

South County Recycling and Transfer Station Siting Siting Advisory Committee Meeting #4 Notes Algona-Pacific Library, Pacific October 10, 2012

Attendees

Marc Davis, Waste Management
Councilmember Dini Duclos, City of Federal Way
Mayor Dave Hill, City of Algona
Byron Hiller, Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce
Patricia Mullen, Federal Way Chamber of Commerce
Diana Quinn, City of Algona
Jodi Riker, White River Valley Citizen Corps Council
Jody Snyder, Waste Connections, Inc.
Rob Van Orsow, City of Federal Way
Gary Venn, Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce
Scott Weide, Auburn School District
Nancy Wyatt, Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce
Jerry Yap, White River Valley Citizen Corps Council

Guests

Juan Lopez, (left before meeting started)
Michelle Treichel, City of Algona Planning Commission

King County Solid Waste Division Staff

Pat McLaughlin, Division Director
Kevin Kiernan, Assistant Division Director
Eric Richardt, Project Manager
Polly Young, Planning and Communications
Kathy Hashagen, Planning and Communications

Consultants

Marcia Wagoner, Read Wagoner (facilitator)
Michael Read, Read Wagoner
Julie Blakeslee, URS Corporation
Cynthia Berne, Long Bay Enterprises

Welcome and Introductions

Polly Young welcomed Siting Advisory Committee (SAC) members and thanked those in attendance for their participation. She then introduced Pat McLaughlin and Kevin Kiernan, Director and Assistant Director of the King County Solid Waste Division.

Pat McLaughlin thanked the SAC for offering their time and attention to participate in the siting process.

Kevin Kiernan echoed Pat's appreciation, adding that members are playing a key role in the implementation of King County's Solid Waste Transfer and Waste Export System Plan. He also noted that earlier in the day he met with King County Council's Regional Policy Committee, informing them that the City of Auburn City Council had passed a resolution opposing the siting of the new recycling and transfer station at either of the two sites (1250 C Street NW and 901 C Street SW) in Auburn. He also relayed to the Regional Policy Committee that the City of Algona discussed the siting process extensively during their most recent council meeting.

Marcia Wagoner reviewed the evening's agenda, and then invited members to introduce themselves. She also asked if members had any questions or clarifications on the notes from SAC meeting #3. There were none.

Polly next responded to questions asked but not answered at SAC Meeting #3.

Response to Questions from September 13, 2012 SAC Meeting #3

There were several questions and issues raised at the September 13 meeting that were not able to be answered at that time. Responses are noted below.

1. How about just expanding the King County Solid Waste Bow Lake facility instead of building a new facility in the south county?

The existing Algona Transfer Station serves about 181,000 citizens in the communities of Algona, Auburn, Federal Way and Pacific. It is reachable within 30 minutes for 90 percent of users within those communities, which helps keep collection costs down due to shorter haul times by garbage haulers. By closing the Algona station and diverting all customers to the Bow Lake facility, drive times would increase for all customers, including commercial garbage haulers. That would very likely result in higher collection costs for south county residents and businesses. It would also increase customer wait times at the Bow Lake facility. It was recently rebuilt and was not designed to handle the additional 17% of system tonnage that Algona currently serves.

2. Does King County have plans to mitigate impacts on roads due to transfer station traffic? And would road improvements be a one-time mitigation or ongoing mitigation?

Effective mitigation starts with design and permitting so that solutions to address anticipated impacts are built into the project and in place before the new facility opens. For example, roadway improvements can be made to mitigate off-site traffic impacts, buildings can be oriented to minimize noise impacts and the architecture can be designed to mitigate aesthetic impacts.

Most transfer station projects have included roadway mitigation. For example, the County built a mile of roadway for the Enumclaw station, did road improvements at the Shoreline station, and added a turn lane at the Houghton station.

As part of ongoing mitigation, the Solid Waste Division would continue to provide crews to pick up litter in the area surrounding our transfer stations. Additionally, state law allows for cities to request compensation to pay for wear and tear on the local roadways directly caused by King County trucks. In the new interlocal agreement with the cities, language is being negotiated that allows solid waste funds to be used to study facility traffic so that the cost of the studies would be borne by the entire system, not just the host city.

