



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

206-263-9600 Fax 206-296-0194

TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov

August 6, 2020

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

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits the Alternative Options for the Use of Biosolids report called for by Ordinance 18930, Section 72, Proviso P3, and a proposed motion that, if adopted, would acknowledge receipt of the report.

As required, the report evaluates alternative options for the beneficial use of biosolids produced at King County's wastewater treatment plants and compares the costs and benefits to the existing biosolids management strategy. The report also considers alternative biosolids management approaches that may lead to diversification or expansion of the markets for biosolids.

Specifically, the report explores options to transition King County's Biosolids Program from a Class B product to a Class A product that could be sold to the public. The report also explores an alternative biosolids management option using a process known as pyrolysis that refers to the chemical break down of organic matter using high heat. These two options are compared to the County's current approach of producing Class B biosolids for use in forestry and agriculture in eastern Washington.

Future options for continuing the current Class B Biosolids Program or transitioning to a Class A biosolids product are less costly than the pyrolysis option, but still have significant costs and technical challenges. Opportunities to explore a phased transition to a Class A biosolids product could be incorporated into long-term planning efforts to repair or replace the equipment that produces biosolids at the regional treatment plants. Capital improvements will be required over time to provide sufficient solids treatment capacity as the region's population grows and this provides an opportunity to consider Class A options.

The Honorable Claudia Balducci

August 6, 2020

Page 2

In developing this report the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) engaged consultant support for the technical and financial analysis. DNRP's Wastewater Treatment Division also held a workshop for internal subject matter experts to review alternatives.

The report furthers the King County Strategic Plan goal of Healthy Environment by exploring biosolids management options that continue to support healthy and productive farms, forests, and open spaces as a nutrient rich soil amendment to build healthy soils and increase plant yield. The report also furthers the Strategic Climate Action Plan goals of reducing countywide greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and making DNRP's Wastewater Treatment Division carbon neutral by 2025, through the exploration of biosolids management options that continue to sequester carbon.

It is estimated that 160 staff hours were required to produce the report, costing approximately \$16,000 in staff hours and \$100,635 in consultant costs. The estimated printing cost for this report is nominal.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed motion and report. This important report will inform future discussions on biosolids management options which would continue to reduce carbon emissions for DNRP and recover resources from wastewater.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Mark Isaacson, Division Director of the Wastewater Treatment Division of DNRP, at 206-477-4601.

Sincerely,



Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council
Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Karan Gill, Director, Council Relations, Office of the Executive
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Mark Isaacson, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP