



Meeting Minutes

Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Spring 2026 Community Meeting

May 20, 2026, 6:30 PM

Maywood Middle School

Facilitator Kalyn Brady opened the meeting. Speakers included:

Rebecca Singer, Solid Waste Division Director

Mark Monteiro, Solid Waste Division Operations Manager

Chris Stubbs, Solid Waste Division Deputy Director

Aaron Copado, Solid Waste Division Environmental Scientist

Introduction

Rebecca Singer welcomed everyone and said that she and the speakers would be providing construction and environmental updates at the landfill. Singer handed presentation off to Mark Monteiro.

Landfill Operations

Mark Monteiro

Construction season is resuming for three major projects: Area 5/6, Area 9 preparation, and Area 8 Stage 1 closure.

The project timelines:

- Area 5/6 projected start in May 2026
- Area 8 projected closure in April 2026
- Area 9 preparation in May 2026

The primary contractors are Scarsella and Goodfellow Brothers, with additional sub-contractors. The relocation of landfill employees to the North Flare Station will happen in August 2026.



Image of landfill areas shared with meeting attendees. Top of image is North Flare Station, bottom of image is Cedar Grove Road, road on right is Maple Valley Highway.

Area 5 & 6 preparation: May 2026 – Dec. 2028

- Export of interim cover soil, installation of landfill gas collection, conveyance systems, leachate collection infrastructure, and preparation for refuse placement and final cover.
- Current status: Contractor currently mobilizing site to start work on Area 5W.

Area 8 stage 1 closure: May 2025 – July 2026

- Installation of final and interim cover system, landfill gas collection, conveyance systems, and leachate collection infrastructure.
- Current status: Contractor currently working on finishing final cover system on south slope, interim cover on east slope.

Area 9 & Area 4 stockpile: May 2025 – Sept. 2027

- Demolition of existing maintenance facilities and excavation of Area 9 refuse cell.
- Current status: Contractor mobilized. Developing demolition plan to start in June. Processing available soils for A9 stockpile.

Interim Facilities Relocation: June 2025 – Nov. 2026

- Relocation and reconfiguration of existing support office and facility spaces at north and south end of landfill.
- Current status: Construction and site reconfiguration is ongoing. Permanent move plan and schedule under development. Permanent moves targeted for later this year.

Monteiro turned the mic over to Chris Stubbs.

Acquisitions, monitoring, construction and future projects

Christ stubbs

4 Interior Headers

- This project is going to bid this summer.
- This grant-funded project replaces the current interior header, improving landfill gas system control. It must be sequenced before the vertical well installation.

Area 8

- Work on final lifts and environmental controls is currently ongoing and remains on schedule.
- Haul road safety has been enhanced through completed improvements, including widening the asphalt at a particularly tight curve.
- The interim closure is now complete, with the cover system and soil placement finished across all slopes. Two-thirds of these slopes have been seeded and are already showing grass growth, while the remaining third will be seeded next week.

- Gas collection is performing well with all gas lines now fully connected.
- Upcoming well upgrades will take place over the next month, during which condensate drainage upgrades will be installed on 21 gas wells. This will alleviate water pressure by allowing proper leachate drainage, ultimately enabling the gas crew to take accurate readings.
- Lead contractor: Goodfellow Brothers Inc.

Area 9

- Development underway.
- Construction is underway to create a truck turnaround area. The north/south section is complete, and the east/west section is currently in the ground prep and earthwork phase.
- New wheel wash at the top of A4 was installed and has been operational since Monday, May 11.
- Lead contractor: Goodfellow Brothers Inc.

