Attachment A

Proposed Solid Waste Disposal Fees for 2027

June 2026

King County

Summary

The Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) is proposing an 8.5 percent across-the-board tipping fee increase for 2027. Currently, the division forecasts the same 8.5 percent annual rate increase each year from 2028 to 2032. Table 1 shows the proposed 2027 rate, as well as the 2028 to 2032 forecasted rates, for commercial and self-haul customers.

Table 1: Current, proposed, and forecasted rates, 2026-2032

Fee/Rate	2026 Current	2027 Proposed	2028 Forecast	2029 Forecast	2030 Forecast	2031 Forecast	2032 Forecast
Self-Haul Tipping Fee (per ton)	$229.29	$249	$270	$293	$318	$345	$374
Commercial Tipping Fee (per ton)	$179.18	$194	$210	$228	$247	$268	$291
Commercial Fixed Annual Charge	$26.8M	$29.1M	$31.6M	$34.3M	$37.2	$40.3M	$43.8M

The rate increases are necessary to support the rising costs of providing essential solid waste services, including recycling and waste disposal services at transfer stations, continued operations at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF), and waste-prevention programs. The rates also support the maintenance, purchase, and construction of the vital capital infrastructure required for the division's operations and to meet legal and regulatory requirements.

The impact of King County rate increases for a typical residential customer with a 32-gallon can, after commercial haulers pass along these costs, is forecasted to be $0.73 per month in 2027.

Major drivers of the 2027 proposed rate include:

- Completion of South County Recycling and Transfer Station
- Major landfill development projects, including development of Areas 5/6 and Area 9 to increase capacity of CHRLF
- Projects to ensure safety and compliance with regulatory requirements

Cost mitigation measures reflected in the 2027 proposed rate include:

- Leveraging revenue from the Cedar Hills Renewable Gas to Energy (CHRGE) facility
- Limiting operational adds (one new staff hire in 2027)
- Reprioritizing capital projects

I. Background

The Solid Waste Division of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) is guided by its vision to achieve zero waste of resources and enhance the environment through collaboration and innovation.[1] The Solid Waste Division (SWD, or the division) operates eight transfer stations, two rural drop boxes, and the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF), which is the only operational landfill in the county. SWD serves residents and business owners in unincorporated King County and 37 cities throughout the county, with a combined 1.5 million people relying on the division's disposal services.

The bulk of SWD's services are supported with revenues generated by tipping fees. Annual increases in the tipping fee are required to cover the rising costs of providing essential waste services, including recycling and waste disposal services at transfer stations, continued operations at the CHRLF, and waste-prevention programs.

Typically, SWD tipping fee rate proposals have set biennial tipping fees in alignment with the County's biennial budget process. However, during 2026-2027 rate deliberations, SWD and DNRP, in consultation with the solid waste advisory committees, chose to pursue a single-year rate proposal covering 2026. The rationale to pursue a one-year rate in 2026 was to give the division an opportunity to reprioritize and sequence capital investments and evaluate cost-saving measures. This current 2027 rate proposal reflects months of internal work within the division and extensive partner engagement.

The proposal seeks to fund capital and operating expenditures, meet the division's commitments to regional partners, successfully implement actions in the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Comp Plan) and Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP), and fulfill the mandate to maintain essential services, while also keeping rate increases as low as possible.[2,3]

II. 2027 Proposed Disposal Fees

DNRP is proposing an 8.5 percent across-the-board tipping fee increase for 2027. At this time, the division is forecasting annual rate increases at the same level of 8.5 percent in each year from 2028 to 2032.

Table 1 shows the proposed 2027 rate as well as the 2028 to 2032 forecasted rate increases of 8.5 percent per year for commercial and self-haul customers.[4] The impact of King County rate increases for a typical residential customer with a 32-gallon can, after commercial haulers pass along these costs, is forecasted to be $0.73 per month in 2027. Details on the curbside impact calculation are provided in Appendix A.

When there are unanticipated closures at transfer stations, SWD offers a service disruption credit to commercial haulers, discussed in Appendix E.

