

Solid Waste Interjurisdictional Technical Staff Work Group
Meeting and Governance Discussion Summary
June 28, 2006
King Street Center

Meeting Attendees:

City Staff:

Sharon Hlavka – City of Auburn
Alison Bennett – City of Bellevue
Tom Spille – City of Bellevue
Rob Van Orsow – City of Federal Way
Cary Roe – City of Federal Way
Elaine Borjeson – City of Kirkland
Nina Rivkin – City of Redmond
Linda Knight – City of Renton
Desmond Machuca – City of SeaTac
Rika Cecil – City of Shoreline
Amy Ensminger – City of Woodinville
Valarie Jarvi – City of Woodinville

County Staff:

Mike Huddleston – Council Staff
Grover Cleveland – Director’s Office Staff
Jane Gateley - SWD
Kevin Kiernan - SWD
Diane Yates - SWD
Gemma Alexander - SWD

I. Approve Minutes

ITSG approved the May 10 regular meeting minutes and June 14 governance discussion minutes without any changes.

II. Updates

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Waste Export System Plan is available. The comment period is open until July 17. No comments have been received.

First NE reconstruction is proceeding on schedule. During excavation, less garbage needed to be removed than was anticipated. Although a sizable allowance was provided for removal of hazardous materials, no significant quantities of hazardous materials were encountered, so that allowance has not been used.

Consistent with the current Comp Plan, the Bow Lake Facility Master Plan is being developed.

In the Growth Management and Natural Resources Committee, Councilmember Dow Constantine amended the ordinance changing due dates. The amended ordinance may return to the Regional Policy Committee before going to the full council for approval. The amendment expressed support for coordination with Seattle in looking at intermodal facility needs. Council staff Mike Huddleston said the amendment highlights the fact that Seattle is currently siting an intermodal facility, and the county needs to be aware of what Seattle is doing.

Engineering Services Manager Kevin Kiernan said the division confers informally with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) already. SPU has a Comp Plan cycle that runs from 2004-2008, so they are slightly out of sync with the county.

Rob Van Orsow of Federal Way suggested that SPU might have a role at ITSG. Huddleston agreed that ITSG should invite SPU to attend.

Kiernan reported that the division has advertised the Lead Planner position recently vacated by Theresa Koppang, who is moving to Oregon. He commented that most of the planning work for the Waste Export System Plan has been completed, and the work that remains is mostly writing. Fortunately, the division has a new technical writer on staff, Jane Gateley, who is very talented and has worked with the division before.

III. MSWMAC

MSWMAC has asked for regular updates at its meetings from city members of ITSG. ITSG decided to rotate responsibility for providing the updates each month. Sharon Hlavka of Auburn will give the first update. The rotation will move alphabetically through the cities. The division will provide the presenter with ITSG minutes.

At its July meeting, MSWMAC will discuss its role in the ITSG report. The ordinance does not identify a role for MSWMAC except to receive a copy of the report; however, it does not preclude MSWMAC from having a role. Several ITSG members expressed support for MSWMAC's involvement in the development of the report.

IV. Third Party Review

Huddleston reported that council has dedicated one staff person to administering the third party review, and briefly reviewed process. Council will prepare the final list of questions for the review panel, with input from the cities. Delegates from the cities and the haulers will have the opportunity to meet with the review panel to discuss their issues.

ITSG reviewed the summary of the advisory groups' questions that Huddleston had prepared. The division will revise the questions based on ITSG's discussion, which focused primarily on questions under the heading "Transfer Stations." ITSG decided that these questions, including the one about host city mitigation would remain on the list. Examples will be added to the host city mitigation question.

The question about Factoria was specifically discussed. ITSG decided to replace the question with three others that have application to more stations than just Factoria:

1. Is the design the least land-consumptive design that will meet the system's needs?
2. Is there a better way to make sure that a new transfer station is aesthetically compatible with surrounding land use?
3. How do economic aspects, factor in to siting decisions and host city mitigation?

