

Potential Expansion of Central Landfill

Trish Pienti

Deputy Director
Public Infrastructure

September 12, 2023



Recommendations



- Accept the Findings and Recommendations of the Solid Waste Regional Capacity Study
- Designate the West Canyon as the preferred site for potential future expansion and direct CEQA related analyses
- Adopt Resolution authorizing negotiations with Republic on sole source basis and setting related goals
- Direct Education and Outreach with Strategic Partners/Stakeholders

Background

- Sonoma County Central Disposal Site (CDS) started operation in 1972
- Valuable asset providing daily disposal needs
- Critical resource for disposal after natural disasters
- Estimated remaining CDS lifespan of 18 years per state-required calculations
- Closure of CDS will trigger economic & environmental impacts

Background

- April 23, 2013: Board approved agreement with Republic for the Operation of the Central Landfill and County Transfer Stations (“MOA”). The effective date of the MOA was conditioned upon securing the waste commitments of the cities and other negotiated requirements.
- April 2015: MOA became effective with an initial 25-year term for the existing permitted area.

MOA Agreement

- Includes the following services: operation of the CDS & five transfer stations, the acceptance and diversion of recyclable materials, and the transfer of the landfill closure and post-closure liabilities
- Caps the rates charged on waste deliveries
- Allows for annual gate rate increases based on 90% of CPI
- Rate covers Republic's costs for assuming risks in perpetuity for the closure of the CDS, post-closure maintenance costs, and related environmental liabilities
- Concession fees collected for Cities and County to fund solid waste programs

Regional Capacity Study

- Wildfires since 2017 have impacted the capacity of the CDS and regional landfills in the Bay Area
- Natural disasters are now part of strategic waste planning
- November 2022: Sonoma County Preliminary Regional Disposal Capacity Analysis Technical Memorandum (*D. Edwards, Inc.*)
- The study examined potential alternatives to address future solid waste needs, including outhaul or expansion of the CDS

Regional Capacity Study Conclusion

- Remaining site life of CDS is 15 to 19 Years
- Capacity of CDS might be consumed quicker due to potential future natural disasters
- Reliance on outhaul services does not align with operational objectives of the County
- New landfill site location not practical or viable
- Expansion of CDS is necessary to serve the needs of Sonoma County

Alternatives to Expansion of CDS



1. Pursue outhaul for long term disposal at distant landfill facilities

- Environmental impacts due to increase in vehicle miles traveled - increase GHG emissions & other air pollutants
- Increased hauling costs
- Compromised ability to address local disposal needs during times of disasters

2. Siting a new in-County landfill facility

- Delay & uncertainty: 20+ years, may not be possible
- Significant additional development costs and environmental impacts
- Outhaul of waste until a site is permitted

Republic as Preferred Operator

- Staff recommends working directly with Republic to negotiate the terms of a potential expansion of the CDS via an amendment to MOA
- Republic is uniquely-positioned to deliver the most beneficial project scope and more cost-effectively. Alternative contractor for expansion project, if concurrent permits could even be obtained, results in:
 - Duplicative infrastructure (~\$50 million)
 - Loss of vertical expansion opportunity
 - Forfeiture of as much as 28 years of potential site life
- Amendment to the MOA is exempt from competitive bidding obligations by operation Public Resources Code Sections 40057-40059 and applicable case law

Staff Recommends

- Accept the findings and recommendations of the 2022 Capacity Study
- Adopt a resolution designating the land west of the permitted boundary and the vertical air space above the existing permitted area as the preferred site
- Direct Staff to undertake further analysis in accordance with CEQA
- Direct staff to engage with strategic partners/stakeholders in education and outreach relative to the findings of the Solid Waste Regional Capacity Study and associated recommendations to ensure Sonoma County residents have long term waste solutions
- Direct Staff to initiate negotiations with Republic Services to develop a draft non-binding term sheet for future consideration by the Board –
Setting the following goals and objectives for the negotiations

Key Goals of Negotiations

Develop a draft non-binding term sheet for future consideration by the Board with the following broad goals:

- Expansion project will be operational before current capacity expires;
- Republic responsible for Permits and development of CDS expansion;
- Republic assumes all liabilities for the Expansion Project;
- Gate rates reduced and continued sustainable funding for the County and Cities;
- All waste and other materials delivered for disposition at CDS will be accounted for economically;
- Review and consideration of public benefits over time, given significant additional term associated with the expansion project; and
- Revenue potential of the expansion project is equitably shared among the parties.

QUESTIONS?