3. What is the benefit of a transfer station to a host city?

A number of benefits and mitigation measures are available to a host city. These include: construction jobs and the use of local area businesses by those workers, permitting and traffic mitigation fees, construction sales tax, convenient recycling and disposal services for local residents and businesses, and the opportunity to have compensation for impacts directly attributable to a solid waste facility, such as road repairs. In addition, residents of host cities enjoy reduced rates due to the shorter drive time for haulers. Together, these benefits bring short-term and long-term revenue and improvements to a host city.

4. How much of the tonnage received at the Algona station comes from Pierce County residents?

Approximately 16 percent of the waste received at the Algona Transfer Station comes from outside King County. That represents two percent of the total tonnage received at King County transfer stations. These figures include parts of Auburn and Pacific that are in Pierce County but part of King County's solid waste service area.

SAC members were informed that these answers would appear in the notes for tonight's meeting.

Open House Recap

Polly provided an overview of the open house held on Sept. 27, 2012, at the Auburn Senior Center.

- Notification for the event included dropping off fliers at the Algona, Auburn, Federal Way and Pacific city halls, area libraries and newspaper offices, Hispanic, Asian and Ukrainian grocery stores, the Auburn Senior Center and Federal Way Multi Service Center, SeaTac Mall/The Commons and at the Algona transfer station. The open house was also announced via the Solid Waste Division's website and City of Auburn Mayor Peter Lewis' e-mail distribution. Additionally, the City of Federal Way sent a letter to residents and businesses near Site B on South 320th Street.
- Per suggestions from the last SAC meeting (#3), the information presented at the Open House was designed to be easy to understand.
- A video was shown featuring some of the transfer stations slated to be rebuilt as part of the Solid Waste Transfer & Waste Management Plan: Shoreline – completed in 2008, Bow Lake – currently under construction, and Factoria – currently in the design and permitting phase.
- More than 70 people attended the Open House, including several members of the SAC, who were thanked by Polly.
- Polly and Project Manager Eric Richardt presented information on the siting process, including the role served by the SAC and the four sites still under consideration.

- Comments were also presented by City of Auburn Mayor Pete Lewis, Kevin Synder, Auburn's Planning and Development Director, and Federal Way City Council member Dini Duclos. Mayor Dave Hill could not be at the Open House so he submitted written comments in advance of the meeting.

Overarching comments and observations from the Open House included:

- Concerns about the effects on traffic due to a transfer facility
- Potential effects on existing surrounding uses
- Loss of tax revenue for the host city
- Harm to a city's image by having such a facility
- Many people acknowledged that siting a facility is difficult & challenging, and thought the information was well presented.

Twenty-six people submitted comment forms and several people identified other properties they suggested as potential locations for the new facility. All of those properties were investigated by the Project Team and discussed with the SAC later in the meeting (see below).

Marcia next invited SAC members who attended the Open House event to offer their observations, which included:

- The presentations and video were good and the sites were nicely presented. Having flip charts adjacent to the site boards for people to write comments and read those of others was a good idea.
- Attendees wanted more potential site options, especially ones not right in town.
- The information was well presented and the work of the SAC accurately and appropriately portrayed.

Focused Site Screening & Comparative Evaluation: Sites Selected for Environmental Review

Julie Blakeslee first reviewed the seven additional sites suggested to King County Solid Waste Division by the public and Siting Advisory Committee (SAC) members since SAC Meeting #3 on September 13, 2012. These seven sites were taken through the same Broad Area Screening process that all other sites under went.

1. 1600/1700 M Street NW: zoned heavy commercial – is only 9.5 acres with 3.5 acres of wetlands – removed from consideration because it is too small.
2. 2101 M Street NW: zoned heavy commercial – is 34.5 acres – 50% wetlands. Developable area is too small. Previously reviewed during Broad area Screening.
3. 35205 Enchanted Parkway S: zoned commercial enterprise (hearing examiner) – 6 acres. Removed from consideration because it is too small.
4. 2500 S 320th Street: zoned City Center Core – 11 acres. Removed from consideration because site is too small and is currently being used as a park and ride.
5. Multiple parcels south of where 272nd Way becomes 277th Street: zoned agricultural. Area within 100 year flood plain. Does not meet pass/fail criteria.

