Solid Waste Interjurisdictional Technical Staff Work Group
Meeting Summary
August 31, 2005
King Street Center

Meeting Attendees:

City Staff:
Sharon Hlavka – City of Auburn
Susan Fife-Ferris – City of Bellevue
Rob Van Orsow – City of Federal Way
Erin Leonhart – City of Kirkland
Linda Knight – City of Renton
Desmond Machuca – City of SeaTac

County Staff:
Peggy Dorothy -County Council Staff
Kevin Kiernan - SWD
Theresa Koppang - SWD
Diane Yates – SWD
Gemma Alexander - SWD

I. Report Four Work Schedule

The Solid Waste Division distributed a handout of the MSWMAC work schedule for Report Four. Report Four is due to council on January 30, 2006, which means that the report must be completed by December 30. The Waste Export System Plan is a separate document that will be due in April 2006. The division recognizes that, given such a tight schedule, ITSG will have to meet more often than monthly in order to prepare recommendations to MSWMAC on time. Diane Yates added that the ILA/Governance discussions are part of the work load in addition to the schedule presented.

ITSG members were very concerned about the tight schedule and discussed how to meet it. ITSG agreed that discussion of transfer station and intermodal options could be paired to save time because similar considerations apply to each. Bellevue emphasized that less meeting time could be spent on materials if the division gives members time to review them before the meeting. Renton commented that cities are also accountable to keep the process moving. ITSG agreed that while each member must represent their city's interest, ITSG must be willing to note areas of disagreement and move topics forward to MSWMAC.

County Council Staff Peggy Dorothy commented that the county is also a member of ITSG, by the cities' request. As a member, the county will sometimes have an opinion or suggest changes that should also be reflected. In reference to the division's revision of the assumptions before the August 24 meeting, she acknowledged that it would have been appropriate for the division to alert other ITSG members that they were working on changes, even if those changes were not completed in time for review before the meeting. She suggested that ITSG members should provide suggested language to the note taker when they think something should be included in the record of the meeting.

ITSG reaffirmed its earlier decision to strive for consensus when possible and when consensus is not possible to record areas of disagreement and move on. After discussion, ITSG also agreed that minutes should continue to be more detailed than they were earlier in the process, but should not be verbatim records of the meeting. ITSG agreed by

consensus that particularly in areas of disagreement, the cities that support each position should be identified in the minutes. The division made the points that as more detail is expected in the minutes, the meetings themselves must become more orderly so that the note taker can keep up, and there may not be much time for review of draft minutes when the committee meets weekly. ITSG decided that in the future, draft minutes will be approved or changed at the beginning of each meeting. The division agreed to continue providing draft minutes by the Friday or Monday following the meeting whenever possible, and to give ITSG a chance to review minutes before they are forwarded to MSWMAC.

The division responded to Bellevue's email regarding the August 24 meeting minutes, identified points of disagreement and agreed to provide a more detailed version of the August 24 minutes to ITSG for review by email.

II. Report Four Assumptions

When asked about the difference between items in the assumption and information lists, the division said that both are facts, but assumptions are what analysts need now to proceed with the report. Items in the remaining list need analysis. The assumptions will move forward to MSWMAC together with the bucket lists, which may ultimately be more important because they highlight for policymakers existing policies that may need to be reviewed and reconsidered.

ITSG discussed the idea of early export that Bellevue presented at an earlier meeting. This discussion clarified that the issue of a federated system is unrelated to the question of early export. Bellevue agreed to write something clarifying their thoughts on early export for the committee. The division confirmed that analysis of that option, using the scenario worksheets that were distributed to ITSG members, will be part of the new economist's work program.

In reference to the unfinished discussion from last week about the federated system assumption, SeaTac asked when other types of system planning would be acknowledged. Engineering Services Manager Kevin Kiernan replied that the division is legally bound to plan for 37 cities, and that is the division's only known plan. He added that Damon Diessner of Bellevue first introduced the term "federated system" during meetings held on Mercer Island in 2003. These meetings culminated in Ordinance 14971 which also includes this language. That ordinance gives the division direction for export planning. The division confirmed that the new economist will also analyze scenarios for reduced tonnage and impacts on the system as part of the discussion of transfer system options, as requested by MSWMAC.

However, if for example, the Snoqualmie Valley Cities wanted to leave the system, the division would not analyze how they might do that. The division would only look at what kind of effect that action would have on the system remaining in the county's planning jurisdiction. To date, no one has suggested any such specific scenario for analysis, so a general sensitivity analysis is all that is planned for Report 4. Renton suggested that if any cities want to consider a specific option that does not include 37

cities, they should suggest that option to the committee for discussion. The division emphasized that analysis of a non-federated system will only ask the question, "What impact does this have on the remaining system?"

The division suggested that when the assumptions are presented to MSWMAC on September 9th, ITSG members draw MSWMAC's attention to the federated system assumption for discussion.

ITSG agreed to eliminate use of the term "bucket" from the lists of additional issues, and to refer to the issues by category.

ITSG agreed by consensus to forward the revised assumptions and list of other issues to MSWMAC for further discussion.

III. Compaction Feasibility Analysis

Kiernan presented a diagram of the physical layout of the King County transfer stations (except Bow Lake, which has a different design) which are direct dump facilities. He said the division has analyzed the possibility of retrofitting the existing stations with compactors. A retrofit would involve placing a compactor in the existing chute without changing the footprint of the building. There are only two brands of compactor, and they both have similar specifications, so the analysis is appropriate to both. Technically, both compactor brands fit into the chutes at existing transfer stations. However, with less than three feet of clearance on either side of the compactor, it is questionable whether there would be sufficient access for regular maintenance.