Table 1. Current, proposed, and forecasted rates, 2026-2032

Tipping Fee	2026 Current	2027 Proposed	2028 Forecast	2029 Forecast	2030 Forecast	2031 Forecast	2032 Forecast
Commercial (per ton)	$179	$194	$210	$228	$247	$268	$291
Self-haul (per ton)	$229	$249	$270	$293	$318	$345	$374
Regional Direct (per ton)	$195	$211	$229	$248	$269	$292	$317
Yard Waste (per ton)	$129	$140	$152	$165	$179	$194	$210
Special Waste (per ton)	$275	$299	$324	$352	$381	$414	$449
Self-haul (minimum)	$36.62	$39.76	$43.38	$47.24	$51.58	$56.17	$61.24
Appliances (per transaction)	$30	$33	$36	$39	$42	$46	$50
Mattresses (per transaction)	$30	$33	$36	$39	$42	$46	$50
Cleanup Lift (per transaction)	$20	$22	$24	$26	$28	$30	$33
Commercial Fixed Annual Charge (calculated)	$26.8M	$29.1M	$31.6M	$34.3M	$37.2M	$40.4M	$43.8M

III. Benefits and Drawbacks of the Rate Proposal

Key benefits of this rate proposal include the following:

(1) **Funds key capital investments.** The rate proposal will allow for full funding of projects that are critical for operations, including:

- Projects associated with landfill development and closure
- Projects associated with regulatory compliance and safety
- Projects related to the Comp Plan, Re+, and landfill gas collection efficiencies.[5]

(2) **Allows for opening of the South County Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS).** The facility is slated to open in 2026.

(3) **Funds landfill reserves to reach estimated liability at closure.** Regulations require the division to have funds available to support ongoing maintenance of the CHRLF for 50 years after closure. The current proposal allows SWD to build the fund balance to meet SWD's projected liability when the landfill closes.
(4) **Provides stable rate path**. The 8.5 percent annual rate increase for six years will provide rate stability for customers.

A key drawback of the rate proposal is:

Limited growth in operating reserves. County policy requires that SWD maintain a 30-day operating reserve, a Recession Reserve, and Rate Stabilization reserves. The current rate proposal will allow the division to maintain a 30-day operating reserve, but will not fully fund the Recession Reserve or build fund balance for rate stabilization.[6]

A full cash flow analysis associated with this proposal can be found in Appendix B.

IV. Cost-Control Measures

The division has taken a number of actions to control costs that are reflected in this rate proposal and are discussed below.

Deferring capital projects. As rate pressure from the growth in capital spending has increased, the division has been exploring ways to mitigate the impact to rate payers. One approach is to defer appropriate projects into the future to distribute spending more evenly over several years rather than have a spike in spending, with the associated high debt service. One such project is the Permanent Facilities Relocation project, which would build a new permanent maintenance facility to replace structures that will be demolished during the development of Area 9 at the CHRLF. The project has been delayed in order to control rate growth.

Limiting additional operating costs. The division is planning limited increases in existing operating expenses beyond inflation. Any emergent needs will be funded out of existing outlays. Minimal growth in operating expenses will help mitigate the upward pressure from capital growth. The overarching goal of the fiscal planning work for this 2027 rate proposal has been to maximize value for customers while mitigating financial impacts on rate payers.

Leveraging new revenues. DNRP reached a settlement in March 2025 with the former owner of the renewable natural gas processing facility located at the CHRLF and acquired the plant in August of that year. Acquisition of the Cedar Hills Renewable Gas to Energy (CHRGE) facility has enabled the County to put the landfill gas it collects to beneficial use, displacing virgin fossil fuel extraction, and generating additional revenue that can help offset rate increases.

V. Rate Model Methodology

A detailed view of the rate methodology is provided in Appendix C. Revenue generated by the rates charged supports all the services provided by SWD, including:

- The municipal solid waste (MSW) transfer system
- Disposal of MSW and Special Waste at the CHRLF
- Recycling and yard waste collection at most transfer stations
- Hazardous and moderate-risk waste collection
- Waste-reduction programs
- Education and outreach

The vast majority of revenues to the Solid Waste Fund are comprised of disposal fees and the fixed annual charge (FAC). Three primary variables drive the revenue received from disposal fees: 1) the FAC, 2) tonnage, and 3) the tipping fees charged for tonnage. When tonnage decreases, revenue is reduced. Appendix D provides tonnage forecasts through 2031.

Revenue generated by the rates must align with costs to ensure services are available for customers and jurisdictions. The cost to provide services (also referred to as the revenue target, revenue requirements, or expenditures) is determined by analyzing SWD's spending patterns; updating assumptions about inflation and interest rates; factoring in changes in central rates; reviewing proposals for budget additions and reductions; determining the level of reserve cash to maintain each year; and examining a host of other factors that influence the cost of solid waste services.

Next, the amount of the FAC must be determined through a cost-of-service analysis at the customer class level. A customer class is "a grouping of solid waste customers with similar usage characteristics who are served at similar costs."[7] The cost-of-service analysis looks at the cost to provide services to each customer class, including both disposal and non disposal-related costs.