Area 5 and 6

- Site access coordination is underway. Soil removal is scheduled to begin within four weeks.
- To prevent potential odors, contractor will leave a 3-foot buffer layer of soil rather than excavating down to the refuse. Contractor is required to submit a comprehensive odor and fugitive emissions control plan for approval before any soil removal begins.
- Lead contractor: Scarcella

Landfill facilities and functions

- Temporary relocation underway
- Lead contractor: Western Ventures

Major Asset rehabilitation

The North Flare Station

- With CHARGE plant operational, beginning rehabilitation of flares. Capital Improvement Project (CIP) is scheduled to start this year to replace three of the five flares, immediate maintenance is required in the interim.
- Refractory (insulation) replacement for Flare 2 is necessary because currently inoperable due to safety concerns. Three of five flares required to be running at any given time, having Flare 2 offline leaves one active backup.
- Replacement of flare tips will also be addressed during maintenance window to ensure optimal performance.
- Frone inspection of flares for hot spots will be access structural integrity and identify any further localized insulation degradation.

Contamination Stormwater (CSW)

- Upgrades to Pump Station 1A are underway to ensure the reliable transfer of CSW to lagoons at south end. *CSW is a combination of stormwater that may have come into contact with refuse, or leachate, condensate, and flow from the upper layers of the leachate lines.*
- Conveyance line replacement and repairs being performed in conjunction with upgrades to maintain system integrity.

Leachate lagoon liner

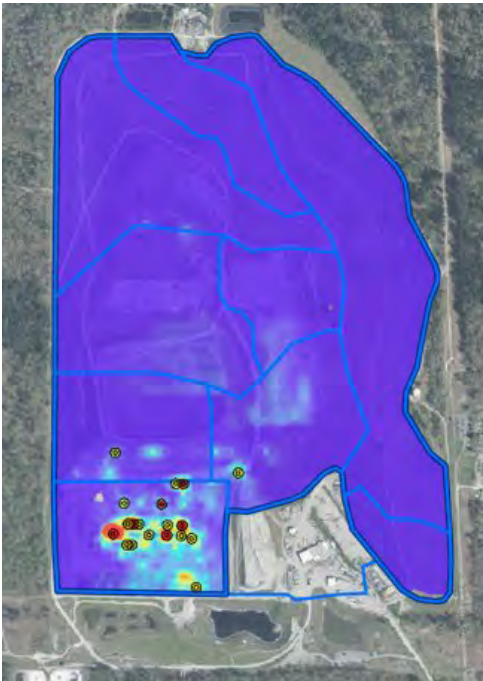
- Access installation and inspection scheduled for June/July will satisfy permit requirement to inspect lagoon liners.
- Process includes taking geo-electric readings, which serve as diagnostic tool for detecting possible liner leak. If readings indicate a potential leak, lagoons must be drained so liners can undergo thorough physical inspection.

Vault lids

- Scheduled equipment replacement underway at SR 169 & 154th NE. SWD regularly takes H2S readings at this location; however, current vault lids are difficult to close once opened and require maintenance.
- Coordinating with WTD, WSDOT, and DLS. No traffic impacts expected.

Stormwater infrastructure

- Repairs currently underway



Dynamic graphic from drone footage shown at meeting demonstrates initial large area of red on active face then faded to current emissions now that environmental controls and interim closure for Area 8 are in place.

Drone flights confirm emissions control for landfill. Flights allow SWD to find and fix hot spots quicker than previously. *Note: Emissions calculations are modeled, not measured and formula is set by the EPA.*

Has been an increase in emissions between 2024 and 2025 that was largely driven by construction, operational adjustments, and CHRGE plant start-up. Frone monitoring data supports trend analysis.

Stubbs handed the mic to Singer.

