Areas (BOMA) are both used to identify areas for mandatory organics collection.

The key difference is their basis for designation:

- **ORCA** is determined by **population**.
- **BOMA** is determined by whether businesses have **current access** to organics collection services.

ORCA:

- **Key change: Addition of collection of multi-family residence phase-in**
 - Jurisdictions that submit a preliminary draft solid waste management plan after July 1, 2026, must now include a timeline and program to phase in source-separated organic material collection for multi-family residences.
- **Key Change: Individual Exemptions**
 - The law now requires—rather than permits—local jurisdictions to grant exemptions to individuals who manage their materials using an alternative mechanism that achieves equal or better environmental outcomes. Ecology is currently developing guidance for cities and jurisdictions on this process, with a stakeholder advisory group providing feedback.

The ORCA map will be updated annually every September to reflect regulatory changes based on population shifts. The map will continue to expand as population grows. The general population trigger for a community to be included is when it surpasses 25,000 people, though there are other nuances that can affect this interpretation.

Ecology recognizes that not all jurisdictions have the necessary infrastructure for organics recycling. Therefore, the agency is developing waivers for both service and collection frequency. Jurisdictions will be able to apply for these waivers starting in Spring 2026. Stakeholder input will be used to inform the development and final structure of these waivers.

Waiver & Guideline Development for ORCA

- Service waivers
 - Issued to jurisdictions or parts of jurisdictions extending the timeline of organic material collection service
 - Time period: up to 5-year renewable waiver

- Application + ORCA readiness plan
- Available for use early 2026
- Frequency waivers
 - Issued to jurisdictions meeting the ORCA requirements through another means other than curbside collection; waiver reduces frequency of collection requirements
 - Time period: one-time waiver
 - Application + alternative collection plan
 - Available for use early 2026
- Guidance
 - Provide local jurisdictions example guidance on how to exempt persons from collection requirements if organic materials will be managed through an alternative mechanism
 - Time period: TBD
 - Available for use early 2026

Guidelines for Individual exemptions

- Ecology will provide guidance on how to exempt persons from collection requirements if organic materials will be managed through an alternative mechanism
 - Available in early 2026
- Change due to HB 1497: may--> must

Ecology is amending its grants rulemaking to incorporate new language related to organic material management. These amendments will focus on establishing standards to address contamination in both organic waste and finished products like compost. Additionally, Ecology is considering amendments that will cover other organic material management practices.

As a reminder, the purpose of rulemaking:

- Clarify a statute (RCW)
- Amend a rule (WAC) to align with changes in state or federal laws
- Create or amend a rule in response to a petition or court decision
- Ensures transparency and public involvement

Goals of the organic materials rulemaking goals and objectives

- Establish standards to limit contamination in incoming feedstock and outgoing finished products
- Establish new standards for pre-processing feedstocks
- Revise other standards for organic material processors noted since the last update in 2013

Organic materials rulemaking timeline:

- Dec. 2024: File CR-101
- May 2026: File CR-102
- July 2026: Public hearings
- Sept. 2026: anticipated adoption and CR-103 filing

Looking ahead to the next 12 months:

- Gather input and continue to shape WAC 173-350 during the rulemaking process
- Release of the compost market study – summer 2025

- Release of the food data hub findings, improving food rescue data tracking – summer 2025
- Release of food service compliance educational materials – summer 2025

Ecology's strong efforts to divert organics from landfills are a key component of the state's climate plan. For any questions, please contact the team at organics@ecy.wa.gov.

Trim asked if the rulemaking comments were posted on Ecology's website. Kingfisher believed they were, but will confirm.

Blazey, speaking for Cedar Grove, the sole compost processor in King County, shared that they have significant thoughts on the new organics regulations. While many of the changes are positive and will increase diversion, he wanted to alert people that the upcoming rulemaking impacts all three waste streams, not just organics, and will likely have significant consequences.

He noted that more will be heard about new standards for pre-processing, also known as depackaging, and he believes a facility tour for this is being organized. He stressed that seeing the facilities helps in understanding what goes in and out. Cedar Grove's primary concerns are the potential landfilling of recyclables by these machines and the risk of generators taking a step backward by sending mixed waste instead of cleaner, source-separated organics. Finally, he mentioned ongoing discussions about tighter standards for composting. Cedar Grove is actively engaged in this issue and aims to ensure any new standards are reasonable, justified, and do not lead to large cost increases. Blazey encouraged anyone with questions to reach out to him.

Mork expressed her city's strong interest in accelerating organics recycling for multi-family residences and inquired about ways to speed up the process in King County. She emphasized the importance of ensuring there is adequate space for the materials and wanted other cities to be aware of their options.