Currently, trailers drive straight through the stations' chute and park inside. Usually four self-haul and two commercial customers at time can unload waste directly into the chute, which provides 456 ft^2 of dumping area. The addition of a compactor creates an intermediate step in waste handling. Compactors are loaded through a hopper with a single 70 ft^2 opening at the top. Customers cannot dump directly into the hopper. If, for example, a 5 gallon propane tank were dropped into the compactor, it could explode, so waste must be sorted before compaction. This requires a flat floor.

After installation of compactors, self-haul customers would unload directly onto the flat floor, using the same amount of space as they do now. However, commercial trucks would need to pull forward as they unload waste, which adds significantly to the space required to unload, and would not allow self-haul customers to unload at the same time. This operating change would significantly reduce the stations' capacity. Once waste was unloaded on the floor, a county tractor would sort the waste and load it into the hopper. Inside the chute, the compactor would essentially bale, or cube, the waste and then push the cube into a waiting trailer.

The cubes of compacted waste are conservatively expected to weigh 27 tons each, based on the county's operating experience at Enumclaw and Vashon Transfer Stations. Currently, the county gets 17 tons of uncompacted waste into each trailer at its other stations. These numbers were presented to SWAC, where a representative who is

familiar with Snohomish County's export system, and representatives from both of the haulers, found them to be realistic.

In order to receive the compacted waste, trailers would have to drive through the open chute and then back up to the compactor in the other chute. This operation would require at least 200 feet of clearance beyond the transfer building. In most cases, this requirement presents a fatal flaw.

At Algona, a 40-70 foot vertical cut would need to be created in the hillside to make room for trailers to back up to a compactor. The investment would be considerable, and since compaction would result in reduced capacity at the station, the division concludes that retrofitting Algona with a compactor is not feasible.

At Factoria, achieving 200 feet of clearance would require cutting into the Olympic pipeline. The division concludes retrofitting Factoria with a compactor is not feasible.

At Houghton, sufficient clearance is available. The division concludes that retrofitting Houghton with a compactor is feasible. However, policy decisions are required to determine if doing so is desirable. If Houghton is retrofitted with a compactor, the station will lose 2/3 of its capacity. This will feed into the discussion of station alternatives. If Houghton were designated as a self-haul only facility, the loss of capacity at that station may be acceptable. The lost capacity would have to be captured elsewhere in the system, perhaps at a new commercial only facility somewhere in Northeast King County.

At Renton, the clearance is available only if extensive and expensive fill work is done to make the area navigable by trailers. The division concludes that retrofitting Renton with a compactor is not feasible.

At Bow Lake, which has a different layout from the other stations, some fill work would be required. However, the master facility plan for Bow Lake already requires major changes to the facility, and space is available for expansion, so rebuilding is a more practical option for Bow Lake.

First NE was not considered because there is already a plan to rebuild the station with a compactor. Because it is a rebuild instead of a retrofit, no capacity will be lost.

The division has looked at some of the technical aspects of retrofitting with compactors before, but this is the first time that the entire impact has been studied. The degree to which retrofitting impacted operations was surprising.

ITSG considered how the question of public vs. private relates to the question of retrofitting existing stations. Renton was concerned about the potential for lost opportunities from not having control of private stations, which can set their own hours and determine the customer base at will. The division commented that the purpose of the public/private matrix is to identify differences between public and private options.

ITSG agreed that although the Comp Plan assumes "all stations are created equal," other possibilities should be considered. The division commented that it has proposed an anchor/branch transfer system several times in the past. Hours changes at rural facilities and variable recycling services throughout the system may indicate that the uniform level of service concept is not as entrenched as it was.

ITSG asked about outcomes from the recycling workshop. The division agreed to ask Recycling staff for an update at the next meeting.

IV. New Facility Siting Criteria

Lead planner Theresa Koppang explained that the handout on siting criteria is not draft material for Report Four, but is provided as background material for ITSG members to use to familiarize themselves with facility siting. The document contains information from the 1992 Comp Plan, from a recent Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) training, and from the earlier milestone reports. The document summarizes the technical criteria the division already uses to identify potential facility sites.

She suggested that Greg Stought, GIS manager, attend the next ITSG meeting to give a presentation on the process GIS uses to identify potential sites. She suggested that he might use Pierce County as an example so that members can focus on the process rather than the specific sites the search may generate. ITSG agreed to this plan.

ITSG agreed that it was important for new sites to meet the standards identified for old sites, and asked the division to ensure the search criteria reflect the standards used in the milestone reports as much as possible. At Bellevue's suggestion, ITSG agreed that each member should come to the next meeting prepared with suggested criteria for site selection above and beyond those already identified by the division. Examples of siting criteria include:

1. The site is not zoned residential, agricultural or open space.
2. The site is not located within 300 feet of properties zoned residential, agricultural or open space.
3. The site is located within 100 feet of a secondary arterial or better (primary arterial, state highway, freeway).

V. Next Steps

The assumptions will be forwarded to MSWMAC for discussion at their next meeting. The division will give the compactor presentation to MSWMAC at their meeting on September 9th.

ITSG will meet again on Wednesday, September 14 from 10-12 at King Street Center to discuss siting criteria.