



SAG Meeting #10 Summary

Siting Advisory Group
Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station

SAG Members in Attendance:

- Aaron Moldver, City of Redmond
- Amrit Bhuie, AR Environmental Consulting
- Andreas Kolshorn, At-large
- James Randolph, At-large
- Jared Hill, City of Woodinville
- Jenna McInnis, City of Kirkland
- Julie Underwood, City of Kirkland
- Paula Goelzer, At-large
- Sandy Cobb, Unincorporated King County
- Susan Vossler, At-large
- Tehmina Ali, Resident
- William Louie, Resident
- William Su, Resident

Staff Members in Attendance:

- Penny Mabie, Definitely Mabie Consulting
- Mary O'Hara, King County Solid Waste
- Phil Coughlan, Herrera Environmental Consultants
- Kalyn Brady, King County Solid Waste
- Amy Ockerlander, King County Solid Waste
- Annie Kolb-Nelson, King County Solid Waste
- Clynn Wilkinson, King County Solid Waste
- Isabelle Trujillo, King County Solid Waste
- Jennifer Gemmill, King County Solid Waste
- Jimmy Mota, King County Solid Waste
- Pat McLaughlin, King County Solid Waste
- Jordan Sanabria, EnviroIssues
- Sarah Omlor, EnviroIssues
- Tay Stone, EnviroIssues
- Evan Griffiths, Jacobs Engineering
- Kate Bradbury, Parametrix

Approximate number of audience attendees: 5

Welcome

Penny Mabie (Definitely Mabie Consulting, Facilitator) welcomed members of the Siting Advisory Group (SAG) and gave members a brief refresher on the available Zoom features. Penny reminded the group of the SAG meeting agreements and provided an overview of the meeting's agenda.

Project update

Mary O'Hara (King County Solid Waste, NERTS Project Manager) provided an overview of the project need and the work that King County SWD has completed to date for the siting process. Activities included convening the SAG, revising the scoping notice, and holding an additional public comment period after removing the Houghton Park & Ride site from the environmental review.

Mary then reviewed a high-level schedule of what's next for the project, including a reminder to attendees that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is now published. The public comment period has begun, and the County will be accepting comments through April 9, 2024. The final EIS is scheduled to be issued in Q3 2024 and the final siting decision is scheduled in Q4 2024. Once the site is selected, the project team will move toward preliminary design efforts beginning in late 2024 to early 2025. The design is scheduled to be finalized in 2027 and the new facility is expected to open in 2029.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) environmental review

Phil Coughlan (Herrera Environmental Consultants) presented an overview of the environmental review process, including an overview of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Phil then explained the EIS process and where the public comment period falls on that timeline, as well as how the EIS is related to the decision-making process related to siting the NERTS facility.

Phil then provided an overall summary of the findings in the Draft EIS, sharing that the evaluation included both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Phil also described the potential for adverse impacts and opportunities for mitigation across each SEPA topic assessed for the four alternatives (the No Action Alternative, Alternatives 1A and 1B at the existing Houghton Transfer Station site, and the Alternative 2 site in Woodinville). He highlighted that for all the action alternatives, construction impacts would be temporary, and mitigation would reduce most identified impacts to less than significant. Phil then reviewed key findings specific to each of the alternatives:

No Action Alternative

- No new NERTS facility would be built. King County Solid Waste Division (SWD) would continue to use the existing, open-sided and outdated Houghton Transfer Station.
- Key impact areas for consideration include environmental health (odors, waste storage, litter, vectors, noise), transportation (truck trips, level of service and safety), hazardous materials (ongoing maintenance as the existing site is adjacent to a closed landfill) and land use (there are some incompatibilities with current land uses that are adjacent, namely the residential properties near the site).
- Key mitigation measures include meeting regulatory requirements, SWD operational practices, and coordination with local agencies and neighborhood stakeholders.
- There are no potential benefits identified for this alternative.

Alternative 1A and Alternative 1B

- A new facility would be built at the existing transfer station site in Kirkland. Phil explained the layout of the new proposed site for each alternative.