Kingfisher responded that while the law doesn't prohibit faster action, being at the forefront of these efforts presents unique challenges. She encouraged Mork to reach out for more details. Blazey added that implementing multi-family organics could be effectively handled through the comprehensive plan, specifically Chapter Four.

Additionally, Weiker mentioned that Republic has raised concerns regarding contamination enforcement and the strict responsibility thresholds for contaminated materials.

Comp Plan Draft Chapter 4 & 2 Discussion

Liu and Smith 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.

The purpose of this Comp Plan process is to:

- Focus on language that allows SWD to act – what is the umbrella that makes key strategies and tactics possible?
- Consider costs of potential policy change

Chapter 2: Existing System Major Changes. This chapter is available on the advisory teams channel.

Majority of the changes in this chapter were updating code – mostly RCW numbers. We made sure that any applicable new codes were added in. We also added sections on:

We already do these things and its more of a reflection of things we are already doing.

- Updated Code
- Added sections on:
 - Special waste handling
 - Disposal vouchers
 - Employee safety and emergency preparedness
 - Re+
 - SCRSTS

Trim expressed that reviewing the document chapter by chapter has been challenging and asked if there would be an opportunity to see the complete document before it is sent to consultants.

Liu explained that while the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will consider the comprehensive plan as a whole, the current chapter-by-chapter process is necessary due to overdue timelines. She stated that as chapters are discussed with advisory committees, they are immediately forwarded to SEPA consultants, who are aware of the proposed changes but are awaiting final direction from SWD. Liu concluded by acknowledging that while this process is difficult, it is the one being followed transparently due to the time constraints.

Trim raised a concern asking if something is later found to be missing from a previous chapter, how should that be handled. Liu acknowledged that this is likely to happen and noted that after the discussions on chapters 4 and 2 are complete, the advisory committees will have all the necessary documents for the EIS review.

Weiker added that the full chapters have been shared in an email from Blum. She advised that if members find anything missing, they should include their comments in either the Chapter 2 or Chapter 4 feedback, and the consultants and Liu will ensure the information is placed correctly. She clarified that with the exception of forecasting and data, members essentially already have access to the full document.

Chapter 4: Circular Economy Chapter Discussion

Liu clarified that she selected specific comments requiring more explanation or discussion to address common themes and questions. She intends to touch on all comments in the document, noting that most were straightforward.

Smith thanked everyone for their input, noting the interesting discussion on the role of the transfer station system in receiving materials and participating in reuse.

- **Comp plan priority/action:** (policy and infrastructure) explore and pursue options to further the circular economy, including increase reuse, recycling, and resources recovery from generators and at transfer stations through innovative methods and technologies
 - **Member comment/discussion:** Can we accept more material types at our transfer stations?

Smith explained that the comprehensive plan allows them to accept materials that align with their strategic objectives. The central question for the county is determining the best use of limited transfer station space to achieve the highest impact and return on investment.

He noted that the region's work on the Re+ initiative involved a collective reflection on the most effective and convenient collection methods, whether through curbside, local drop-off, the private

sector, or our own system. Over the life of the next comprehensive plan, we will seek to answer these questions. While we aren't committing to accepting more material types, the key focus is on using the limited space at transfer stations to advance their zero-waste goals. This includes a future dialogue on what materials we should prioritize collecting at these stations for the greatest impact.

- **Comp plan priority/action:** Generation rate targets
 - **Member comment/discussion:** How will these be determined

Regarding the zero-waste goal, the end date is being shifted from 2030 to 2050, though 2040 and 2060 were also discussed.

Once the final date is confirmed, an analytical exercise will be conducted to determine how to track progress from today to that endpoint. This will include applying a feasibility lens to identify what actions need to happen to meet various milestones along the way.

The county will then lead a dialogue with advisory groups and cities to establish these midpoints, such as where they should be by 2035 to stay on track for 2050. This process will be led by the county with input from both advisory groups.

- **Comp plan priority/action:** Various actions (ex: grant programs)
 - **Member comment/discussion:** How does SWD determine return of investment (ROI) standards and prioritize actions and weigh their costs?

This question addresses a core aspect of solid waste decision-making. When considering applications for grants, such as the WRR grant, the work program must outline its broader impacts, typically in terms of **diversion, climate, or social equity**.

As part of the Re+ initiative and the zero-waste plan, we discussed how to define and measure ROI for our generational system changes. We settled on three key areas:

1. **Diversion potential**
2. **Climate potential**
3. **Social equity potential**

Our theory of change is that we must invest today to lay the groundwork for future benefits, which may not be fully realized until the 2030s. We've defined ROI using **leading indicators** to reflect this. For example, in our grants, we track if applicants are from minority-owned or BIPOC businesses, recognizing that these investments in innovation today will create long-term benefits for multiple communities.