Future projects and acquisitions

Rebecca Singer

Projects under design & study for 2026:

- Leachate lagoon improvements include better aeration and a cover. Project team continuing with original scope.
 - Currently reviewing asset program to ensure leachate lagoons are functioning effectively. Because of discharge to South Treatment Plant, Division is proactive and mindful about the quality of the flow sent.
- Completed past, present, and predictive stormwater modeling for the southern portion of the site to determine if future runoff controls necessary.
 - To maintain a good relationship with Cedar Grove, launching new stormwater flow study. While a study was conducted a few years ago, it lacked necessary scope. New, more robust study will precisely track where stormwater is being managed and routed.
- Upcoming CIP project will assess condition, location, and hydraulic profile of the CHRLF leachate main down to Wastewater Treatment Division's main connection. The project will also include leak testing.
- Arsenic removal updates:
 - We are piloting an MBR program and have seen reductions in our system.
 - Leachate (Areas 5, 6, & 7): Phase I of the pilot program to remove arsenic from these isolatable areas yielded promising results. We are now advancing to Phase II.
 - Condensate: Following successful bench testing for arsenic removal, this initiative is moving into the pilot project phase. Because this condensate bypasses the leachate lagoons, it does not require King County Industrial Waste (KCIW) oversight.
- Site-wide hydrogeologic study underway.
 - In response to regulatory feedback, implementing improvements to well network. Upgrades will provide more accurate, updated assessment of groundwater conditions and track environmental changes.
 - Cannot control groundwater movement but enhancements allow monitoring of flow paths and maximization of water protection efforts.

Eastern property acquisition

- Fencing placed around properties purchased before April 2026
- Trees cut during fencing now replaced, irrigation in place
- Patrols of parcels discontinued in April
- Three additional owners reached out regarding selling property
- SWD purchased two parcels in 2026
 - o Fencing will be installed in fall/winter 2026
 - o Houses will not be included in current deconstruction project

Eastern property deconstruction

- Contract could not be awarded due to misunderstanding of deconstruction language
- SWD staff working to update bid package to add clarifying language
 - o Deconstruction is different than demolition
- Bid package sent to King County procurement team mid-May
 - o Typically takes 3-6 months.
- If successfully awarded, anticipate completion spring 2027
- Sites will be left with erosion control in place, some trees remaining, no landscaping

Eastern property site maintenance

- Landscaping services to be discontinued. Will continue to monitor for Class B & C invasive weeds.
- Dry weather ditch maintenance in the right of way belongs to City of Maple Valley, not SWD.
- Driveway culverts to be removed during deconstruction and returned to open ditch.
- Landscape services on 2027 property purchases will continue until deconstruction.
- Once the houses down, sites will be prepared for erosion control. No landscaping services will be done beyond weed control.

Eastern property site restoration

- Working with King County Parks to design predevelopment site for 2027
 - o Working to restore and maximize natural character of the space
- Planning to request Conservation Corps and volunteers for planting events in fall 2027

Singer handed the mic to Copado.

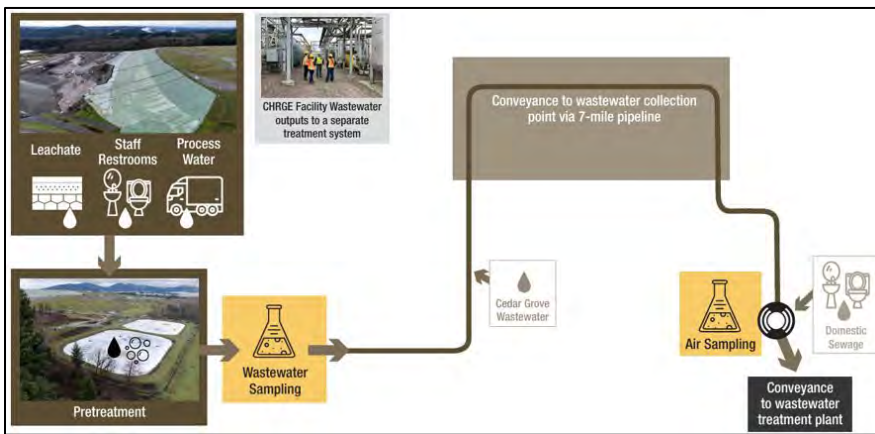
Environmental monitoring & compliance

Aaron Copado

Copado explained conveyance process for landfill and demonstrated with graphic: landfill generates leachate, leachate is piped from landfill to two lagoons at the southwest corner of the CHRLF property.

