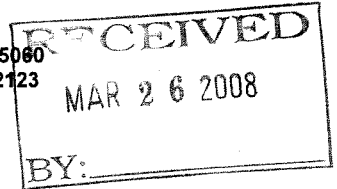




County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

701 OCEAN STREET, ROOM 410, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
(831) 454-2160 FAX (831) 454-2385 TDD (831) 454-2123



THOMAS L. BOLICH
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

APPROVED AND FILED
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DATE: 3/18/08
COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
SUSAN A. MAURIELLO
EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE BOARD

AGENDA: MARCH 18, 2008

March 13, 2008

BY: *[Signature]* DEPUTY

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California 95060

SUBJECT: ZERO WASTE ECOPARK – FINAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Members of the Board:

On September 18, 2007, your Board received a presentation by HDR/Brown, Vence and Associates (HDR/BVA) and Public Works on the Long Range Resource Recovery and Waste Management Plan. As directed by your Board, Public Works staff has met with representatives from each of the local cities to secure their respective participation levels in the long range planning process and commitments for the next phase of the project, environmental review. Your Board also directed Public Works to return on March 18, 2008, with a final project recommendation and description for commencement of environmental review. The final Project Description and Revised Economic Analysis is on file with the Clerk of the Board and available on the Public Work's web site listed in the attachments. On December 11, 2007, we also provided your Board with an update on several emerging issues and options potentially affecting our planning process. For your reference we have included a copy of the December 11, 2007, Long Range Planning Update.

We collectively refer to these future replacement facilities for the aging Buena Vista Landfill as our "Zero Waste EcoPark" (EcoPark). The EcoPark would include a reuse and resale center, regional composting operation, materials recovery facilities for both curbside recycling and construction and demolition materials, a transfer station to move residual waste to an out-of-county landfill or other waste conversion facility, and other bulky material processing operations (i.e., concrete, asphalt, scrap metal). Your Board executed a 30-year disposal agreement with the Monterey Regional Waste Management District (MRWMD) on April 17, 2007, to accept refuse from our Ben Lomond Transfer Station at their landfill in Marina. Under the terms of this agreement, we are provided enough contracted capacity for the entire County Service Area 9-C waste shed, which includes all unincorporated county areas and the City of Scotts Valley. This project anticipates all refuse from the EcoPark will be transferred to the MRWMD landfill. However, the EcoPark project is planned to be a fully sustainable system that would eventually eliminate the need for any landfilling and includes space for a future waste conversion facility (emerging technology), which we discuss in more detail below.

Recommended Preferred Project

In summary, the recommended project location from the HDR/BVA siting report provided to your Board on September 18, 2007, would be located on and adjacent to the Buena Vista Landfill. The proposed project would utilize the last undeveloped landfill cell, Module 5 (approximately seven acres), and a 26-acre parcel located just north of the property. The project would also require early closure of the Buena Vista Landfill, approximately eight to nine years prior to the current planned closure date. The attached description contains diagrams depicting the proposed project layout and traffic flow, as well as some of the anticipated mitigation measures and project enhancements such as an educational center with a focus on marine debris awareness, an educational walk, creation of a new riparian habitat zone, and a reuse and resale center. Use of the existing landfill property would provide a number of benefits such as continuing use of some existing infrastructure (i.e., Cashiering/Scale Facility, Household Hazardous Waste Facility, Public Recycle Drop-off Center, and maintenance shops); the site is already a known public service center; the site has easy freeway ingress and egress and is more rurally located than other potential sites; and using some of the existing landfill property would require less additional land for the project. Early closure of the landfill would also have the added benefit of reducing some of the common issues related to normal landfill operations such as birds and vectors, wind blown litter, noise, odors, and visual appearance, as most of the new operations would occur within enclosed structures.

The project description includes several alternative sites for the EcoPark and stand-alone composting operations in addition to the Buena Vista Drive location, as evaluated and ranked in the final siting report presented to your Board on September 18, 2007. Under the alternative EcoPark project scenarios, the Buena Vista Landfill would remain operational until it reaches full capacity. The Buena Vista Landfill's remaining life at permitted build-out is projected to be 15 to 17 years based on our increased waste diversion rates (currently at 65 percent) and the direct haul of Ben Lomond Transfer Station waste to the MRWMD. We are recommending these sites also be included as alternatives for evaluation in the environmental review process.