6. 28721 West Valley Highway: zoned light industrial – 15 total acres, 12 of which are wetlands. Developable area too small – removed from consideration.
7. 302 Lund Road/940 W Main Street/922 West Main Street: zoned EP- Environmental Park. 80-90% wetlands – 18 total acres. Removed from consideration Site contains priority aquatic habitat per Washington State Fish and Wildlife. (It was revealed in further discussion that the area suggested for investigation was actually up on the bluff, not in the valley. The project team agreed to investigate the upper area as well.)

The following is a summary of questions asked and answers provided during discussion of the seven additional sites suggested.

- Did the project team look at properties adjacent to the suggested sites that were too small but might meet size requirements if additional parcels were included? Answer: Yes, but no viable options were available.
- Is it possible to fill in a site to get it out of the 100-year flood plain? Does just the site need to be out of the floodplain or access to the site as well? If it includes access, there are portions of West Valley Highway that are in the floodplain. Answer: It is not King County policy to build essential public facilities in a flood plain. King County will consider the fact that portions of West Valley Highway are in the floodplain as part of the environmental review.
- Have you looked at sites (assemblages of parcels) up the hill, closer to I-5 on 277th/272nd? A site assemblage on 272nd Street near I-5 was suggested by the Algona Chamber. Answer: King County did look at assemblages, but they didn't meet the 15-20 acre size criterion. Other assemblages are possible; we looked at many assemblages, but didn't look at every possible parcel, so we will investigate the area which is up on the hill out of the floodplain.

Julie next described how King County staff and the consultant team worked through the Focused Screening and Comparative Analysis steps to determine the sites to be studied further in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

- Because of the discussion at the last meeting about the pros and cons of prioritizing the criteria, the criteria were applied without prioritizing; we did not give any more weight to one criterion than another.
- Since the last SAC meeting, the Project Team applied numerical values to how well each site met the Functional and Community Criteria (shown on handouts).
 - Criteria that were met "Well" received 3 points,
 - Criteria met "Moderately" received 2 points,
 - Criteria met "Slightly" received 1 point, and
 - Criteria that were not met or not applicable received 0 points.
- When the scores were added for each site, the results indicate a clear line with Sites D and E scoring higher than Sites A and B, with about a 20-point spread.
- Sites D (901 C Street SW, Auburn) and E (35101 West Valley Highway, Algona) are what King County will plan to study in this EIS. In addition to these two sites, the EIS will also analyze what is called a "No Action" alternative, which would look at not building a new facility, but continuing to use the existing transfer facility.

- The team also scored the sites using weighted criteria, based on the “dot” voting the SAC did with the Community Criteria, to determine if it would alter the outcome. The results were similar and the clear break between the two higher scoring sites (D and E) was consistent.
- The County received a few letters that proposed that consideration of specific existing conditions near the proposed sites to see if that would later the evaluation or ranking of the sites. For most issues raised, those conditions had already been considered in our initial evaluation. On a couple of issues, the conditions lowered a site’s score by 3 or 4 points in total, but did not materially change the site total or its overall ranking.

SAC Member Observations about Sites Selected for Environmental Review

SAC members were invited to offer their observations and opinions about both the process of identifying and selecting sites. Responses to those observations, when provided, are noted.

1. If criteria were not weighted, every criterion has an equal weight. Didn’t like the “dot” voting to weight the criteria, but don’t like not having any weighting either. Response: whether the criteria were weighted or non-weighted, the results were the same.
2. The scoring process was done without the SAC. The SAC was only asked for review and comment on the scoring done by King County.
3. Site D is close to a park. Response: There is a baseball field near the site, but the field could be about 1,000 feet from the active area of the proposed project, not from the property line.
4. There is no “benefit to a host city” so why is the score a 3 for this criterion? Response: the benefit would be the same for all cities and should be reflected in the collection rates, i.e. keeping this essential public facility close to the area it serves means less costs to the haulers, which should help keep collection rates lower. Also see response to Question 3 under “Response to Questions from September 13, 2012 SAC Meeting #3.”
5. Why doesn’t the SAC rate the Community Criteria?
6. No one likes the sites and the cities are objecting - the feeling is you should start over on identifying a site. Response: no one is saying any of these sites are perfect. There will be challenges wherever a transfer facility/essential public facility may be located. We’ve asked a number of times for people to recommend sites for mitigation, and this is where we are. We believe we can mitigate the effects for either of the sites.
7. Some members voiced the opinion that they’re not happy with the process and that the County is not listening to the community concerns about lack of economic benefit, loss of property tax revenue, and retail tax. The County has not gone far enough to look at assembling several properties; saying site assemblage is “too hard” is not a good answer. Feel the County should cast the net wider and find a site that the cities can support.
8. The site near Federal Way was tossed out quickly because the County didn’t do its due diligence. (Note: the site near Federal Way had met all the other criteria, but the County did not contact property owners until confident of that. When they were contacted, we the owner had other plans for the property.)
9. How many sites were evaluated? Response: The County initially evaluated 130 sites. There are 60,000 individual parcels within the service area, King County looked at 15-20 acre parcels then looked at options for aggregating adjacent parcels to bring the size up to the 15-20 acres. Many sites were screened out due to zoning, floodplain and other pass/fail criteria.
10. Mayor Hill would like to see the list of sites the County considered.

11. Having been involved in prior transfer station sitings, realized it is very sensitive for all communities. I'm satisfied with the process, it seems fair, the County has listened, and having the SAC score sites based on Community Criteria would create mud-slinging. I have faith that the County is doing the very best.
12. A member feels that it is not fair that the County is rating community criteria - does not agree with the rationale.
13. Having been involved in siting essential public facilities, you're never going to please everyone. The goal is to hear everyone out and then go through the environmental process. The County has done a great job thus far. There are great things that can be done with design. SEPA may kick out a site entirely. No matter where you put a transfer station, people won't like it. If it is not too late to add an additional site, do it, but it would be sad to stop and start all over again.
14. As a hauler, I approach this from a different perspective. Both sites are good from a hauler's perspective. I'd like to know we've looked under every rock, but this facility is going to land somewhere. Site D will not be an issue near a park. It is tough to get away from water in the valley. There's going to have to be some give and take on siting; not everyone is going to be happy.
15. Could there be two smaller facilities given there are lots of smaller sites? Response: the size of a facility can't get much smaller; the size is determined by the size of the trucks and the turning radius needed. Building two facilities would increase operating costs, but the site itself would not be much smaller than what's currently being considered. We did look at the option of two smaller stations and it doesn't work for those reasons.
16. There would have to be substantial ongoing mitigation for lost tax revenues and road mitigation. Otherwise, cities are not going to support this. Cities would need to know the magnitude of mitigation support. Response: there is a state law that allows cities to demonstrate the direct impacts of a facility and receive roadway mitigation. Language to that effect is also being added to current interlocal agreements with the cities.
17. When traffic and roadway damage is studied, it only includes Solid Waste Division trucks; it doesn't include Waste Management trucks. The tonnage goes over the roads twice – once to the station and once leaving the station and going to the landfill. But the County only counts it once so only half the traffic is being considered. (Note: RCW 36.58.080 speaks to this topic.)
18. Considering equity and social justice impacts, why did Auburn score better than Algona? Algona is 10 square miles in size – the site the County bought would be gone forever and not available to retail/commercial use if developed as a transfer station. What do we get back in compensation? We have 3,070 residents, our income is low, kids are on the reduced cost lunch program; we do not have any revenue to loose.
19. Has a joint facility with Pierce County been considered? Would it be worthwhile to talk with them? Response: no we have not, but it's doubtful that Pierce County residents would like it. Also, it moves the facility away from the population center.
20. The SuperMall is undergoing a \$35 million renovation - Algona has a chance to expand its retail base.
21. There is a knowledgeable commercial brokerage community in this area. What kind of incentive have you offered to local brokers to assemble parcels? More should be done on assemblage. Response: the County's Project Team has done a considerable amount of outreach to the brokerage community; we met with them and talked with them.

Description of “Scoping” as part of Environmental Review Process

Julie described the upcoming EIS and scoping process, identifying the steps and highlighting the various points of public input into this process. A Scoping Notice will be published in the “Seattle Times” and local papers, posted on a large sign at each site, delivered to all property owners within 500 feet of the two proposed sites, to host cities, and to agencies and tribes with jurisdiction or interest. This Scoping Notice will briefly describe the sites and the proposed project that is being considered, and will ask for any information available and for what should be studied in the EIS. This could include environmental concerns such as transportation, soils, wetlands, noise, land use, etc.

The Scoping Notice will also indicate the dates of the 30-day public comment period, in which comments may be submitted. It also will contain information on a scoping meeting to be held in November.

All comments received will be considered for determining the scope of the EIS. Comments will be considered from the SAC, comments received at the Open House, from the upcoming Scoping Meeting, and those submitted by mail or e-mail during the comment period. Once the scope has been established, the team will then conduct analysis of the two proposed sites plus a “No Action” alternative which would describe potential effects of not building a new facility.

The next opportunity for public input will be after the Draft EIS is published when again there will be a public notice of the DRAFT EIS’ availability, a 30-day comment period, and a public meeting to gather any comments on the content of the Draft EIS.

There are several topics that may be analyzed in the EIS. At this point in time, we know there have been concerns about traffic and access. Typically what we would analyze is the baseline conditions, what traffic is out there now especially in the morning and late afternoon commute times, how the intersections are performing, or if there are any safety concerns. Then we would have an estimate of trips generated by trucks and autos to/from the transfer facility and overlay that on the existing traffic to see how the project could change the roadway environment. We anticipate studying the afternoon and morning weekday commute traffic, as well as weekend traffic. This analysis also determines what mitigation measures are needed to reduce impacts, such as road widening or intersection improvements.

Other elements that may be studied are: noise, odors, air quality, soils, wetlands, plants and animals, cultural resources, surface water, and public services and utilities.

The following is a summary of questions asked and answers provided during discussion of the scoping process for the EIS:

- Please send a copy of the scoping notice to the Chamber of Commerce. Response: Will do.
- Since Algona already has a transfer facility, to create a baseline do you subtract the existing transfer station traffic? Response: We don’t know at this time; this will be evaluated and addressed in the Draft EIS.
- Who is the SEPA lead agency? Response: King County is the lead agency.

- What is your actual traffic count? Just your trucks? Response: The actual traffic count includes all the traffic on the road; not just King County Solis Waste Division trucks. We use recent traffic counts or do new counts if necessary. Sometimes we have people count turning movements at intersections.
- Does the SAC have any involvement in the scoping? Response: you'll be invited to the scoping meeting and given notice of all the comment periods and meetings.

Next Steps

Polly reviewed the project schedule.

Public Scoping:

- A public Scoping Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 15 at the Green River Community College, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. The meeting will have a similar format as the Open House – displays, a video presentation, an opportunity for people to comment both in writing and verbally using a court reporter.
- Scoping is required by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).
- Scoping an opportunity for the public to tell King County what aspects of the environment they want us to consider when studying the potential impacts of a new facility.

Solid Waste Transfer Facility Six-Step Site Selection Process:

1. Potential site ID
2. Broad area screening
3. Focused area screening
4. Comparative analysis
5. SEPA/EIS – The Scoping Meeting kicks off the SEPA/EIS process.
6. Decision

Opportunities for additional public comment:

We encourage the SAC to comment on the Draft EIS. The County will certainly keep the SAC informed as the project moves forward. This is our last SAC meeting tonight. Thank you for your participation and the representation you have provided for your communities and their interests. We asked for your help, your opinions and perspectives, and you delivered.

G. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.