Other inputs to the lagoons include:

- Contaminated stormwater
- Process water such as water used to wash trucks
- Sewage from onsite bathrooms



Graphic shown during meeting to demonstrate conveyance process.

Once combined, inputs are called industrial wastewater. SWD has permit that allows discharge of industrial wastewater to the closest wastewater treatment plant (South Treatment Plant). Wastewater is aerated in lagoons for pre-treatment prior to going to treatment plant.

Once industrial wastewater leaves lagoons, it travels through a 7-mile-long pipe before connecting to wastewater collection and conveyance system and ultimately flows to South Treatment Plant in Renton.

CHRL and Cedar Grove Composting facility only inputs into 7-mile conveyance pipe. Regular sampling takes place at beginning and end of pipe. Results are compared to limits set in the permit.

CHRL industrial wastewater compliance permit contains multiple limits, including limits related to the volume and chemistry of industrial wastewater. Monitoring and sampling results consistently confirm compliance with most, but not all of limits.

Currently, SWD unable to consistently meet arsenic discharged limits (arsenic loading) on daily basis. To address issue, SWD is pursuing a new treatment system to remove arsenic from the industrial wastewater.

Work required by compliance order issued by King County Industrial Waste Program.

Occasionally, monitoring indicates sulfide limits are not met. Instances tend to happen when one aerator in lagoons breaks down. Once repairs are made, discharges return to compliance. Longer term, SWD is pursuing improvements to the aeration system that will provide more reliable pretreatment.

SWD flared 100% of the landfill gas during Bio Energy Washington shut down. Based on high arsenic concentrations in condensate removed from the gas, questions arose about arsenic concentrations in gas itself, and fate of any arsenic emitted via flaring. PSCAA issued an administrative order in late 2023 requiring SWD to evaluate arsenic in landfill emissions and, depending on the outcome of the evaluation, implement emission controls as needed.

SWD was interested in better understanding emissions but studies of this nature had not been undertaken previously – question of arsenic emissions from a landfill was novel.

If results indicate Acceptable Source Impact Levels (ASILs) may be exceeded, would then control emissions using Best Available Control Technology (BACT).

Arsenic air monitoring – current status

SWD has received the results from July 2025 sampling events. Don't yet have a final report but some preliminary takeaways from the results include:

- Concentrations of arsenic in ambient air were similar at an upwind offsite location, multiple fenceline onsite locations, both up and downwind, as well as a regional monitoring station in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle.
- Ambient air sampling near the leachate lagoons was inconclusive – results neither ruled out nor confirmed the lagoons as a source of arsenic emissions.
- FTIR monitoring did not detect arsine, which is a gaseous form of arsenic.
- Slight modifications in sampling protocols between earlier sampling events and this one helped improve data quality.

All sampling events undertaken to evaluate arsenic emissions were conducted while 100% of LFG was being flared. Any arsenic in gas was potentially emitted in flare exhaust.

Since SWD purchased the landfill-gas-to-energy plant in fall 2025, roughly 8% of landfill gas has been flared. Reasonable to estimate that current arsenic emissions today are fraction of what they would have been during the sampling events. Important because sampling results are used as inputs for dispersion model which is in progress right now. However, the sampling results represent a scenario that is quite different from current conditions. Model results will predict whether and where an ASIL exceedance might occur if/when SWD were to resume flaring 100% of collected landfill gas, which SWD has no plans to do.

Air monitoring – next steps

Final modeling report should be available this summer, then submitted to Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA). Report will inform the best available control technology (BACT) determination and then SWD expects PSCAA will issue an enforceable order requiring implementation of BACT.

Copado turned the mic over to Kalyn Brady, who set the ground rules for the Q&A.

