

3/4/19 COW  
Public Comment

March 4, 2019  
King County Council  
Committee of the Whole

Re: Proposed Substitute Ordinance No. 2018-0375.2, relating to adoption of the 2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

Honorable Committee Members,

I would like to ask this committee to delay a vote on the approval of the 2019 Solid Waste Comprehensive plan in order to schedule a town hall or council meeting so you may hear from the citizens that will be impacted by the expansion.

Additionally, we were led to believe the vote was to be delayed until the results from the feasibility plan were complete, so a better informed decision could be made.

The idea that the feasibility plan would be used sometime in the future is ludicrous and a waste of taxpayer money. Solid Waste has no intention of using any of this data – they want to expand and that's all they will consider. It is up to the council to alter that course.

The sense of urgency Solid Waste is portraying in order to convince the council the Comp plan MUST be approved before the feasibility study is done is suspect. Area 8 was designed and constructed between 2014 and mid 2019 – about 5 ½ years. According to Solid Waste, capacity will be exhausted by 2028. That's 8-9 years. Why the rush? Will 6 months really force SW to rail?

Solid Waste claims it could take up to 10 years to build a WTE plant. Since they have no experience in this area, their claim should not be considered valid.

It is incredibly irresponsible to use the last little bit of the only landfill in King County.

If this expansion plan is approved, you eliminate the possibility of ever siting a WTE plant at this property. The property size COULD accommodate a WTE energy plant, contrary to claims made by Solid Waste.

Mr. McLaughlin laments at the possible size of a 5 line plant, the biggest in the nation. However, a plant this size would only be needed by 2040. He doesn't complain about the Bio-Energy plant – the biggest in the nation, AND had never been done before, putting surrounding areas at risk if it didn't perform right. And don't forget, the landfill gas capture piping system – the largest in the nation, possibly the world.....

BTW - Why does it have to be ONE large plant?

Was any consideration given to having multiple, smaller WTE plants located throughout the county?

This would further reduce GHG emissions by reducing the travel distance of transfer trucks.

Or, why not start off small and site 1 plant with 1 – 1000 ton line/day plant somewhere in the County? It could take some of the pressure off the landfill and reduce truck miles driven. And, the cost for a one line is approximately \$250 Million. Is that more palatable to the Council?

Many think it would be impossible to gain public acceptance for a WTE plant. How in the world would you know? You haven't tried. To use the public outcry from 2001 against an incinerator is in no way indicative of today's culture. All it takes is education. Arguments of environmental harm against WTE are unfounded. A WTE is far safer than a landfill.

- Cedar Hills handles daily
  - 9 million gallons of toxic leachate
  - 24 acre feet of storm water run-off
  - 15 million cubic ft of LFG

Possibility of Contamination of aquifers and/or ground water:

- Landfills : yes
- WTE: NO

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## Scavengers (rats, eagles, raccoons, etc)

- Landfills: Yes
- WTE: No

## Odors

- Landfills – ABSOLUTELY – and no evidence of what particulates are In Cedar Hills odor!
- WTE – NONE – Just ask Dow Constantine.

## Environmental impact of emissions

- Landfills – Methane is over 80 times more damaging than CO2, leaks methane no matter how good you think the capture system is. Toxins are present in landfill gases, just not measured
- WTE -- CO2 emitted from the stacks, nearly all toxins are captured, and amounts can be measured. CO2 less damaging than methane

## Electricity rates too low, cheap hydroelectric – weak argument against WTE?

- Puget Sound Energy gets 38% of its energy from coal powered plants and 33% from hydroelectric., 21% from Natural gas.
- Aren't we trying to get rid of coal powered? Don't we want to bring down hydroelectric dams on the Snake to save the salmon? There WILL be markets for the electricity
- Average Residential rates:
  - West Palm Beach – 10.4 cents per kWh
  - Las Vegas – 12.15 cents
  - Renton & Issaquah – 10.36 cents
  - Spokane & Seattle – 5.71 cents
  - Vancouver – 9.18 cents

Of course the biggest argument many use against WTE is the money:

Have you considered that an increased cost in garbage rates might be a good thing?

In 2008, when gas prices were north of \$4.00, people invested in smaller, more gas efficient vehicles, carpooled, changed their habits to consolidate trips and took the bus. Sales of SUV's and trucks took a huge hit. Is this good for the environment? – Absolutely. However, now that gas prices are cheap, people are moving back to the gas guzzling SUV's and Trucks.

Could an increase in garbage rates encourage people to recycle more? Possibly – it's something to consider. Giving residents more options on pick-up times (weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, etc) can also help residents plan and possibly reduce their garbage costs.

It can cost to do what's right. Technology costs, innovation costs, improvements cost. Helping the planet heal from the damage that's been done and continues to be done IS NOT CHEAP. Being part of the solution IS NOT CHEAP. Sitting on the sidelines while the planet burns – costs nothing, and that's what you are choosing – you are choosing to be part of the problem.

I recently watched a program on fracking in Texas. They have hundreds of flares, burning the gas, because it's too expensive to build the infrastructure to capture the gas – no profit in it. Their attitude? It's just 2% of the total so it's no big deal. If everyone has that attitude, we will NEVER be able to make any headway.

A member of your council has been researching WTE plants for 14 years. I would think her conclusions should have more merit than those of Solid Waste when it comes to viability, safety, and environmental impact, since Solid Waste has admitted to knowing very little about WTE. To continue an operation simply because they've been doing it for 50 years is a ludicrous excuse.

Respectfully,  
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As the process continues for managing our waste stream, I'm hoping that you will give this process one last pause before moving forward with a decision.

The community has concerns over the proposed plan, regarding both the landfill expansion and taxpayer funds being directed to the nuisance compost facility.

In concerns to the compost facility, I would like to address a recent amendment to the comp plan. Solid Waste has put forward a Compost Marketing Development plan to spend \$500,000 to expand and enhance the regional market for compost. The goal of this pilot program is to increase the market for compost. Solid Waste claims that the compost odor issue is due to the lack of market for the processed compost, when in fact, it's due to both raw materials decomposing in a substandard facility and the finished product.

Cedar Grove Compost has been and continues to be one of the largest nuisance offenders in King and Snohomish County. 90% of all odor complaints to PSCAA in 8 years have been filed against Cedar Grove, nearly 13,000 complaints. The putrid compost odor regularly affects residents in a 7-9 mile radius around their facilities. This council has an opportunity and obligation to only move forward with organizations that demonstrate the willingness to make the necessary expenditures to comply with operational permits, clean air standards, and be a good neighbor. I ask that the council consider allocating these funds differently, by either striking the amendment or allocating funds to help improve Cedar Grove's substandard operation, to help alleviate the burden on the community.

Regarding the landfill, there are too many concerns to note in this short time but have been brought in front of this council previously. I have seen no material changes to the comp plan that help protect our environment or community.

The council must commit to social justice and equity for our community. A community that has long been burdened by the county's waste. We are a community that appears to have no voice when making policy that is for the benefit of others. As mentioned, I ask the council to take a final pause before deciding on a plan that will affect our region for decades. I ask that the council of the whole come visit our community, hear from us and come back with suggestions and solutions that can be incorporated into the comp plan that may offer basic protections to our water, air, and health.

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