



**MEMO TO:** Planning and Public Works Committee of the Whole

**FROM:** Andy Rheume, Maintenance and Operations Manager

**DATE:** June 11, 2019

**SUBJECT:** King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

**I. PURPOSE** ☐ For Info Only ☐ Potential Agenda Item ☒ Scheduled for Council Action

**II. RECOMMENDATION**

Review and discuss the King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan at the June 25, 2019 Study Session.

**III. DEPARTMENT CONTACTS**

Kristi Wilson, Acting Public Works Director	425-556-2529
Gary Schimek, Acting City Engineer	425-556-2742
Andy Rheume, Operations Manager	425-556-2741

**IV. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND**

Washington State law requires that each county, in cooperation with the cities located in the county, prepare a coordinated, comprehensive solid waste management plan (per RCW 70.95). The current King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan ("Comp Plan") was adopted in 2001. This plan establishes policy guidance for the King County solid waste system, which includes six urban transfer stations and four rural transfer facilities, the Cedar Hills landfill, and waste prevention and recycling programs. Policies in the plan address the following:

- Solid waste system planning
- Waste prevention, recycling and solid waste collection
- Solid waste transfer and processing system
- Landfill management and solid waste disposal
- Solid waste system finance and rates to support the system

The Comp Plan has been subject to review numerous times since 2001, with a draft submitted for public comment and review in 2009 and another review occurring in 2013, and the most recent review occurring in 2018. In the intervening years, the County developed and adopted the 2007 Transfer Station and Waste Management Plan, which identified transfer station upgrades that

would be needed to address aging transfer station infrastructure, growth projections and resulting increases in solid waste tonnage.

The County and cities also updated and extended the Interlocal Agreement for the solid waste system, with this Agreement lasting through 2040. The economic recession that began in 2007 resulted in a prolonged decline in the amount of solid waste that was generated in King County. It is just in the last few years that tonnage has slowly increased.

The Solid Waste Division initiated the process of updating the Comp Plan in collaboration with the cities and two advisory committees, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee (MSWMAC), of which Redmond is a member. King County Council approved the Comp Plan on April 24, 2019.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **2019 Comp Plan:**

The 2019 Comp Plan addresses similar areas as the current plan, including the transfer system, service level standards and sustainable materials management (a holistic approach to waste reduction and recycling). It is organized according to goals and policies which provide “broad direction,” which should not change throughout the life of the plan, as well as “targeted, specific and time-based” actions that may be adapted to adjust to changing conditions.

There are three key policy issues in the Plan that will impact Redmond:

- 1) **Recycling Goal of 70%:** The Plan sets forth a goal of achieving “Zero Waste” by 2030 – with an interim goal of diverting 70% away from the landfill to achieve the 70% goal. King County defines zero waste as having no recyclable materials going to the landfill. The Plan proposes several actions that range from waste prevention and recycling education to building code updates that provide adequate space at multi-family housing developments for recycling and composting collection. In contrast, the 2001 Comp Plan did not set an overall diversion goal, rather, it set targets for single-family, multifamily and commercial diversion.

Redmond’s current overall diversion rate (percent of waste that is diverted from landfill) is 45%. Single family diversion rate is 67%, multi-family is 30%, and commercial is 37%. In the 2019-2020 budget, Council authorized one-time funds to increase the amount of diversion of recyclables and compost materials from multifamily and commercial sectors to help to reach the overall diversion rate goal of 70%.

- 2) **Northeast Transfer Station:** The Houghton Transfer Station in Kirkland is identified for closure in the 2019 Comp Plan. The Houghton Transfer Station was built in the 1960’s and is at the end of its useful life. A new transfer station will be built in the Northeast area of King County to serve this area prior to Houghton closing.

If the 2019 Comp Plan is approved by the cities, King County will initiate a process with the Northeast cities to site, design, develop and construct a new transfer station. The process will include extensive community involvement.

- 3) **Long-Term Disposal:** The 2001 Plan assumed that the Cedar Hills landfill would reach capacity in 2012, however the life of the landfill has been extended due to more efficient practices, the development of new capacity, and a reduction in garbage tonnage (due in large part to the 2007 economic recession and resulting drop in garbage).

To address future disposal needs, King County considered three different options: (1) transporting garbage by rail to a landfill located outside of King County, (2) developing a waste to energy facility that would incinerate garbage, and (3) extending the life of the Cedar Hills landfill, by further developing the landfill to expand its capacity. The 2019 Comp Plan directs that King County will extend the life of Cedar Hills landfill until 2040. The Comp Plan also directs the Solid Waste Division to identify the next disposal option for after 2040.

- A. **Analysis** (Please include process to-date and any service delivery or fiscal considerations.)

Service Delivery – Implementation of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan will impact recycling services provided to City residents and businesses, disposal of solid waste at the Cedar Hills landfill, and the location of the North East transfer station.

Fiscal Note – Solid waste fees charged to City residents and businesses will increase with implementation of the Comp Plan, as these fees pay for infrastructure and program improvements included in the plan.

- B. **Previous Discussion Held:** Council held a Study Session on February 27, 2018 on the Draft Comp Plan and approved a comment letter that was sent to King County. The comment letter supported the goal of diverting 70% of garbage from the landfill through recycling, convening Northeast Cities to establish service and capacity needs in Northeast King County, and expanding the Cedar Hills landfill to create additional disposal capacity at least through 2040.

## V. **TIME CONSTRAINTS**

King County transmitted the Comp Plan to Redmond on May 20, 2019, which initiated a 120-day clock for Redmond to approve or disapprove the Plan or take no action. The Plan is approved if cities that represent 75% or more of the population approve the Plan within 120 days. The City Council needs to take action on the Comp Plan by its September 10, 2019 Council meeting if it chooses to act. This topic is scheduled for consideration at the July 2, 2019 Council meeting.

## VI. **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: City Comment Letter to King County on the 2019 Comp Plan.

**Attachment B: Presentation for June 11, 2019 City Council Study Session**