Our grant programs serve a dual purpose:

1. **To drive near-term action**, where diversion is a good indicator of success.
2. **To support future system-wide change**, which makes relying solely on diversion indicators challenging.

For instance, a grant for a furniture repair bank might have limited impact during the grant period, but the long-term benefit could last 10-20 years. As we move into the next phase of Re+, we are committed to being more intentional about how we measure and understand impact. This will be a continuous theme in our grant work moving forward.

- **Comp plan priority/action:** Various actions on increasing material recovery from Construction and Demolition
 - **Member comment/discussion:** More background information

There is significant potential within the **Construction and Demolition (C&D)** waste stream. For example, the amount of clean wood sent to Cedar Hills that could be salvaged is remarkable.

Last year, a discussion was held about increasing C&D rates to fund future programs. These programs would be authorized by the comprehensive plan and could include initiatives such as:

- Partnering on salvaging lumber.
- Developing circular economy business parks and salvage warehouses.
- Collecting C&D materials at transfer stations and third-party facilities.
- Providing education and awareness training on C&D green codes and deconstruction.
- Demonstrating two-bin operations at construction sites.

The core question is whether the comprehensive plan's language authorizes these ambitious, high-impact C&D initiatives, which would be detailed in separate plans (like the Re+ or resource recovery plans). We believe the current language does provide that authority.

Smith asked the committee if they would like more background information on C&D or if they are seeking more detailed C&D content within the chapter itself. He noted that the previous comprehensive plan had very little C&D content and they are aiming to place a greater emphasis on it.

In response, Blazey suggested it would be helpful to update definitions for things like C&D recyclables and source separation. He questioned at what point a generator is simply throwing a small percentage of recyclables into a large bin of garbage, and where the line for "source separation" should be drawn. Smith replied that a definition glossary would be included in the comprehensive plan and suggested that more detailed content on these definitions could be added to the chapter itself.

Mork thanked Smith and asked how cities can encourage the source separation of construction debris. Echoing Blazey's earlier comments, she noted that it's often difficult for companies with C&D materials to understand what can be separated and to be incentivized to do so.

Smith replied that with new funding from a rate change, they plan to invest in more education and awareness so companies understand the benefits of source separation. He also mentioned that they are discussing new policies, such as requiring specific actions at worksites, and the importance of demonstrating their effectiveness.

He suggested that the public sector, particularly on large infrastructure projects, has a role in demonstrating how multi-bin operations can work and in writing these requirements into project specifications to make them standard practice. Reflecting on a previous discussion, he raised the possibility of financial incentives and partnering with cities on demonstration projects to show what is possible.

Smith emphasized that they want to invest in helping people "do the right thing" from the start and in supporting the workforce. He noted their recent award for green workforce development training and stressed the need to expand these efforts beyond the county and into the private sector.

Mork expressed her support for Smith's comments and suggested that SWD should consider publicizing a list of companies that properly separate C&D debris.

Smith responded that he hopes the comprehensive plan's language will authorize this kind of work. He also suggested that a future regional plan, separate from the comprehensive plan, could bring together a broader audience for what are often technical discussions in the C&D space.

Weiker added that while the comprehensive plan provides goals and directives, the real challenge lies in the details. She highlighted the need for effective enforcement, source separation, and outreach, as well as the implementation of systems and programs to reduce contamination and ensure materials are sent to the correct destinations.

- **Comp plan priority/action:** (Policy and Infrastructure) Assess and develop options if selected actions are not enough to achieve an overall 70% recycling rate
 - **Member comment/discussion:** Should any frequency of developing these options, or levels of rigor of the options themselves, be built into this?

Smith asked if the committee had any specific feedback for the county to consider regarding the intermediate steps toward achieving zero waste.

- **Comp plan priority/action:** (Policy and infrastructure) Work with food producers, grocers, restaurants, and schools to prevent food waste and to increase food recovery through donation of surplus meals and staple food items to local food banks
 - **Member comment/discussion:** How well does this achieve the Organic's Management Law's food waste reduction and edible food recovery goals? Should there be a specific policy/action around supporting recommendations from Ecology's food donation workgroup?

Organics are a key focus for the region and state, with significant interest from cities regarding food donation and recovery. Smith noted that SWD is not likely to directly reference Ecology's food donation work.

Regarding the specific work program, the question is what a "Re+ 2.0" or a regional food waste plan would look like. The comprehensive plan's language is expected to authorize actions such as forming a food donation work group. The ultimate decision will be whether to prioritize this food donation work over other organics initiatives.

Member Comment

No comment.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.