- The main difference between Alternative 1A and Alternative 1B is determined by whether the existing transfer station building would be demolished prior to constructing the new station, or if the building would remain operational during the construction of the new station and repurposed or replaced once the new station was operational.
- Key areas for consideration include construction (noise), hazardous materials (via excavation of waste from the closed landfill), environmental health (such as litter and vectors), land use (incompatibilities with land use policies and potential future uses) and transportation (truck trips, level of service and safety).
- Potential benefits include stormwater quality improvements, reduced impacts from odor, noise, air, etc., and implementation of new environmental control systems that meet closure and post-closure care requirements in areas of disturbance at the existing closed Houghton landfill where waste remains (Washington Administrative Code 173-351-1500).
 - While the potential excavation of waste could have a potential impact from exposure to materials currently entombed in the closed landfill, a potential benefit would be that the area of disturbance would be reconfigured with the most up to date environmental control/treatment systems.
- Key mitigation measures include meeting regulatory requirements, implementing a construction management plan, modern design features, structural best management practices (BMPs) and SWD operational practices and coordination with local agencies and neighborhood stakeholders.

Alternative 2

- A new facility would be built at an identified potential site in Woodinville. Phil explained that because this site has a wetland, a new wetland delineation would be needed to identify the required buffers of the wetland that the construction would have to stay away from. If it is unavoidable, then mitigation on or off site would have to occur.
- Key areas for consideration include the nearby wetlands (indirect and direct), air quality (new emissions in the area), land use (incompatibilities with land use policies and potential future uses), cultural and historic resources (high risk) and transportation (truck trips, level of service and safety).
 - Phil explained that the reason cultural and historic resources are considered high risk is due to the location in the Sammamish River basin. There is potential for finding human remains or cultural artifacts on the site. He noted that a survey of the site could take place in advance of construction, archaeologists could be present during construction and an Inadvertent Discovery Plan could be put together in advance to mitigate impacts. Coordination would occur with the City of Woodinville, interested tribes, and the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
- Potential benefits include stormwater quality improvements.
- Key mitigation measures include wetland mitigation (on or off site) as well as the mitigation listed for Alternatives 1A and 1B: meeting regulatory requirements, implementing a construction management plan, modern design features, structural best management practices (BMPs) and SWD operational practices and coordination with local agencies and neighborhood stakeholders.

Siting Advisory Group Question and Answer Session

Upon completing the Draft EIS overview, Phil asked SAG members if they had any questions about the information presented.

Q: There were high emotions shared from the community about previously considered sites. Now that it's just these two sites, what coordination has been going on with neighborhoods? What's next?

A: One of the best things that area stakeholders can do next is to review the Draft EIS. The context for an EIS is that it's an information source for the public and decision makers. Having community perspective on what impacts may exist or what mitigation may be employed to reduce impacts is important for us because the better those are described and included in the EIS following public comment, the better information decision makers and stakeholders will have when it comes to selecting a site, the permitting process, and identifying methods to reduce impacts during construction and operation. As far as coordination with nearby neighborhoods, we have held scoping meetings and in-person meetings, and we have sent out newsletter updates. The primary activity since our last SAG meeting was developing the Draft EIS.

Q: Will I find details regarding transportation and the carbon impact, particles, etc. on how the studies were constructed and the findings?

A: The transportation report is very thorough in terms of describing its methodology as well as the data it collected. There is an air quality technical report that is part of the EIS that discusses the calculation of greenhouse gases.

Q: Does it go so far as to compare a truck driving to different transfer stations?

A: There is some discussion regarding differences in distances but not to that level of detail. This is a good comment to make for the Draft EIS, and a great example of the kind of substantive comment that is helpful in informing the Final EIS.

Q: Could you explain land uses and essential public facilities and how that's reconciled?

A: State law sets the guidance for siting essential public facilities. It requires that jurisdictions develop a process to site facilities when they're considered essential. Each of the comprehensive plans (Woodinville and Kirkland) have a discussion of their essential public facilities process for siting and for permitting. There are a couple of things that are significant. State law defines an essential public facility as a facility that is large, usually difficult to site facilities (such as prisons, solid waste facilities, wastewater facilities, and airports) that benefit a large group and must exist for the community to function. It precludes jurisdictions from putting up impediments that would effectively prevent an essential public facility from being constructed in their jurisdictions.

Q: On the maps for the Kirkland site (No Action Alternative, Alternative 1A and 1B), there is an area in the upper right corner labeled as "Existing Taylor Fields" when it is a residential home. Why is that labeled that way?

A: I'm not sure, that may be a typo. Thank you for catching that.

Q: One of the potential benefits for Alternatives 1A and 1B is with the excavation of the garbage of that area. Do you know what percentage would be excavated?