Of particular importance is the proposed franchise hauler's corporation yard. As we stated in our December 11, 2007, report, the changes in land use regulation within the city of Watsonville now make it impossible for any future hauler to site a corporation yard or recyclable materials processing operation within the city. No appropriately zoned or developed land exists within the unincorporated county for such an activity. As we are seeing with more jurisdictions in the state, facilities to support franchised operations are being developed by the local jurisdictions and leased back to the franchised hauler. The benefits of maintaining a permanent infrastructure for our franchise haulers are that future competitive selection processes will be less risky with the required infrastructure guaranteed and potential new vendors will be capable of competing more effectively with the incumbent franchisee, resulting in better rates. Costs for development of the franchise facilities would be recovered through lease payments from the franchisee to the County.

One of the major project changes we discussed in our December 11, 2007, report to your Board was the new opportunity to jointly develop a municipal composting operation with the Monterey Regional Waste Management District (MRWMD) on their landfill property in Marina. The MRWMD has 60 acres of landfill space dedicated for one of their last landfill disposal areas that is not scheduled for construction for 60 to 70 years. The MRWMD already possesses the required permits for this operation, so the ability for this project to come on line

62

in advance of our completed EcoPark is an added benefit. Both the MRWMD staff and our department believe that landfilling will be an obsolete practice long before the MRWMD will need this space, so the potential for this to be a permanent location appears to be very favorable.

In light of the successful meetings we have been participating in since late last year with the MRWMD, City of Santa Cruz, Salinas Valley Waste Management Authority, and other potential local participants, we are now considering the MRWMD organics composting option as possible project options for the purposes of the EcoPark's environmental review (EIR) process. However, we are still including other local Santa Cruz County sites as the possible project options for the purposes of the EcoPark's environmental review composting facility alternatives for the EIR to evaluate in the event the joint project with the MRWMD does not come to fruition. All the County jurisdictions have indicated a desire to participate in this particular project. The scope of the EcoPark project will be significantly reduced as a result of this decision and the economies of scale for the MRWMD regional compost site should provide cost benefits as well.

Work is currently underway in preparation of a joint Request for Proposals to be issued by all the participating agencies sometime in summer or fall of 2008. Additional reports will be brought to your Board as the planning and institutional structure for this joint project are further developed.

As directed by your Board on February 18, 2008, the attached project description and preliminary economic analysis has been reviewed and commented on by the Integrated Waste Management Local Task Force (Task Force) and approved for submission to your Board. Task Force comments focused on issues of clarifying the many components of the economic analysis and improving the readability of the document for the general public.

Regional Participants

Attached you will find the EcoPark project participation responses from the Cities of Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, Capitola, and Watsonville. The City of Santa Cruz is interested in participating in both the construction and demolition materials recovery operation and regional composting operation components of the EcoPark project. The City of Scotts Valley is also interested in the construction and demolition materials recovery operation and regional composting operation components of the EcoPark project, and as a member of County Service Area (CSA) 9C, their costs associated with project development are included within our CSA 9C program budget.

The City of Capitola has elected not to participate in the EcoPark project as reflected in their attached staff report and their City Manager's letter to our department. While City of Watsonville staff has been very supportive of this type of regional project (see attached City of Watsonville letter dated February 26, 2008), they have not been able to secure support from their City Council to-date. As a result, in light of the time-sensitive deadlines established for securing such commitments, the attached project description only reflects the written project commitments received to date. Watsonville has indicated a desire to keep this opportunity available as they consider their own long-term waste management and resource recovery needs. We have indicated to Watsonville staff that if they can eventually secure local support and proportional funding for participating in the EcoPark, they may choose to join the project at a later date. Their delayed decision to participate in the EcoPark project would likely

require a supplemental EIR, which Watsonville would have to fully fund along with their proportional share of our ongoing EIR work. The City of Watsonville's decision to join the project's environmental review, in progress, would also need to be done early enough in the process to avoid unnecessary delays to this time-sensitive project (see following schedule).

Schedule

A more detailed schedule will be developed and submitted to your Board once the EIR consultant selection process is completed. We have attempted to provide a very rough outline of what our department feels is a reasonable schedule at this point in time.

