



King County | Office of the Executive

Executive Girmay Zahilay

Chinook Building, CNK-EX-0800
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-2391

June 1, 2026

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

Dear Councilmember Perry:

This letter transmits an analysis of the costs and benefits of retaining or surplussing the Solid Waste Division property located on Harbor Island in response to Ordinance 20023, Section 110, Proviso P3, and a proposed Motion that would, if enacted, acknowledge receipt of the report. The content of the report pertains to uses of the site for solid-waste-related purposes.

With authorization from the Council, the Solid Waste Division (SWD, or the division) purchased the former Fisher Flour Mill property on Harbor Island in 2003 for \$8.5 million to provide SWD with a potential solid waste intermodal/transfer facility once the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill reaches permitted capacity. With access at the site to both Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific Railroad rail lines, SWD could contract with either rail company for waste-export services.

SWD has retained the property pending a final decision on a long-term disposal method, to be finalized with the adoption of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan in late 2029 or early 2030. The two options for long-term disposal are waste export by rail and waste-to-energy (WTE). The Harbor Island property is not large enough to house a WTE facility under current technology.

A 2020 study commissioned by SWD concluded that the site would be viable to develop a waste-export facility using either rail or barge transport. Barge export would present complex permitting and management requirements. While rail export would be feasible, there are also other locations that could be developed for such a facility.

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Because the property is located within the Harbor Island Superfund site, which is under a consent decree with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, there would be special environmental permits and approvals needed to conduct any demolition or new construction.

If the long-term disposal decision is to implement waste export by rail, surplussing the property would require that SWD either contract with an existing privately owned intermodal facility or purchase a new property with rail access. Surplussing the property would benefit the division through revenue from the sale; the appraised value of the property in its current state is \$22.5 million.

Thank you for your consideration of this report and proposed Motion. The information in the report helps decision-makers and King County residents understand the options regarding the costs and benefits of retaining or surplussing the Harbor Island property.

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

Sincerely,



for

Girmay Zahilay
King County Executive
Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

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

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Office of the Executive

Jasmin Weaver, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Hyeok Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Executive

Sierra Howlett Brown, Director of Government Relations, Office of the Executive

Garrett Holbrook, Council Relations Manager, Office of the Executive

Mo McBroom, Interim Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Rebecca Singer, Division Director, Solid Waste Division, DNRP