

MSWAC

Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee

King Street Center ■ 201 South Jackson Street, Suite 6400 ■ Seattle, WA 98104-3855

June 11, 2025

To: King County Executive Shannon Braddock
King County Councilmember Rod Dembowski
King County Councilmember Girmay Zahilay
King County Councilmember Sarah Perry
King County Councilmember Jorge L. Barón
King County Councilmember De'Sean Quinn
King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci
King County Councilmember Pete Von Reichbauer
King County Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda
King County Councilmember Reagan Dunn

CC: John Taylor, Department of Natural Resources and Parks Director
Rebecca Singer, Solid Waste Division Director

RE: ADVISORY NOTE ABOUT THE 2026 SOLID WASTE RATE PROPOSAL

The Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee (MSWAC) recognizes the need for an adequate revenue stream to support the regional solid waste system and ensure continued progress on key capital projects such as transfer station modernization and maximizing disposal capacity at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill, diverting resources from disposal, and expanded recycling services. Toward this objective, King County's Solid Waste Division has proposed a rate which includes an 8% increase on the commercial tipping fee, a 12.5% increase on the self-haul tipping fee, a 12.5% increase on the yard waste fee, and a 15% increase on 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.

Fiscal accountability and responsible stewardship of public funds is a priority, and we are mindful of how rate increases impact our residents. In an effort to be adaptable to current, unique circumstances that include the recent hiring of a new Solid Waste Division Director and concerns about the current rate path ([highlighted by the County Auditor](#)), MSWAC supports the division making an exception to the typical, preferable two-year rate setting timeframe with a one-year rate setting approach to fund 2026. This approach provides an opportunity for a comprehensive examination of the revenue requirement, capital project expenditures, reserve funds, and additional options for rate mitigation. MSWAC also supports a Regional Utilities Affordability Summit, as outlined in Executive Braddock's 200-Day Plan.

MSWAC is committed to programs and services that protect the environment and enhance the quality of life in our communities. Ensuring our residents continue to have access to the full range of essential waste disposal and recycling services King County provides is among our top priorities. We are also invested in the division's long-range comprehensive planning goals to boost recycling rates, modernize

aging transfer stations with expanded services, and advance actions to protect public health and safety while advancing zero waste efforts to all King County residents and businesses.

The Division's 2026 proposal will fund our key priorities adopted in the Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan, including:

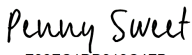
- Decrease the tonnage of materials being landfilled by adopting waste prevention and resource recovery programs, such as Re+, that are beneficial to the environment and local economy.
- Provide access to recycling and waste disposal services seven days a week at eight transfer stations and six days a week at two rural drop boxes.
- Implement capital improvements that generate family-wage jobs in the construction trades and expand access to recycling in communities, such as south King County, that currently have limited access to such services.

This proposal was discussed in the January, February, March, April and May MSWAC meetings this year. The Solid Waste Division also hosted an Advisory Committee Rate Open House in March and an Advisory Committee Rate Special Session in April to further engage with Advisory Committees. We appreciate the dialogue with County staff and look forward to our continued work together to maintain a responsible rate path for the County's crucial solid waste infrastructure and planning needs.

We thank the Executive and County Council for considering our advisory input on 2026 King County Solid Waste Division rates.

Signed on behalf of MSWAC,

Signed by:


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Penny Sweet

Chair, Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Councilmember, City of Kirkland

Signed by:


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Jon Gire

Vice-Chair, Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Solid Waste Program Manager, City of Bellevue