



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6959
July 7, 2026
Consent Agenda**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6959: Sound Cities Association 2027 Solid Waste Rate Response Letter	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Direct the City Council liaison to the Sound Cities Association Public Issues Committee, Councilmember Weiker, to support the SCA Solid Waste Rates Response Letter (Exhibit 1) and take action on behalf of the City Council on any proposed amendments.	

DEPARTMENT:	City Manager
STAFF:	Jason Kintner, Chief of Operations Robbie Cunningham Adams, Senior Management Analyst
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Wendy Weiker
EXHIBITS:	1. Draft SCA 2027 Solid Waste Rate Response Letter 2. SCA Background Memo on Proposed 2027 King County Solid Waste Rate
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	3. Make once-in-a-generation investments to update and modernize aging infrastructure, capital facilities, and parks.

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to seek City Council support for the Solid Waste Rate Response Letter (Exhibit 1) drafted by the Sound Cities Association to the King County Council, that is being reviewed by the Public Issues Committee.

- The [Sound Cities Association](#) (SCA) was founded in the 1970’s to help the current 37 member cities in King County act locally and partner regionally to create vital, livable communities through advocacy, education, leadership, mutual support and networking.
- The Public Issues Committee (PIC) is a committee of SCA comprised of a representative of each city in SCA for the purpose of making recommendations on policies and committee appointments to the Board.
- Councilmember Wendy Weiker serves as the representative to the PIC on behalf of the Mercer Island City Council, and Councilmember Julie Hsieh serves as the alternate.
- SCA is engaging with the King County Council on the proposed 2027 Solid Waste Rate Proposal.
- SCA is seeking approval and feedback from the PIC on a proposed SCA Solid Waste Rate Response Letter thanking the King County Solid Waste Division for their work to control costs throughout this

rate-setting process and to establish a stable projected rate path. The letter also supports the call by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee for continued cost-saving efforts and a return to multi-year rates (Exhibit 1). The letter will be considered by the PIC at their July 8, 2026 meeting.

- Additional information on the proposed solid waste rate proposal can be found in the memo provided by SCA staff at the June 10, 2026 PIC meeting (Exhibit 2).

BACKGROUND

Sound Cities Association

The Sound Cities Association (SCA) was founded in the 1970's to help the current 37 member cities in King County act locally and partner regionally to create vital, livable communities through advocacy, education, leadership, mutual support, and networking. It's members include nearly every City in King County except for Seattle and Bothell. SCA's primary focus is on advocating for shared policy goals of member cities at the County level.

The SCA Public Issues Committee (PIC) was established by SCA in 1995 as a standing board committee. Per SCA Bylaws, the PIC "shall review and evaluate policy positions and recommend to the Board what, if any, action should be taken on such policy positions". The PIC includes a representative of each city in SCA. Each SCA member has a seat and equal vote at the PIC. It is the body responsible for making recommendations on policies and committee appointments to the Board. The PIC is SCA's vehicle for bringing policies to member cities, and for member cities to bring policies to SCA. The PIC not only evaluates and recommends policy positions, but it also recommends regional committee and board appointments to the SCA Board of Directors.

Proposed 2027 King County Solid Waste Rate and SCA Response Letter

The King County Solid Waste Division (Solid Waste Division) has been preparing the 2027 Solid Waste Rate Proposal, which has been presented to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and the Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee. For 2027, the Solid Waste Division has proposed an 8.5% increase across fee types, which is anticipated to have an average monthly curbside impact of \$0.73 per household. Currently, the Solid Waste Division projects 8.5% increases each year from 2028-2032, which would result in approximately a 63% increase in rates over this period. The Solid Waste Division calculates the rates by calculating their revenue requirement, allocating that to customer classes, and estimating future tonnage.

The Solid Waste Division has cited inflation, regulation, tonnage, labor costs, capital expenditure needs, and operating expenditures as the primary rate drivers. Additional information on the proposed solid waste rate proposal can be found in the memo provided by SCA staff at the June 10, 2026 PIC meeting (Exhibit 2)

SCA and Mercer Island City staff have consistently expressed concern about the compounding impact of sharp increases across utilities, which ultimately spurred the recommendation by SCA to send a response letter on behalf of the member cities.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

SCA is seeking approval and feedback from the PIC on a proposed SCA Solid Waste Rates Response Letter to the King County Council thanking the Solid Waste Division for their work to control costs throughout this rate-setting process and to establish a stable projected rate path. Previous rate projections were over 10% for 2027 and the Solid Waste Division ultimately recommended a rate below that at 8.5%. The letter also

supports the call by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee for continued cost-saving efforts and a return to multi-year rates (Exhibit 1).

Staff and Councilmember Weiker, the Council appointed voting representative on the PIC, recommend a motion to direct Councilmember Weiker to support the SCA response letter as drafted. While staff and Councilmember Weiker have no recommended text changes to propose, staff recommend a motion to allow Councilmember Weiker to vote on the City's behalf on any proposed amendments, as the full City Council will not have an opportunity to review all of the proposed amendments ahead of the July 8, 2026 PIC meeting.

NEXT STEPS

The SCA Board of Directors will review the recommendation provided by the PIC and is expected to take final action on the letter at their July 15, 2026 board meeting.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Direct the City Council liaison to the Sound Cities Association Public Issues Committee, Councilmember Weiker, to support the SCA Solid Waste Rates Response Letter (Exhibit 1) and take action on behalf of the City Council on any proposed amendments.