For example, to provide disposal service to commercial haulers, the County employs scale house and transfer station operators, drivers, mechanics, and landfill crews; it also builds, operates, and maintains transfer stations and the landfill. A portion of each of these costs is allocated to each of the customer classes based on their usage of that resource, usually determined by the number of tons or transactions a class generates.

Non-disposal costs include expenses, such as administration, regional planning, Re+ actions, and regulatory compliance. The FAC is based on the commercial haulers' portion of the non-disposal services costs. For example, if the sum of all non-disposal costs totaled

$100 million, and the commercial customer class share were 30 percent, the FAC would be set at $30 million.

Nearly all other Solid Waste Fund revenues other than the FAC come from tonnage received at transfer stations. The remaining revenues include rents on County-owned property, interest income, grant funding, and landfill gas revenues. Once the FAC and other revenues are subtracted from the overall cost of service, or revenue requirement, the remaining cost must be divided by the projected tonnage to set the per-ton rates.

At a high level, the relationship between the cost to provide services (expenditures), revenue, tonnage, and rates can be characterized as shown in the equation below:

$$\textbf{Expenditures} + \textbf{Reserves} = \frac{\textbf{Revenues Required} - (\textbf{FAC} + \textbf{Other Revenues})}{\textbf{Tonnage}} = \textbf{Per Ton Rate}$$

VI. Conclusion

This proposed rate increase would support DNRP making an investment in critical infrastructure projects between now and 2032. Investments in infrastructure, such as SCRTS, extending the life of the landfill, and improving the efficiency of landfill gas capture, will yield long-term financial benefits for rate payers, boost the local economy, and reduce the impact of waste on the environment.

Spending has been prioritized to focus on maintaining delivery of essential services and delivering on the commitments made in the Comp Plan and the SCAP.

The focus on the revenue side has been one of mitigating the impact of increased capital spending. The economic turbulence caused by inflation and higher borrowing costs is impacting the cost of operations and capital spending, resulting in a lower tonnage forecast than previously projected. During this rate-setting process, the department has been sensitive to the needs of its customers and other partners and worked to reduce the need for rate increases. Despite increased cost pressure in King County’s capital program and reduced tonnage due largely to high interest rates, DNRP has been able to maintain a rate increase proposal consistent with projections from the last two rate cycles—all while preserving essential services and providing investments needed to reach the County’s strategic goals and commitments.

[1] DNRP has rebranded these zero waste of resources efforts as Re+.
[2] King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan
[3] Strategic Climate Action Plan
[4] The commercial rate applies to certified and contracted haulers.
[5] Re+ is an innovative and multifaceted program aimed at reducing the amount of garbage that needs to be managed by keeping materials in use longer and recovering economically valuable resources that now get buried in a landfill.
[6] The Solid Waste Fund has three reserves. The Rainy-Day (30-day operating) Reserve, Recession Reserve, and Rate Stabilization Reserve. Each reserve account has rules regarding the amount of cash to be held in reserve and when those monies can be spent. More information about reserves is provided in Section IV of this report and in Appendix C.
[7] Section V.B. Solid Waste Classes of Service, Solid Waste Cost of Service and Rate Restructure Study, FCS Group. October 2021.