Alison Bennett of Bellevue asked that ITSG's earlier question on waste withdrawal be added to Huddleston's document. Huddleston said that King County Council will not ask that question because it is inconsistent with the ILAs. ITSG discussed whether it was appropriate to present a question that will not move forward, and if so, how the question should be phrased. Several members commented that the question should be more specific. Nina Rivkin of Redmond said that if the question moves forward, it should address a specific geographic area, as the results of the previous general inquiry were not valuable. A clear consensus was not reached before the group agreed to move on to other topics in the interest of time.

V. Waste Export System Plan Recommendations

Kiernan said the document on the plan recommendations is an attempt to summarize the contents of the report so that the division can get input on the substance before writing up the full draft plan.

ITSG members recognized that the division must be sensitive to the constraints of the budget process and stay within the scope of the current SEPA analysis. However, ITSG felt that the recommendations are not broad or strong enough. In particular, the plan should be more emphatic in its recommendation to pursue strategies that expand the life of Cedar Hills. The division acknowledged this and agreed to strengthen the recommendation language. The Cedar Hills language will be changed to say, “We request authority to reopen the Cedar Hills Site Development Plan to maximize the life of the Cedar Hills Landfill, subject to cost effectiveness, environmental review and community considerations.”

ITSG discussed the reasoning for delaying decisions on intermodal facility needs and long haul transport method. Noting that circumstances (such as Waste Connections’ purchase of Northwest Containers and the drop in landfill space prices) have changed significantly even during the course of the planning process ITSG agreed that it is premature to make these decisions with ten or more years remaining to waste export. These decisions should be informed by a determination on how long Cedar Hills will be able to remain open and the results of the partial early export RFP. However, the language used should be more positive, such as, “The system would be better served by maintaining flexibility than by foreclosing options at this time.”

ITSG discussed what level of detail the Waste Export System Plan should include. It was agreed that the milestone reports will be incorporated by reference, and the EIS, Business Plan, Siting Plan and possibly the recycling report will be appendices. However, ITSG agreed that relevant data from the milestone reports should be pulled forward into the plan wherever it is necessary, so that the reader will not have to refer back to previous documents in order to understand the plan.

The impact of recycling rates on the plan and how transfer station designs are affected was examined. ITSG decided the Waste Export System Plan should be explicit about recycling assumptions and how they fit into the planning process. Kiernan said that new transfer stations are being designed with separate collection areas for yard waste/organics and nonspecific, flexible space is being included to allow new transfer stations to respond to future changes in recycling programs. Desmond Machuca of SeaTac commented that she would like to see a more regional approach to recycling than the current one where every city develops recycling policies and contracts individually.

The draft Waste Export System Plan will be available for review in July. ITSG suggested the report should include a discussion of the constraints that could result in actions other than the preferred alternative, such as available property, and changes in recycling programs or growth patterns. For example, the preferred alternative includes closure of Algona Transfer Station and construction of new full service facility in the south county, which will result in the lowest long term operating costs. However, siting constraints

could result in Algona being retained as a self haul facility. Language should be included that clarifies that conditions may result in different decisions at a later date.

After discussion, ITSG decided that it would be better to present a one page outline to MSWMAC than the current 3 page summary. The outline should be presented with a thorough presentation by division staff. A summary of the preferred package should also be provided.

ITSG members commented that the division should remain open to purchasing land for an intermodal facility if a promising site becomes available. It was suggested that, similar to early export, site availability could be one of the items that the division revisits each year in its annual report. Huddleston commented that while transfer station siting should be the division's top priority, it would be prudent to remain open to purchasing an intermodal site, especially if a site is found that could support co-location of an intermodal and a transfer facility.

ITSG began a discussion of Waste-to-Energy, but determined that more time was needed to address it properly. It was agreed that Waste-to-Energy will be a future agenda item to allow for thorough discussion of the issues.

VI. Governance Discussion

ITSG decided to use the remaining time for city members to continue the caucus from the previous meeting.

VII. Next Steps

Intergovernmental Staff Liaison Diane Yates will email members to schedule the next pre-MSWMAC ITSG meeting and the next governance discussion.