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# MSWAC

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Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee

King Street Center ▪ 201 South Jackson Street, Suite 5701 ▪ Seattle, WA 98104-3855

April 8, 2021

To: King County Executive Dow Constantine  
King County Councilmember Rod Dembowski  
King County Councilmember Girmay Zahilay  
King County Councilmember Kathy Lambert  
King County Councilmember Jeanne Kohl-Welles  
King County Councilmember Dave Upthegrove  
King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci  
King County Councilmember Pete Von Reichbauer  
King County Councilmember Joe McDermott  
King County Councilmember Reagan Dunn

CC: Christie True, DNRP Director  
Pat D. McLaughlin, Solid Waste Division Director

RE: ADVISORY NOTE IN SUPPORT OF THE 2022 SOLID WASTE RATE PROPOSAL

The Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee (“MSWAC”) supports a 2022 solid waste rate proposal to ensure continued progress on key capital projects such as transfer station modernization, expanded recycling services, and the diversion of resources from disposal. Under this proposal, King County’s Solid Waste Division would raise the current per-ton disposal rate by 9.4%, or the equivalent of an additional \$0.71 on the average monthly bill for curbside customers.

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 facilities and expand services, and advance actions to mitigate climate change and address environmental inequities.

Additionally, fiscal accountability and responsible stewardship of public funds are also of importance, especially as the region recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic impacts that are still being felt by many of our residents. We appreciate the effort the division went to in reducing or delaying spending to avoid a rate increase last year and are supportive of a reasonable rate increase this year.

Some of our priorities that this rate increase supports include:

- Access to recycling and waste disposal services 7-days a week at eight transfer stations and 6-days a week at two rural drop boxes.

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- 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 no access to such services.
  - Reducing the amount of garbage in the landfill and returning back to the marketplace the 70% of materials that are still economically valuable, which could grow local manufacturing jobs.
  - Through the CleanUp LIFT discount, reducing financial burdens to customers who spend a disproportionate amount of their income on waste disposal and recycling.

This proposal was discussed in the January, February, and March MSWAC meetings this year and we appreciate the dialogue with County staff. One option discussed was to postpone a rate increase once again for 2022, but no members voiced support for that option given the cuts in services and investment that would likely result. Instead, we believe the proposed rate increase now will fund key initiatives and ensure a smooth rate path in future years.

We thank the County Council for considering our support of this rate increase as you discuss this proposal.

Signed on behalf of MSWAC,

Penny Sweet  
Chair, Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee  
Mayor, City of Kirkland

Linda Knight  
Vice-Chair, Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee  
Solid Waste Coordinator, City of Renton