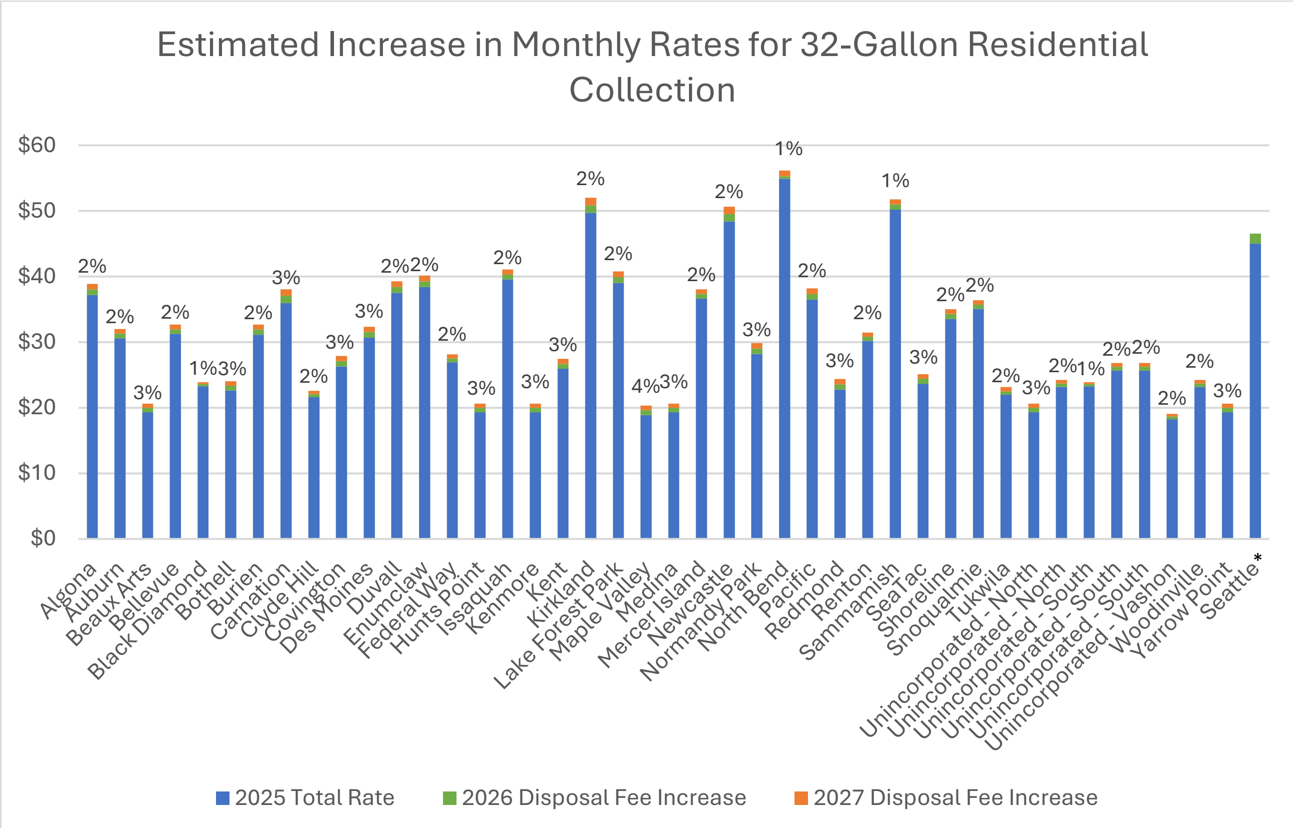
Curbside Impact Calculation

Solid waste customers and jurisdictions have historically asked for and come to expect a measurement of the impact a rate increase proposal would have on residents' waste collection bills, referred to as "curbside impact." To fill this need, DNRP created a curbside impact measure that generates an average monthly curbside impact for all residents in the County's service area, based on amount of garbage generated by a typical household. It will not match the actual curbside impact in any given city because all cities have different starting rates and distribute the disposal costs across their customer bases differently. However, it should be accurate in the aggregate across the entire Solid Waste Division (SWD, or the division) service area. In addition, the division has gathered rate data and modeled the impact in different jurisdictions for the most common can size: the 32/35-gallon cart. This provides more context for the potential variability of impacts across the service areas.

The curbside impact to customers varies considerably between cart sizes and collection contract/ Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC)-service areas. To model the potential impact, the division gathered rate data across the service area for the most common residential can size: the 32/35-gallon cart. The amount attributable to the disposal portion of the monthly service cost was not available for all contracts and the UTC areas. The division compiled the most recent available contract data and found that, on average, 26 percent of the cost was attributable to the disposal fee. This factor was then used across the monthly service cost to estimate the monthly increase. **On average, a 32/35-gallon cart customer would be expected to see a $0.73 increase per month due to the proposed 2027 rate increase.**

Figure 1 below shows a breakdown of the curbside impact by jurisdiction.
Figures 2 and 3 provide more information on our estimation methodology.

Figure 1. Impact of the Proposed Rate Increase on Monthly Solid Waste Service Fees



*Seattle 2026 increase includes both service and disposal fee components.

Figure 2. Key to City Disposal Rate Estimation Methods

Estimation Method	
City disposal percentage is based on the current year rate sheet.	1
City disposal percentage is based on the most recent past-year rate sheet disposal component out of total rate. This percentage is then applied to published current-year rates to calculate the current disposal component.	2
City disposal percentage is based on the average disposal percentage across all current-year and recent past year, for available City and UTC rate sheets. This percentage is then applied to published current-year rates to calculate the current disposal component.	3

City disposal percentage is based on most recent past-year rate model. This percentage is then applied to published current-year rates to calculate the current disposal component.	4
Unincorporated King County (UKC) disposal percentage is estimated as the hauler cost of disposal out of total hauler costs, as outlined in Rate Case Sheets. Defaults to average disposal percentage when recent estimated costs are unavailable. This percentage is then applied to published current-year rates to calculate the current disposal component.	5
Provided for comparison.	6

Figure 3. 32/35 Gallon Service Rates and Disposal Component Estimation Method

See Figure 3 for key to estimation method

City	2025 Estimated Monthly Cost	2025 Estimated Disposal Component	Estimation Method Used
Algona	$37.17	$9.03	3
Auburn	$30.59	$7.43	3
Beaux Arts	$19.31	$7.03	5
Bellevue	$31.25	$7.58	1
Black Diamond	$23.28	$3.17	5
Bothell	$22.64	$5.92	2
Burien	$31.14	$6.52	2
Carnation	$35.97	$8.74	3
Clyde Hill	$21.59	$5.24	3
Covington	$26.27	$8.69	4
Des Moines	$30.66	$6.98	2
Duvall	$37.53	$9.12	3
Enumclaw	$38.40	$9.33	3
Federal Way	$26.90	$6.53	3
Hunts Point	$19.31	$7.03	5
Issaquah	$39.55	$7.33	2
Kenmore	$19.31	$7.03	5
Kent	$25.94	$8.02	2
Kirkland	$49.70	$12.07	3
Lake Forest Park	$39.02	$9.48	3
Maple Valley	$18.86	$5.77	2
Medina	$19.31	$7.03	5
Mercer Island	$36.64	$6.16	2

Newcastle	$48.41	$11.76	3
Normandy Park	$28.18	$8.83	2
North Bend	$54.89	$8.50	2
Pacific	$36.50	$8.87	3
Redmond	$22.76	$8.47	4
Renton	$30.19	$6.72	4
Sammamish	$50.21	$8.26	1
SeaTac	$23.63	$5.74	3
Shoreline	$33.52	$6.27	2
Snoqualmie	$35.07	$6.98	2
Tukwila	$21.97	$6.34	2
UKC - North (Republic of Bellevue)	$19.31	$7.03	5
UKC - North (WM - Northwest)	$23.18	$5.63	5
UKC - South (Republic of Kent)	$23.28	$3.17	5
UKC - South (WM - Seattle)	$25.64	$6.23	5
UKC - South (WM - South Sound)	$25.64	$6.23	5
UKC - Vashon	$18.24	$4.43	5
Woodinville	$23.18	$5.63	5
Yarrow Point	$19.31	$7.03	5
Seattle	$45.05	-	6

Appendix B

Cash Flow through 2032

	Budget	Proposed	Forecast				
Revenues	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**2031**	**2032**
Beginning Fund Balance (4040)	$19,000,000	$19,168,921	$25,985,211	$29,846,238	$34,587,380	$33,283,468	$30,415,724
Disposal Revenue	$161,627,280	$179,177,046	$191,818,182	$205,549,033	$215,849,788	$229,882,968	$245,055,991
FAC	$26,838,510	$29,119,783	$31,594,965	$34,280,537	$37,194,383	$40,355,905	$43,786,157
CHRGE Revenue	$28,537,339	$25,268,247	$26,185,383	$26,529,889	$23,941,123	$22,452,370	$21,554,757
All Other Revenue	$13,114,691	$13,211,438	$13,363,018	$13,519,996	$13,682,567	$13,850,933	$14,025,303
Total Revenues	**$230,117,820**	**$246,776,514**	**$262,961,548**	**$279,879,455**	**$290,667,861**	**$306,542,176**	**$324,422,208**
Expenditures							
SWD Operating Expenditures	$163,389,569	$166,629,593	$174,217,417	$180,913,143	$187,866,306	$195,086,806	$202,584,924
Debt Service	$40,220,707	$45,716,110	$52,229,681	$59,277,007	$66,552,452	$74,034,156	$78,595,659
Fund 3901 Construction Transfer	$5,328,037	$5,328,037	$7,000,000	$7,245,000	$7,498,575	$7,761,025	$8,032,661
Fund 3910 Landfill Reserve Transfer	$15,010,586	$16,286,485	$17,988,423	$19,868,213	$21,944,441	$24,237,635	$26,770,468
Fund 3810 Capital Equipment Recovery Transfer	$5,500,000	$5,500,000	$5,665,000	$5,834,950	$6,009,999	$6,190,298	$6,376,007
Fund 1040 Landfill Post-Closure Maintenance Transfer	$500,000	$500,000	$2,000,000	$2,000,000	$2,100,000	$2,100,000	$2,163,000
Total Expenditures	**$229,948,899**	**$239,960,225**	**$259,100,520**	**$275,138,313**	**$291,971,773**	**$309,409,921**	**$324,522,719**
Ending Fund Balance	**$19,168,921**	**$25,985,211**	**$29,846,238**	**$34,587,380**	**$33,283,468**	**$30,415,724**	**$30,315,212**
30 Day Operating Reserve	$19,162,408	$19,996,685	$21,591,710	$22,928,193	$24,330,981	$25,784,160	$27,043,560
Recession Reserve	$6,513	$5,988,525	$8,254,528	$11,659,187	$8,952,487	$4,631,564	$3,271,652