Question and Answer Period

Are the north facilities already built? When will people move in?

The facilities will be completed in August and that is when people will move in.

Where is the budget for this construction? What does the transparency look like – are we over or under budget?

The construction budget is part of our capital portfolio, which is specifically allocated money. Capital money is long-term debt that is paid over years to help keep the rate low. Typically, this type of debt is paid off in 20 years but that can depend on the cost of the project. To determine how much is spent, we undergo a rate setting process where there are checks and balances, as well as King County Executive and King County Council approval. All of our funds are transparent.

Where can people see this budget?

This budget and timeline can be seen at King County Council meetings or online on the King County Council [website](#). We are sending out budget package to the Executive soon with the rate projected to be sent to Council on June 19. Council typically pushes back with questions and concerns. As the rate process continues, it becomes harder to go back and reassess the rate, but we have done it before.

How is SWD funded?

SWD operates as an enterprise-funded business, meaning taxes are not part of our revenue. Most of SWD's money comes from tipping fees at the transfer stations – either from the public's self-haul or from the haulers.

For Area 5/6 - how much soil is being taken off?

We will remove top cover down to three feet of soil above the refuse layer.

Will there be vibrating compactors?

No.

Will you be drilling into the garbage for vertical wells?

We have no current well drilling. We drilled in stage one closure of Area 8 and we will be putting in vertical wells in Areas 5, 6, and 7.

How long will the filling take for Areas 5 and 6?

We are planning to start filling this area May 2027. The area is split into three sections and each section has approximately one year's worth of space before reach capacity.

How long will Area 9 be open?

The development for Area 9 is underway and once open, it will stay in use until the landfill reaches final capacity around 2040. We will leave extra space for Area 9 for emergency use such as a regional natural disaster.

After five years of an area being opened, the exposure to methane significantly increases. Is SWD expecting Area 9 to be open longer than 5 years?

Yes, but we are making efforts to mitigate the impacts. We will fill Area 9 up to grade and apply an initial cover. As we reach different height milestones, we will continue adding covers to keep exposed areas protected as much as possible.

If the relocation is just temporary, what is the long-term plan?

We are currently in the permitting process for a permanent facility in the southeast portion of the landfill. The project is at 90% design and we are evaluating alternative options for office space. We plan to submit the special use permit application once we reach 99% design.

Is there a problem with the power company and the BPE easement?

The issues with the BPE easement are related to the leachate lagoons and not the permanent facilities project.

Where is the facility for washing and working on the trucks?

The truck wash is being converted into a temporary cat shack that will be used until the new mechanical area is built. We will still have some maintenance people at the landfill working onsite during this period.

Where will the permanent facility be?

Our maintenance facility is currently in Renton, but we are looking for a permanent, centrally located home for our mechanics that makes sense for all our sites. This new facility will likely be off the landfill, as we are shifting our business model to focus on disposal solutions for after the landfill closes.

Last year, SWD indicated that a decision regarding the next LTD would be reached by June 2026. Could you provide an update on the selected option?

We are currently in the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process evaluating the environmental impacts of the two alternatives, with a final recommendation slated for 2028. The timeline includes a public comment period in 2027, after which the proposal will move to the Executive and then to the Council. Given the generational impacts of this decision, we are actively seeking input from all cities and stakeholders to ensure every perspective is incorporated into the Executive recommendation.

Is SWD still building the second canister?

A new state emissions rule went into effect several years ago that prohibits the installation of any new open flares. We are working to replace the old flare by requesting permission to replace it with a new flare that we purchased before this law went into effect. The old flare will be recycled if we are able to replace it. If not, we will working with our Green Building team to find a buyer for the new flare.

How often are the flares inspected?

The flares undergo annual visual inspections, both internally and externally, to assess overall condition and identify damage, evaluate system performance, and evaluate equipment status. Emissions testing is conducted every five years to comply with permit requirements.