A: Not at this point. If this site was chosen for the new NERTS facility, information on how much of the landfill would be excavated would be gleaned as part of the design plan that would be developed in the next phase of the project.

Q: The Washington Department of Ecology noted that there are carcinogens from the Kirkland site that aren't currently harmful to humans as long as they remain undisturbed. Is this addressed in the Draft EIS?

A: Pollutants are addressed in Section 3.4, Hazardous Materials, in the Draft EIS.

Q: A nearby school was mentioned for the Woodinville site but not for the Kirkland site. There are schools at both sites. Do you go into that in the Draft EIS?

A: Yes.

Q: Of all the comments you receive, are you planning on matrixing those and responding to them? Or are you just taking them in?

A: We are required to respond to them and include those responses in the Final EIS. There are a variety of ways to respond to them. We will combine similar comments and respond to them once instead of submitting duplicative responses. It will be a matrix-like appendix to the Final EIS.

Q: Public recycling facility is not a materials recovery facility, right?

A: No, a public recycling facility is not a materials recovery facility.

Q: I was surprised to hear that the current Houghton Transfer Station is considered a Kirkland City historic landmark, is that correct?

A: Because of its age, it is eligible for protection as a landmark, but it would need to go through an evaluation by professionals to determine if it meets the standard.

Q: Will this presentation be sent out to the SAG for review later? How should SAG members provide comments? Can we respond by email?

A: The PowerPoint will be sent out after the presentation. The Draft EIS is available for review on the website. It'll be much more valuable to you to make formal comments to the Draft EIS rather than to the presentation slides.

Q: Is the Yarrow Creek wetland discussed in the EIS?

A: Yes, the Yarrow Creek wetland is discussed in the water resources section, vegetation section, and wetlands section. Should the new NERTS facility be sited there, a benefit to these wetlands would be that treatment of the water runoff would be required to meet the current design manual standards (which differ from the current surface water quality standards).

Engagement Opportunities in the Draft EIS

Kalyn Brady (King County Solid Waste) reviewed the opportunities for people to provide public comment on the Draft EIS, noting the 62-day comment period that opened February 7, 2024, and will close April 9, 2024. She explained that comments are accepted via comment form through the online open house, by comment form at one of the in-person Draft EIS public hearings, verbally to a court reporter at one of the Draft EIS public hearings, by email, and by

mail. Kalyn also shared that there will be subject matter experts at the in-person and virtual public hearings that people can speak to and ask questions about the Draft EIS.

Mary walked the SAG through how to access the online open house by visiting the project website. She also explained the format of the online open house and how the site can be navigated to review the Draft EIS. Mary then explained how to use the Draft EIS comment form, including the topic toggles and how to make a substantive/helpful comment.

Public Comment

Penny opened the call for public comments. Audience members were asked to electronically raise their hand to indicate they would like to speak. There were no public comments made.

Next Steps

Penny thanked SAG members for their efforts over their tenure, both acknowledging current and former members. Penny also reviewed SAG activity spanning from the kickoff meeting on October 14, 2020, to this final meeting, which included:

- Participating in 11 SAG meetings
- Participating in 3 site scoring and weighting workshops
- 7 SAG members attended a transfer station tour
- SAG members attended 1 or more of the 4 public meetings held so far
- Studied materials and siting information to prepare for meetings
- Communicated and shared information with their affinity groups

Pat McLaughlin (King County Solid Waste, Division Director) also expressed his thanks to the SAG. Pat acknowledged that as volunteers, SAG members showed their passion and commitment to their community. Pat expressed gratitude to SAG members for participating in a process to replace the existing transfer station at Houghton, which is helping to advance King County SWD's mission of achieving zero waste.

Various SAG members in turn thanked the NERTS team for their efforts in engaging with the SAG. One member expressed interest in staying involved with this project as it progresses. Another member commented on the increased accessibility in community involvement with the introduction of virtual engagement, as all SAG meetings were conducted virtually and were easier to prepare for and attend.

Q: What is the next step expected from SAG members? If we want to give comments, how do we do that?

A: This is the final SAG meeting, so the next step is to take what you learned tonight and encourage your community to participate in the Draft EIS public comment process, using the ways of making comments that Kalyn described. Down the road, King County SWD will be working with the neighbors of the selected site. There will be a lot more that happens with the community in the future.

Penny thanked SAG members and audience members for attending and concluded the meeting.