Rate Methodology

The solid waste rate model seeks to balance expenditures and reserve requirements with anticipated revenues. The ending fund balance can be carried over from prior years to smooth out demands on revenues from one biennium to the next.[1] Descriptions of each of the major components of the rate model are provided below.

Expenditures

Expenditures – funds the Solid Waste Division (SWD) spends to provide public services – are divided into three major categories: operating expenditure, capital expenditures, and fund transfers.

Operating Expenses

Projected spending levels for existing operations are calculated by reviewing the current adopted biennial budget and actual spending levels for the biennium. As part of the rate development process, SWD identifies the need for new or additional services across each section of the division. Once new programs or bodies of work to meet County goals are identified, they are evaluated and prioritized based on whether they meet a regulatory mandate, their cost, and environmental and social justice impacts.

Capital Expenditures

Solid waste capital projects and post-closure obligations at the landfill are funded through direct cash transfers to capital funds or by using bond funding to raise revenue. The Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) has three capital funds: the solid waste capital improvement fund (CIP), the solid waste capital equipment replacement program fund (CERP), and the landfill reserve fund (LRF).

Construction Fund Transfer

Funding is transferred from the operating fund to the construction fund to pay for small capital projects when bond financing is not the appropriate funding instrument. The transfer amount is evaluated by DNRP during each rate-setting process.

CERP Fund Transfer

DNRP develops an annual spending plan, the CERP, to address solid waste equipment replacement needs over the rate-setting period and the two subsequent biennia. The transfer rate is calculated to provide the necessary funding for the planned spending above the required reserve amount.

LRF Transfer

The LRF transfer amount is calculated on a per-ton basis. Key variables include the tonnage forecast, the estimated date that Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF) reaches capacity, and the projected cost for post-closure activities. Traditionally, new landfill development and closure projects were cash-funded from the LRF. Given the desire to keep rates low and the projected cost of planned development of Area 9, it became apparent that debt-financing these projects (instead of cash financing them) would provide significant relief to rate payers.[2] King County Code 4A.200.390, which governs the LRF, was updated in 2020 to explicitly allow bond proceeds to fund these projects.

Debt Service

DNRP annually reviews its CIP to update planned spending on existing projects and decide what other projects are needed. The cash flows are then multiplied by an accomplishment rate, and these amounts are used to project the needed bond issuances to estimate the cost of debt service over the next six years.[3] The projected amount of new debt service is added to the scheduled debt service to arrive at an estimated expenditure in the rate model.

Reserve Requirements

DNRP has three financial reserves: the Rainy Day Reserve, the Recession Reserve, and the Rate Stabilization Reserve.

Rainy Day Reserve

King County Comprehensive Financial Management Policies require that operating funds include a Rainy Day Reserve sufficient to cover operating expenditures for up to 60 days but no less than 30 days.[4] The department has set this reserve amount equal to 30 days of operating expenditures.

Recession Reserve

In case of a recession, this reserve provides a buffer for the rate to protect the rate payers from the financial impacts of falling tonnage so that customers are not faced with major rate increases during a recession. It is set at five percent of annual disposal revenue. In years with a recession, this fund is intended to be drawn down by no more than 50 percent per year. After the recession has ended, the fund is gradually refilled over a five-year period.[5]

Rate Stabilization Reserve

The Rate Stabilization Reserve allows for ending fund balances to be carried over between budget periods, which, when utilized, can help smooth revenue demands over time. This creates a more predictable path for rate payers. For example, when a department spends less than it collects in a given year, it can carry that savings over into future years through the Rate Stabilization Reserve. This reserve can be used to cover costs in future years and reduce the impact of cost increases in future years, helping to keep rates from spiking from one year to the next.

