



King County

Shannon Braddock
King County Executive

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www.kingcounty.gov

June 16, 2025

The Honorable Girmay Zahilay
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Zahilay:

This letter transmits a proposed Ordinance that, if enacted, would increase King County's disposal fees charged at transfer stations or the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF) for disposal of municipal solid waste. The revenue provided by these fees would enable King County to maintain essential solid waste disposal services, expand access to recycling, meet obligations in the 2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Comp Plan), make progress towards County environmental goals, and continue to do so with a strong emphasis on equity and social justice in frontline communities.

This proposal includes an eight percent increase of the commercial tipping fee, a 12.5 percent increase of the self-haul tipping fee, a 12.5 percent increase of the yard waste fee, and a 15 percent increase of the fixed annual charge. The impact of King County rate increases for a typical residential customer with a 32-gallon can, after commercial haulers pass along these costs, is forecasted to be \$0.71 per month in 2026.

The Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee (MSWAC) and the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) were briefed monthly, from January to May of 2025, on the rate increases proposed in this legislation. A rate adjustment now will help ensure a smoother rate path going into future years. It is the preferred approach of Department of Natural Resources and Parks' (DNRP) city partners.

The proposed legislation would provide for continued implementation of actions outlined in the Comp Plan, including capital projects, such as ongoing construction of the South County Recycling and Transfer Station in Algona, building the future Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station, and further development at the CHRLF. Investment in these critical

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infrastructure projects is driving an estimated total capital spending of \$865 million between 2025 and 2031.

To counter this increase in capital spending, the Solid Waste Division (division) is deferring some projects into the future to avoid a spike in spending, with the associated high debt service. One such project is the Permanent Facilities Relocation, which would build a new permanent facility replacing the original facilities that were demolished to make room for development of the new Area 9 at the CHRLF. The project was originally estimated to spend over \$100 million through 2029. This project is now paused while the division searches for other potential move-in-ready properties that meet business needs. The pause defers spending on this project out into the 2030s.

The proposed legislation advances the service-accessibility by continuing to provide the Cleanup LIFT low-income discount. DNRP is currently developing a new low-income discount program for curbside solid waste services in unincorporated areas of the county. In addition, the proposed legislation supports the goals in the Strategic Climate Action Plan related to energy and preparation for climate change impacts, advancing toward the goal of zero waste of resources through actions to increase recycling of food waste, organics, and recyclables, and further improving landfill gas collection at the CHRLF.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance. This important legislation would enable King County to continue to provide essential, safe, reliable, efficient, and environmentally sustainable solid waste transfer, recycling, and disposal services to our community, and help the County continue to move toward zero waste of resources.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Rebecca Singer, Division Director of the Solid Waste Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-263-2244.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon Braddock".

for

Shannon Braddock
King County Executive

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Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Stephanie Pure, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget

John Taylor, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Rebecca Singer, Division Director, Solid Waste Division, DNRP