



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: June 13, 2022

SUBJECT: Work Session to Discuss Landfill Site Selection Criteria Memorandum

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

This is an informational Work Session and no motion is being recommended at this time.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Introduction and Background

In 2019, the Board of County Commissioners approved the County's Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP). One of the objectives identified in the Plan is the siting of a new landfill in Deschutes County to replace Knott Landfill, which is projected to reach capacity in 2029. A Landfill Siting Group, consisting of representatives from County Administration and the Solid Waste, Community Development, Property Management, Facilities Management, IT and Legal Departments performed preliminary work in developing a site screening process for identifying a new landfill site. In late 2021, the Group implemented a solicitation to retain the services of a consulting firm to assist in moving forward with the site screening process. Parametrix was awarded the contract and has been working with the Landfill Siting Group to further refine and develop the Site Selection Criteria Technical Memorandum (SSC).

Integral to the site selection process was reconvening the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC), as that group will be reviewing, editing and approving the work on the site screening process and will ultimately make a recommendation to the Board on a site. Several members of the SWAC had stepped down with the completion of the SWMP and staff went through a recruitment process to repopulate the Committee. The first SWAC meeting, held on April 21, 2022, served as an introduction of County staff and the Parametrix team to the SWAC, and presented the goals for the Committee and the draft SSC for discussion and consideration. The second meeting, held on May 17, was primarily an in-depth discussion, comment and input session on the SSC process and content. The attached SSC has incorporated comments from the SWAC and is presented to the Board today for consideration and input.

The SSC will guide staff, the Parametrix team and the SWAC through the process of screening candidate sites with the objective of identifying a short list of potential sites and ultimately, a single site for the Board to consider for the County's next solid waste management facility. While the original and primary task is the siting of a new landfill, the siting team has recognized that the facility may very well be viable for a number of other related activities such as waste diversion for recycling, bio-digestion for the production of renewable natural gas, organics composting and other waste management related operations. For this reason, the facility is being branded as a Solid Waste Management Facility, rather than just a landfill. While the process will be focused on siting a landfill, it will be acknowledged that collocation of related facilities is a distinct possibility.

The Site Selection Criteria Technical Memorandum & Process

The SSC provides for a methodical approach to evaluating properties in Deschutes County that are potentially viable sites for a new Solid Waste Management Facility. The process applied in the SSC provides a thorough, comprehensive and transparent approach to screening all candidate sites in the County.

The Parametrix team developed the SSC document using the County's 1990s landfill siting criteria, state and federal regulations, team experience siting landfills in the Pacific Northwest and specific land use requirements and natural environmental characteristics found in Deschutes County. During the early phase of work with the Landfill Siting Group and through subsequent work with the SWAC, the document has been refined to address crucial considerations to avoid and minimize adverse impacts to natural and cultural resources and to maintain consistency with the County's land use codes and existing infrastructure and resources.

The process presented in the SSC utilizes a tiered weighting method which combines a wide range of site characteristic, engineering, natural environment, cultural and land use factors to assign scoring and ranking of potential candidate sites. It should be noted that there are specific factors that include a fatal flaw score that will exclude sites from consideration at the onset due to specific regulatory, environmental or land use factors.

The process will involve two phases of SSC application. In the first phase, referred to as the broad site evaluation, the initial step will involve utilizing a GIS application that the County's IT Department has developed to apply certain criteria to identify the initial candidate sites for the process. Once those potential candidate sites are identified, Parametrix will start applying the specific criteria in the SSC to that list for the broad site evaluation process. Values generated for each site will be used in determining which prospective locations should continue to remain on the list for further consideration. In the initial round of scoring, the characteristics of each site will be evaluated, scored and applied to the SSC to produce a representative value for each site. These values will then be used to compare sites and aid in determining which sites should be carried to the next stage of evaluation. This broad site evaluation relies mainly on existing data sources to generate a weighted score for each site. It is anticipated that 12 sites will be identified through this initial screening effort for further evaluation in the second phase, focused site evaluation.

The focused site evaluation phase will produce more detailed, site-specific information on site engineering, hydrogeology, the natural environment, and land use. This step will include on the ground reconnaissance of the 12 sites identified during broad site evaluation to “ground truth” the findings of the broad site evaluation. The site visits will be conducted by technical specialists on the Parametrix team for further evaluation of specific criteria. Three sites will be identified through the focused site evaluation effort and conceptual plans will be developed for each site which will include access, grading, excavation, and placement of environmental and operational infrastructure. Additionally, the site plans and mapping will be used with additional field studies to evaluate potential impacts more accurately.

Throughout this process, monthly meetings with the SWAC will include presentations on SSC application progress and scoring results for review, consideration and approval. Staff will report to the Board periodically at milestones in the site screening process with progress updates.

Next Steps

Staff will return to the Board on Wednesday, June 22 to receive and discuss any input Commissioners have on the SCC. Once comments and input received from the Board are incorporated into the SSC, the Parametrix team will implement the site screening process. It is anticipated that initial results from the broad site evaluation effort will be presented to the SWAC for review and discussion at the August, 2022 meeting. Overall, the goal is to complete the broad and focused site evaluation process by March, 2023. At that time, staff will consider, with Board concurrence, negotiating with Parametrix or issuing a solicitation for the next phase of work which will involve more extensive site-specific investigations and analysis to arrive at a single site for Board consideration.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

None

ATTENDANCE:

Chad Centola, Director of Solid Waste

Tim Brownell, Incoming Director of Solid Waste

Dwight Miller, Project Manager, Parametrix