What kind of drones are being used and how long have they been in use?

Launched in 2024, our drone program operates with strict protocols and licensed pilots, utilizing an internal fleet for surveying and photography. For specialized methane monitoring, we partner with SNIFFER Robotics, utilizing their EPA-approved technology.

When will SWD tear down the buildings? Does SWD check for contaminants? Is it an expensive process?

We always check buildings for contaminants so we can safely recycle the materials. Deconstruction can be more expensive than just using a bulldozer—depending on our project partners—but we are committed to being good environmental stewards. This approach allows us to recover as many materials as possible while also helping to create new green jobs.

What is the MBR system?

We are piloting an innovative treatment system to remove arsenic from leachate before it enters the lagoons. The system utilizes a membrane bioreactor (MBR), similar to the technology deployed at the Brightwater treatment plant, which features cartridge-bound, hollow-fiber tubes that act as a sieve to capture micro-bacteria and contaminants. While municipal water systems typically use MBRs as a final filtration step before drinking water distribution, there is currently no standard technology for removing arsenic from landfill leachate. This pilot will determine if the system can successfully bridge that gap.

What is the timeline for this project?

The pilot is currently happening.

Why is leachate treated at the beginning and not at the end? Why is it not treated at the South Treatment Plant?

Our permit requires that we treat leachate on the front end before discharge to the treatment plant. Since we are regulated for arsenic levels in the leachate, we are moving forward with installing this system now. This also protects biosolids by ensuring contaminants are treated before they reach the wastewater plant, keeping the process fully compliant with strict EPA regulations.

What are the results of the arsenic air monitoring? Has a final model been completed?

Available updates remain consistent with those provided during the last community meeting. Additional information will be shared as it becomes available.

Arsenic changes form depending on its environment - whether it's water, air, etc. Various forms of arsenic have different toxicities, and industry experts are struggling to find ways to measure them accurately. Part of why the testing took so long is that SWD commissioned novel methods for detecting and calculating arsine, the gaseous form of arsenic that is specifically mentioned in the state air regulations.

What about all other toxins in the landfill gas?

More than 90% of all landfill gas collected from the landfill is processed at the CHARGE Plant, where impurities are removed to meet strict standards for renewable natural gas. Landfill gas that does not go to the CHARGE Plant is routed to the North Flare Station, where it is combusted in flares. The combustion process destroys >98.5% of non-methane organic compounds in the gas, including those considered toxic.

Is there anything to test the combined effects of toxins?

Compliance with Acceptable Source Impact Levels (ASIL) is determined for each air pollutant on an individual basis. If a source is unable to show compliance, it may submit a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to the Department of Ecology for second tier review. The HIA determines health effects for people who are exposed to increased amounts of the toxic air pollutant from the source.

Has the Clean Air Agency's permit for Areas 5 and 6 gone out? Is it open for public comment?

A Notice of Construction application was submitted to PSCAA in November 2025. It is currently under review by the agency. Our understanding is that this application will be subject to a public review period at a time to be determined by PSCAA.

Where is the pipeline?

The conveyance pipe runs east from the leachate lagoons, then roughly parallels 228th, Cedar Grove Road, and Maple Valley Highway (State Route 167). The conveyance line ends near the intersection of Maple Valley Highway, where it connects to the Wastewater Treatment Division's sanitary sewer conveyance system.

Do you test the wells along Cedar Grove Road?

We monitor atmospheric hydrogen sulfide in the structure where our leachate pipeline connects to WTD's sewer.

Is some of this gas sold to PSE?

Yes.

Could the former Boeing property be used as another landfill?

This adjacent property, Queen City Farms, is owned by our neighbor Cedar Grove. That area was a superfund site. They have a consent decree.

Do you have a system for groundwater and have there been exceedances? Is there an aquifer?

We monitor a network of over 100 groundwater wells on a strict periodic schedule. View the quarterly reports [online](#).

Response from Ecology staff in audience: The deep aquifer is monitored via approximately 45 wells on a semi-annual basis, with data reported directly to the Council and published online. We collaborate closely with the Department of Ecology on this monitoring program, and we anticipate a substantial well redevelopment project in the coming years.

While Ecology's dedicated project page (search: 'CHRLF Ecology') notes some historical exceedances, overall trends are decreasing and remaining stable. These groundwater wells are strategically designed to ensure regulatory compliance and prevent any downslope environmental harm. Managing this alongside an adjacent Superfund site creates a unique operational environment; however, recent data shows that as groundwater exits the property, no volatile compounds have been detected.

Can you provide a status update on the East Perch Zone test results, as well as the progress on the leachate pond covers?

We are actively pursuing the Special Use Permit, a process that has been underway with the Department of Local Services for approximately two years. While we have not yet reached the final approval stage, we are advancing the procurement process for external consulting services. Additionally, we have received approval for a dedicated on-site hydrology position and will soon begin hiring a hydrologist to manage on-site operations.

Former SWD Director Pat McLaughlin said he wanted to leave some capacity at the landfill for emergencies – where will this be and will it be left uncovered?

We are intentionally reserving some space in Area 9 for emergency use, such as a major natural disaster. While this means we won't be fully utilizing the landfill's capacity right now, it is a decision we have to make as a region to ensure we are prepared if something happens.

The state requires that there's a plan for closed landfill. When does the clock start?

Even though we are leaving some emergency space open, we are still moving forward with the closure process. We already manage and monitor nine other closed landfills as stewards. A site owner/operator is required to perform post closure care for 30 years or as long as necessary to reach functional stability.

Is there any scenario where SWD can come back and begin filling again after everything is settled?

Retroactively going back to fill that space would be incredibly difficult and expensive. That is why we are developing a long-term disposal (LTD) decision and writing it into code. The LTD process will include a SEPA review, giving the public three separate opportunities to comment. Those comments and responses will be built directly into the FEIS.

What is the rationale for seeking input from municipalities that do not host the landfill? Furthermore, what incentives exist for these non-host cities to actively engage in the comment process rather than disregard it?

Talking with residents about the LTD option means preparing for the landfill's closure and the end of its active use. As a region, we have to decide where our waste will go next. The main choices are waste-to-rail - shipping it to one of two landfills on the Columbia River - or waste-to-energy, which means mass burning the waste.

This is why outside cities are paying close attention. Communities along the rail lines, like Kent and Auburn, are weighing in because they want to know how this will impact them. For context, Seattle already sends out a 1.2-mile train every day, and our system would require an even longer one. On the other hand, almost no one wants a waste-to-energy facility in their area. We are out talking to these cities to understand how they view these choices. What we decide today will have a generational impact, so we are gathering input from as many city representatives as possible before making our formal recommendation to the Executive and the King County Council.

How are you educating partner cities on modern waste-to-energy technologies, given that public pushback historically centers on emissions, smokestacks, and air pollution?

A significant number of cities are supportive of Waste-to-Energy (WTE). We are currently conducting a comprehensive WTE study - assessing operational requirements, potential siting, and associated costs - to provide the Council with a clear understanding of how this option would impact the county.

Comment Period

- Resident is very concerned about that green special district because it includes the Cedar Grove parcels, which would allow for the construction of a WTE plant.
- WTE is typically more expensive, and cities are worried that their residents will have to shoulder the extra costs.
- The bird problem is currently severe and lacks proper management. It is becoming a health issue for neighbors who must pick up littered trash.
- Area 8 should be completely sealed, while keeping a separate area available somewhere else for emergency space.
- Because this region only has one representative, there is fear that other cities will push a WTE facility into UKC just to keep it out of their own jurisdictions. During the last EIS, outside cities seemed indifferent to local impacts, leading to frustration that local comments are not being taken seriously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.