Revenues

Typically, about 90 percent of the solid waste program’s revenue has come from a combination of disposal fees and the fixed annual charge (FAC). Other sources of revenue include the sale of gas collected at the CHRLF; rental income from real property owned by the department; a fee from construction and demolition waste collected at third-party recycling facilities; and the commodity value of recyclables collected at the stations. DNRP also receives reimbursement income from the Hazardous Waste Management Program in exchange for providing household hazardous waste collection services. Miscellaneous sources of revenue include various grants, interest earnings, and other small-dollar sources.

Disposal and Recycling Fees

Disposal and recycling fees are collected on a per-ton and per-item basis, depending on the material. The projected revenues for these sources are calculated using the tonnage forecast. The rate model is used to determine the revenue requirement and fee schedule needed to balance the expenditure and reserve requirements once all other revenue sources are incorporated into the model.

Per-Ton Fees

- **Commercial Fee.** The per-ton fee charged to customers disposing of municipal solid waste (MSW) at transfer facilities and to curbside collection vehicles at the CHRLF. Until 2024, the basic fee was charged to both commercial and self-haul customers. However, since the 2024 implementation of the rate restructure and its FAC, the basic fee was split into the commercial tipping fee and the self-haul fee.
- **Fixed Annual Charge (FAC).** Beginning in 2024, the fee charged to each of the primary curbside collection haulers based on the share of total tons brought in from each of their service areas. The FAC is based on the share of the cost of non-disposal activities allocated to the commercial solid waste hauler customer class.
- **Self-Haul Fee.** The per-ton fee charged to customers disposing of MSW at transfer facilities. The minimum fee that a customer would pay is equivalent to 320 pounds. Until 2024, the basic fee was charged to both commercial and self-haul customers. However, in 2024, upon the implementation of the rate restructure and its FAC, the basic fee was split into the commercial tipping fee and the self-haul fee. Since the FAC is not collected from self-haul customers, the self-haul tipping fee is higher than the commercial tipping fee.
- **Regional Direct Fee.** A discounted fee charged to commercial collection companies that haul solid waste to CHRLF in transfer trailers from their own transfer stations and processing facilities, thus bypassing County transfer stations. This fee is set at 85 percent of the self-haul rate.[6]
- **Special Waste Fee.** The fee charged for certain materials that require special handling, record keeping, or both, such as asbestos-containing materials and contaminated soil. This fee is set at 120 percent of the self-haul rate.
- **Yard Waste and Clean Wood Waste.** A fee for separated yard waste and clean wood delivered to facilities that have separate collection areas for these materials.

Per-Item Fees

- **CFC Appliances.** Appliances with CFCs, such as refrigerators, are charged on a per-item basis.
- **Mattresses.** Mattresses, box springs, and other mattress-like items are charged on a per-item basis.
- **Unsecured Loads.** Customers that arrive at the division's stations with unsecured loads are charged a fee.

Cleanup LIFT
For self-haul customers, the County offers a discount for low-income individuals on their transactions if they can provide an ORCA LIFT, Electronic Benefits Transfer card (often referred to as an EBT card), or Medicaid card.

Other Revenue

Sale of Landfill Natural Gas
Methane, which is a natural byproduct of the decomposition of waste, is captured at CHRLF and converted to pipeline-quality natural gas at the Cedar Hills Renewable Gas to Energy (CHRGE) facility located at the landfill. The processed gas has value as both a commodity that can displace the use of conventional fossil fuels and an environmental attribute, which monetizes the environmental benefits of the gas.

Rental Income
DNRP receives revenue from a variety of rental properties. The rent from the schedule for each lease is modelled and properties that are near the end of their lease terms are re-evaluated for income potential.

Construction and Demolition (C&D) Fee
DNRP collects a small fee from each ton of construction and demolition (C&D) waste collected at third-party sorting and reclamation facilities. This revenue funds the cost of administering the C&D recycling program.

Moderate-Risk Waste Reimbursement Expense
DNRP receives reimbursement income from the Hazardous Waste Management Program in exchange for providing household hazardous waste collection services.

Recyclable Materials Proceeds
Recycling materials collected at the transfer stations are sent to materials processing facilities, and DNRP pays for hauling costs and processing. The department then receives the commodity value of the processed material as revenue. After China implemented a policy that effectively banned the importation of recyclable materials, values for many common materials fell precipitously. Thus, the proceeds from the sale of recyclable material are projected to be a declining revenue source for the department.

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[1] A fund is a financial accounting unit used to control and monitor the planned use of resources, usually with a specific scope and often in compliance with legal and administrative requirements. Ending fund balance, or fund balance, refers to the amount of money left in a fund at the end of an operating period. In this document, it refers to a calendar year or biennium.

[2] While cash funding projects is less expensive overall due to no interest cost, debt financing spreads those costs over time, so the rate does not have to increase sharply for a few years to cash-fund expensive projects like transfer stations or new landfill cells. By employing bond financing in place of cash financing (where permitted), rates are kept lower in the near term.

[3] The capital accomplishment rate is how much of the forecasted project cost was spent in a given year. For example, if one forecasts spending $100 million in a year but only spends $85 million, the accomplishment rate for that project for that year is 85 percent. Assuming an accomplishment rate below 100 percent means the rate

model will forecast that less debt will need to be issued (in this example, 15 percent less), the resulting debt service payments—and, by extension, the rate—will be lower.

[4] Financial Management Polices

[5] Per King County Comprehensive Management Policies

[6] The new rate restructure for commercial revenues creates a challenge when comparing pre-restructure rates to the new format. To do so, the restructured commercial fee and the FAC can be combined to create a rate value called the composite commercial rate (CCR), which can then be compared directly with the pre-restructure basic fee. The CCR is used solely to facilitate equal comparisons between pre-restructure rates with rates under the new structure; it is not for billing customers.

Tonnage Forecast Through 2031

The rate proposal was developed using a forecast of the amount of waste that will be disposed of at SWD facilities during the rate period. The forecast relies on established statistical relationships between waste being disposed of and some economic and demographic variables that affect it—namely population, employment, and consumption.[i] Additional adjustments are made based on policy action expected impact on tonnage, primarily related to recovery programs (Re+), and statewide legislation.

Year	Type	Transfer Station Tons	Other Waste	Regional Direct	Special Waste	Yard Waste
2017	Actual	895,672	19,898	12,161	3,446	21,966
2018	Actual	849,506	18,336	17,039	3,632	19,150
2019	Actual	840,878	17,422	7,542	2,690	22,739
2020	Actual	813,703	21,390	32,553	1,504	23,583
2021	Actual	827,211	22,792	24,736	2,130	24,838
2022	Actual	821,860	25,578	15,730	1,988	23,588
2023	Actual	798,765	30,521	3,741	2,206	17,780
2024	Actual	797,128	29,718	10,81	1,950	19,016
2025	Actual	779,059	43,954	7,529	3,146	19,491
2026	Forecast	784,582	36,100	11,100	3,400	19,300
2027	Forecast	773,162	36,100	11,100	3,400	19,300
2028	Forecast	761,413	36,100	11,100	3,400	19,300
2029	Forecast	750,616	36,100	11,100	3,400	19,300
2030	Forecast	721,861	36,100	11,100	3,400	19,300
2031	Forecast	705,775	36,100	11,100	3,400	19,300

[i] Consumption measured in dollars spent for retail sales, excluding automobiles.

2027 Service Disruption Credit

In 2026, the Solid Waste Division (SWD) implemented a reduced fee schedule for commercial haulers that comes into effect when there are unanticipated closures of two or more transfer stations. This reduced fee schedule was developed in collaboration with hauler partners.

During the 2027 rate development process, commercial hauler representatives on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee provided feedback on the current reduced fee structure, expressing dissatisfaction that there was no fee reduction in the case of an unanticipated closure of one transfer station. They also expressed concern that fee reductions only applied if SWD redirected haulers to the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill, and not when they were redirected to another transfer station.

To address these concerns, SWD is proposing an alternative structure to provide fee relief in the event of the unanticipated closure of one transfer station in 2027, while maintaining fee relief for unanticipated closures of two or more transfer stations in alignment with the 2026 status quo. To receive the credits outlined in the 2027 rate proposal, commercial haulers must submit scale ticket documentation to SWD within five business days following the resumption of normal transfer station operations. See Table 1 for the 2026 (status quo) and 2027 service disruption rate proposal.

Table 1. Service Disruption Credits

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>2026 (Status Quo)</th><th>2027 Proposed</th></tr>
<tr><td>When one transfer station experiences an unexpected closure longer than 24 hours</td><td>• No reduced rate</td><td>• $20 dollars per ton credit

Applies when haulers are redirected to either another transfer station or Cedar Hills Regional Landfill</td></tr>
<tr><td>When two or more transfer stations experience an unexpected closure longer than 24 hours</td><td>1-day: $125/ton
2-day: $100/ton
3+-day: $75/ton

Applies only when haulers are redirected to Cedar Hills Regional Landfill</td><td>1-day: $70 per ton credit
2-day: $94 per ton credit
3+-day: $120 per ton credit

Applies when haulers are redirected to either another transfer station or Cedar Hills Regional Landfill</td></tr>
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