



King County

Shannon Braddock

King County Executive

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November 21, 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 an organics system mapping and policy report in response to Ordinance 19861, Section 109, Proviso P2, and a proposed Motion that would, if enacted, acknowledge receipt of the report.

King County's Zero Waste of Resources goal is to reduce, reuse, and prevent waste wherever possible, and to divert recyclable materials and organics away from the landfill. Organic materials include yard waste, food waste, and other organic materials, such as paper products. Generators of organics are single-family and multifamily residents and commercial generators, such as grocers, gardening and landscape companies, restaurants, and others.

When properly processed, food and yard waste have substantial environmental and economic value. A significant amount of food that ends up in the landfill is edible and could have been redistributed to people facing food insecurity. Moreover, as garbage, this wasted food has the potential to emit 60,400 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent into the atmosphere, further contributing to climate change.

The Proviso requested an organics system mapping and policy report to aid in the Council's understanding and in support of the County's zero-waste goal. Solid Waste Division (SWD) contracted with Cascadia Consulting Group, LLC, to produce a flow control analysis for organic materials in the County's regional solid waste system.

In this context, "flow control" refers to the methods used by governmental entities to control the disposition of waste generated within its jurisdiction. The analysis included in this report covers policies, ordinances, regulations, contracts, and agreements pertaining to flow control of organics. It also looks at regulatory and compliance gaps, "leakage" — organic materials

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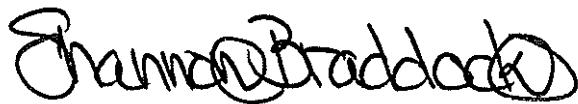
ending up in the garbage or recycling stream — best practices, and recommended actions and policies.

The report concludes that through potential changes in code definitions, reporting requirements, and enforcement, King County — in collaboration with partner cities and other interested parties — has an opportunity to improve flow control and recovery of organics.

Thank you for your consideration of this report, which will help inform future actions by the County to reduce the landfilling of organics, furthering the County's zero-waste goals and the goals of the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan.

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

Sincerely,



Shannon Braddock
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council
Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Dwight Dively, Chief Operating Officer, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget

Stephanie Pure, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

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

Rebecca Singer, Division Director, Solid Waste Division, DNRP