Environmental Review - Initial Study Preparation:	May 2008
EIR Consultant Selection:	Fall 2008
Completion of EIR (12 months):	Fall 2009
EIR Public Review and Comment (6 months):	Spring 2010
Development and Regulatory Permitting, and Project Design (12 months):	Spring 2011
Financing and Construction (18 months):	Fall 2012
Tentative Operational Date:	Fall 2012

Coastal Commission Consultant Support

Your Board had previously directed Public Works to seek out professional assistance to support the EcoPark development process as it moves through the permitting process and particularly the Coastal Zone review and permitting process. We have been in contact with McCabe and Company who has extensive experience in working with the California Coastal Commission (CCC) and has previously assisted the County in this capacity with the East Cliff Sea Wall project. Ms. McCabe is interested in helping the County as an advocate for this essential public utility project, and Public Works will be working with Ms. McCabe to develop a scope of work for her firm's services. We have agreed that the best timing for bringing her firm into this project would be later this year, after the project enters environmental review and we begin to develop more project detail that can be reviewed and commented on by the CCC.

Waste Conversion Facility

As previously promised, we would like to keep your Board regularly updated on the expanding and growing waste conversion technology (CT) industry. Public Works staff continues to meet and discuss these new technologies with interested developers. We have had some recent strong interest from CT developers that would like to site facilities in California. In previous reports to your Board, we outlined what CTs are and how they can benefit our EcoPark project and the County's Zero Waste goals and objectives adopted in 2005. The major CT technologies, such as gasification, simply convert organic wastes to clean burning fuels that can then be used to generate electricity. This technology is not to be confused with waste incineration that burns refuse to recover heat for steam generation and electrical production. Gasification actually converts waste to fuel with minimal emissions. Ash or slag residues coming from the conversion process are amenable for use as asphalt, concrete or brick additives, resulting in no waste by-products. Plants can be built to much smaller scale to support smaller waste streams and communities, unlike conventional incineration that typically requires 800 tons of waste per day or more to be economically sustainable. These new technologies are much cleaner than incineration and, in theory, can actually create a positive

cash flow from a waste stream (through electrical or fuel sales) instead of incurring unrecoverable costs and long term liability associated with conventional landfilling.

We are excited about the possibilities with these new technologies and the potential to achieve a true zero waste system. The availability of this technology for waste applications is approaching much faster than we anticipated and we hope to bring some ideas and options forward to your Board in the near future. In light of the CT advancements we are seeing, the EcoPark project description includes more detail than originally anticipated to facilitate incorporation of this technology into the EcoPark project. In accordance with the Guiding Principals and Zero Waste Resolution adopted by your Board, we are still committed to achieving a 75 percent waste diversion rate through aggressive resource recovery; however, a CT application would allow us to economically handle the remaining 25 percent waste stream residue in a more beneficial manner and with revenue potential. We have initiated contact with various regulatory agencies to discuss the permitting processes for such a facility, as the current regulatory framework for CT plants is not well defined yet. We know the California Integrated Waste Management Board has a strong interest in promoting the development of CT plants in the state and hopes to solicit similar support from other agencies.

It is therefore recommended that the Board of Supervisors take the following action:

1. Accept and file the project description and economic analysis report on the proposed Zero Waste EcoPark.
2. Direct Public Works and the Planning Department to take all the necessary steps to initiate environmental review of the proposed Zero Waste EcoPark.
3. Direct Public Works to return on or before August 26, 2008, with a status report.

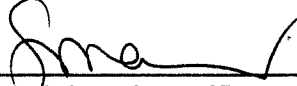
Yours truly,



THOMAS L. BOLICH
Director of Public Works

TLB:RPM:mh
Attachments

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL:



County Administrative Officer

- Copy to:
- Charles Lester, California Coastal Commission (w/a)
 - Integrated Waste Management Local Task Force (w/a)
 - William Merry, Monterey Regional Waste Management District (w/a) ✓
 - HDR/Brown, Vence and Associates
 - Susan McCabe (w/a)
 - GreenWaste Recovery (w/a)
 - Planning Department (w/a)
 - County Counsel (w/a)
 - Environmental Health (w/a)
 - Public Works Directors for cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville

CBD BOSMAIL

From: CBD BOSMAIL
Sent: Sunday, March 16, 2008 11:00 PM
To: CBD BOSMAIL
Subject: Agenda Comments

Meeting Date : 3/18/2008

Item Number : 62

Name : Luis A. Alejo, Esq.

Email : laalejo@msn.com

Address : P.O. Box 143
Watsonville, CA 95076

Phone : (831) 726-6032

Comments :

March 16, 2008

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Zero Waste EcoPark - Continued opposition regarding proposed sites in the Pajaro Valley

Dear Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to express my continued opposition to placing the new waste management center, also called the "EcoPark," in the Pajaro Valley. I also continue to have many serious concerns about equity and the fairness regarding the limited sites that were reviewed as part of the county report entitled, "Long Range Resource Recovery and Waste Management Facilities (EcoPark) Planning Facility Functionality and Overview of Site Considerations."

The last report divulged that ALL of the primary and preferred sites for the future county waste management center (aka EcoPark) continue to be in the South County area. All the sites in other parts of the county were ELIMINATED. There were only 3 sites North or Mid County that were reviewed, although the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) regarding the landfill originally looked at 31 areas throughout the county. There were no other sites considered in North or Mid County although more sites were possible, whereas 11 sites are in the South County area. This equates to nearly 80 percent of sites reviewed are in the South County area and only 20 percent are in Mid or North County areas.

It is absolutely appalling that the County Public Works Department thinks it perfectly fine to look at South County as a good place to put its recyclables/compost and transload/transfer county trash. With limited land available in South County, the amount of acres would be put to better use on other pressing needs such as building new public schools.

The latest report prioritizes the existing Buena Vista Landfill as the "Most Preferred Site," but with adjacent farmlands that are currently being used for strawberry cultivation and therefore threatens scarce agricultural lands in the Pajaro Valley. The additional acreage would also put the EcoPark nearby Pajaro Valley High

3/17/2008

School, which is completely unacceptable. In addition, the acquisitions for adjacent acreage would also require approval by the California Coastal Commission for use as a waste management center and for composting.

The "Second Most Preferred Site," consisting of the Airport Road sites, is also completely unacceptable and would place the EcoPark just a few yards away from Pajaro Valley High School. I cannot understand why the County Public Works Department thinks it would be acceptable to put this waste center near our newest high school. Please see the maps to see how close both the "most preferred" and the "second most preferred" are to PV High School.

The "Third Most Preferred Site" off Riverside Drive (near the Bus Barn) and "Fourth Most Preferred Site," Harkin Slough site, also threaten prime agricultural land and undermine the intent of Watsonville's smart growth plan, Measure U, which was approved by 60 percent of the voters. The second and third preferred sites would also require approval by the Coastal Commission.

During the public meeting held in Watsonville, there were many concerns expressed, but the report presented the Board of Supervisors last September failed to reflect any of them. The report also failed to include alternatives proposed by Pajaro Valley residents such as looking at smaller alternative sites so that sites in Mid and North County can be seriously considered since most of the trash is generated from the area between Live Oak and Aptos. However, DPW staff and the consultants have failed until this day to seriously pursue these recommended alternative, and have instead opted to continue to push for the EcoPark being placed in the Pajaro Valley.

On September 5, the Watsonville Planning Commission unanimously voted against place a waste or recycling center in Watsonville and the Watsonville City Council also opposed the project. It is obvious that this EcoPark is not wanted in South County and recommending placing the new county dump in the Pajaro Valley would certainly send the wrong message to all residents of South Santa Cruz County. The city of Capitola has also expressed its lack of support, and the cities of Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley have only expressed limited support for construction (C&D) waste, composting and wood-green waste.

I respectfully ask you to not recommend placing the new county dump in the Pajaro Valley or "supersizing" the current Buena Vista Landfill. It unfair and inequitable to the residents of South County. We have already done our fair share of dealing with the county's trash for the last several decades. I look forward to hearing from you soon regarding these serious concerns since I have yet to been contacted by the Public Works Department whatsoever regarding the serious concerns I have raised from the very beginning. I can be contacted at (831) 726-6032 or at laalejo@msn.com. Thanks for you attention to the serious issues raised in this letter.

Sincerely,

LUIS A. ALEJO
Attorney At Law

62