



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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July 19, 2023

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

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits the Biosolids Thermal Drying Phase 2 report in response to Ordinance 19546, Section 113, Expenditure Restriction ER2 and Proviso P1, and a proposed Motion that, if enacted, would acknowledge receipt of the report.

As required, the report provides a Phase 2 report on biosolids thermal drying. The report evaluates a revised proposal by a private vendor and technology consortium called the King County Biosolids Partnership (Biosolids Partnership). The independent consultant that researched and wrote the first report, Consor (formerly Murraysmith), was retained by the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) to conduct the study. The deliverables for the consultant were developed with input from the Council sponsor of the Proviso.

In September 2021, the Biosolids Partnership proposed that biosolids produced by King County's three regional wastewater treatment plants be processed at the County's South Treatment Plant into Class A biosolids pellets and sold for use as fuel or fertilizer. In its 2022 report, the consultant identified significant concerns with the Biosolids Partnership proposal and recommended that King County continue implementing the current baseline scenario of Class B biosolids land application plus the development of a Class A composting program. In response, the Biosolids Partnership prepared a revised proposal to address the concerns raised in the consultant's 2022 report.

For this Phase 2 report, the consultant identified that the revised Biosolids Partnership proposal has been simplified compared to its original proposal and that it addressed many of the challenges identified in the previous report, including the unproven application, lack of redundancy, system complexity, facility size, and feedstock supply.

The consultant found that while the revised Biosolids Partnership proposal is technically feasible, it remains much more expensive than the baseline alternative over the full project lifecycle. In addition, it is noted that the revised Biosolids Partnership would not meet applicable regulatory requirements and policies for biosolids. The consultant's

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recommendation based on the Phase 2 report remains consistent with the first report: King County should continue implementing the current baseline scenario as planned.

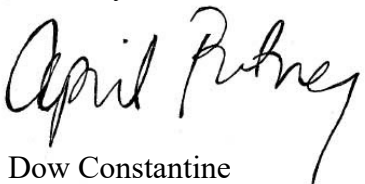
Following completion of its April 2023 report, Consor released a copy to the Biosolids Partnership. Though additional communication between the two parties has occurred, the conclusions of Consor's report remain unchanged.

The work outlined in the enclosed report 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.

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

If your staff have questions, please contact Kamuron Gurol, Division Director of the Wastewater Treatment Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-263-5767.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Shannon Braddock, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Mina Hashemi, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Kamuron Gurol, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP