



# Kittitas County Transfer Station Public Feedback Summary (May 23 – June 30)

## Introduction and Background

Kittitas County is performing a study to relocate the Ellensburg Transfer Station to a site already owned by the County or other suitable locations within the greater-Ellensburg area.

The new facility will replace the existing Ellensburg transfer station and will be designed to address some existing site challenges (location and size constraints, customer access issues during significant rainfall or spring runoff events, long queuing times and small unloading and processing areas) and prepare the County for future growth.

To better understand the interests of people in the communities served by the current transfer station and how best to involve community members during siting, permitting, design, and construction of the new station, the project team hosted a community meeting. The community meeting included a brief presentation, Q&A session, informational display boards, and feedback forms (Appendix A). The project also engaged community members using an online engagement platform which contains the same information and feedback opportunities as the community meeting. A summary of feedback forms received is summarized in the following table.

Feedback opportunity	Date	Location	Feedback forms submitted
Community Meeting	May 23 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Kittitas Valley Event Center	9
Online Engagement Site	May 23 – Nov 1*	<a href="https://kittitascountytransferstation.participate.online/">https://kittitascountytransferstation.participate.online/</a>	6

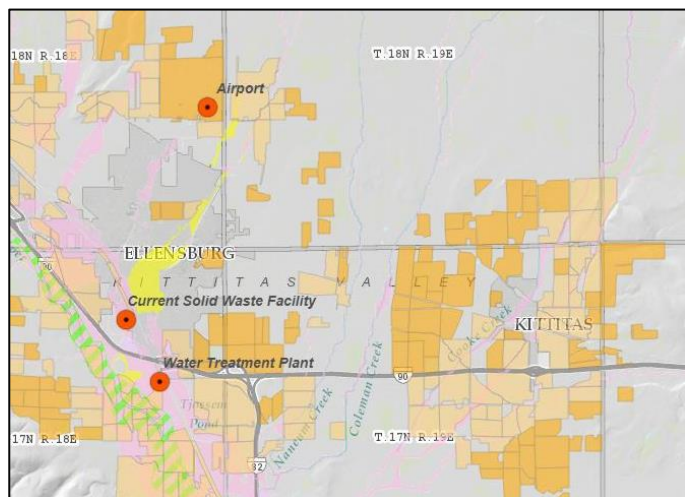
\*public feedback period ran from May 23-June 30

## Survey Questions & Feedback

The public involvement process provided insight into key concerns and areas of interest from the community about the siting process for the new transfer station. Survey questions and key feedback received through the online open house and in-person meeting (via comment forms and sticky notes on display boards) are summarized below. A full listing of comments received can be found in Appendix A.

### Siting Areas

- Question:** Please review the potential siting areas (shown at the right). Are there any potential siting areas or concerns the project team should know about in any of these areas?
- Key Feedback:**
  - Choose a siting area that is close to a highway and therefore easily accessible.
  - Consider wind directions, fire hazards and the water table (for





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- flood risks) when choosing a siting area.
- Don't choose a siting area that is too close to the airport, as roads in that area tend to be congested.

## Community Values

- **Question:** Please review the community values listed on the display board (to the right). So far, we have heard these values are important - are there others?
- **Key Feedback:**
  - Expand the types and amounts of recyclables and compost accepted.
  - Have onsite attendants.
  - Ensure that the site is ADA accessible.
  - Allow users to pay with credit/debit cards when paying for waste disposal.
  - Expand the hours of the recycling center.
  - Provide more information about what happens to recyclables and compost after being dropped off at the transfer station.
  - Ensure that this project will not result in additional taxes and/or user fees for the community.

## Siting Criteria

- **Question:** The team has developed preliminary siting criteria for two levels of screening to identify potential sites. Secondary site screening criteria will be used to narrow down to a more promising set of sites. Do you have any comments on the criteria or suggestions for other criteria the project team should consider?
- **Key Feedback:**
  - Choose a site that is close enough for the community to all get to and use, but is not in a residential area or requiring community members to drive through residential areas.

## What's Important to You About Siting the New Transfer Station?

Here is what we have heard about community values and concerns so far. **What else do we need to consider?**

Tell us your thoughts!

Topic	Values and Concerns
Existing Facility	<b>CONCERNS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size constraints</li> <li>• Limited variety of accepted recyclable plastics</li> <li>• Cash only</li> </ul>
New Facility	<b>VALUES</b> <p><b>Usability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convenience</li> <li>• Increased recycling availability (weekends)</li> <li>• Increased plastics recycling</li> <li>• Accessibility for all, especially at the recycle area</li> <li>• Clear and easy to understand signage</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind protection (litter prevention)</li> <li>• Water availability</li> <li>• Clean water and rivers (runoff)</li> </ul> <p><b>Stewardship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic efficiency</li> </ul> <p><b>CONCERNS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not relocate the new station near current or planned residential areas</li> <li>• Be sensitive to property values and economic inequality</li> </ul>



Kittitas County Transfer Station Relocation Project

[KittitasCountyTransferStation.participate.online](https://www.kittitascountytransferstation.com/participate/online)

## Preliminary Siting Criteria

### Preliminary Initial Site Screening Criteria

- Greater than 25 acres in size
- Acreage outside of 100-year floodplain
- Facility setback requirements
- Nearest utilities (water, sewer, electrical, telecommunication)
- Site access

### Preliminary Secondary Screening Criteria

- Zoning
- Current land use
- Permitability / State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)
- Endangered species
- Historic properties / natural resources
- Distance to existing and future residential neighborhoods
- Impact to county roads (e.g. changes needed, traffic impact)
- Distance / access to interstate
- Distance from transfer station to landfill
- Distance from population center (ease of access by customers)
- Ownership of property
- Existing property cleanup / demolition requirements
- Site topography
- Depth to groundwater
- Stormwater / drainage considerations
- Development cost



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- Conduct further research to understand where users live, and which routes they might take to access the new site.

### **Additional Questions**

- **Question:** Do you have any other comments about the siting process?
- **Key Feedback:**
  - Make sure the new facility can keep up with population growth.
  - Plan to address water runoff during construction.
  - Place an emphasis on functionality, not design.

### **Next Steps**

The project team is in the early stages of planning the second round of outreach, which will include another community meeting and public feedback period (most likely in mid-September).



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### Appendix A – Complete list of feedback submitted

#### Siting Areas

Please review the potential siting areas on the display board. Are there any features or concerns the project team should know about in any of these areas?

- Community meeting – comment form
  - *\*Fire/other fire hazards - 1) Susceptibility to wildfires 2) possible point of origin (i.e. sunset materials compost area self igniting and burning for days! Huge pyro clouds with burning debris uplifted). Sparks from equipment or traffic. Loads. \*Space to expand to popular expansions. Wind direction orientation - dust/fire/odors - especially with our more active weather than Wenatchee/Yakima/etc. \*Ease on/off main roads/interstate for semis hauling in/out.*
  - *None that I know of.*
  - *Most sites appear to have potential for being west - either from irrigation -related flows and high water table or alleviated from flood risk. Dry places are far away from town. Would it be better to have smaller facility for household trash close to town and a larger site for disposal of larger volumes of waste?*
  - *Not familiar enough with all areas.*
  - *Airport creates problems because of road access - should be close to freeway for hauling off.*
  - *Plan for wind direction and (illegible) removed.*
- Community meeting – display board sticky note
  - *I like it here (west side site by ECP).*
  - *Not the highest and best use for this site (+30 years) (airport).*
  - *Maybe (arrow pointing to Southeast of airport).*
- Online engagement platform
  - *Ellensburg lacks good arterial roads both east-west and north-south. N-S is more of a problem. Probably the best E-W locations would be east of town on the Kittitas Highway. Getting in and out of the airport area has many problems. The University located as it is presents some challenges in developing good arterials through the main part of town. I wouldn't favor anything very close to the interchange areas. They are gateways to the city and should be used for other sorts of businesses. It might also be best to avoid adding traffic to those areas that could be directed elsewhere.*
  - *Yes. You have several parcels on Hungry Junction Rd highlighted. First, concerned the acreage on the NE corner of Reecer Creek and HJ; the county maps are incorrect on this designation. Areas that should be marked "floodway" are marked floodplain. It has led to building in that area, where two creeks, East Currier and West Currier, flow parallel than combine. That entire corner is under water every year. Please check with the roads department; people working year after year on that corner have called it one of the worst in the county. Second, the parcels above Hungry Jct and Kerr roads are also flood prone. Every year they get sheet run-off from the hills, following numerous juvenile (i.e. beginnings of incision) channels/rills. This whole*



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*area sees sheet flow submerging pastures and flowing over the road. Third, this is a residential neighborhood with many homes. The visual and olfactory issues, in addition to groundwater pollution concerns, in addition to greatly increased traffic on the road will bring opposition out in force. I can say this with certainty since mine is one of the parcels in that identified zone. I hope you will consider my points as part of the process. I am a professional geologist, so my observations about the flooding are both first hand and professional.*

- *I prefer using the airport.*
- *I think you can rule out anything south of the Yakima River. It's not very convenient (except for those of who live on that side of the river) and access is choked at river crossings. I think it best to stay far from the Yakima River and any of its tributaries.*

### Community Values

Please review the community values listed on the display board. So far, we have heard these values are important - are there others?

- Community meeting – comment form
  - *Noise, odor, traffic impact.*
  - *Re-purposing of existing facility when closed? New property, owned or leased? Paper, cardboard recycling, local or shipped elsewhere? Plastics, where shipped? Compost, available to facility customers?*
  - *As long as there no additional property taxes, user fees, etc. I see no problem with this proposal.*
  - *Convenience to users is the biggy!*
  - *I would like to see a transfer station location that could handle additional compost materials (e.g. food waste) and add home recycling bins (e.g. mixed plastic and mixed paper).*
- Online engagement platform
  - *I would like to see the recycling center open in the evenings. One way to keep the recycling area open is to have it outside the gate and install surveillance cameras to capture any bad activity that occurs. Or perhaps have two gates: one for the waste area and one for the recycling area.*
  - *The listed values seem right.*
  - *Expanded household materials recycling (assumed) Onsite attendants ADA access Office/employee space Porta-potties/sanitizing stations for customers.*
  - *Increased recycling capabilities, including all plastics and mixed paper. Use of credit or debit cards when paying for waste disposal.*

### Siting Criteria

The team has developed preliminary siting criteria for two levels of screening. Initial site screening criteria will be used to identify potential sites. Secondary site screening criteria will be used to narrow down to a more promising set of sites. Do you have comments on the criteria or suggestions for other criteria the project team should consider?

- Community meeting – comment form
  - *Better signage on Main Street directing public to meetings!*



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- *Roadway access. The existing roadways are becoming inadequate, Vantage Highway, Little Highway, and Creek Roads will soon be overwhelmed since there appears to be little infrastructure improvement with all of the new housing developments.*
- *Main consideration should be the old real estate addage, "Location, location, location." The further away from the main population centers, presumably Ellensburg - the less likely people farther away will use the facility. That means other means of disposing and more burning of the green debris.*
- *Roads which serve property - 2 lane roads with out hauling will create traffic problems. Needs to not be in or hauled through primary residential zones.*
- **Online engagement platform**
  - *Lack of homes. People shouldn't have to lose property value and be subjected to the sights, smells and traffic.*
  - *Screening criteria seems right.*
  - *My big question: How can you know where to build the new site when you don't know where the customers are coming from? It is my understanding that customer address data has not been collected. Without this data, you will not know which locations are more/less convenient for customers. Furthermore, you will have to guess as to where the best traffic flow/road improvements must be made. The City of Ellensburg has tried (and failed) to require in-town curbside pickup; this item must be brought back into the public's consciousness as part of this project. It's time in-town residents allow household waste management to be efficiently managed by experts, not by anarchists. This may reduce self-haul site traffic substantially, and influence customer location density. Perhaps even more important is impact to public health and safety. There is a well-known chronic problem with rats (and other undesirable critters) that are probably attracted to garbage that is not stored or disposed of properly; a by-product of the increased pest population is the increased loose/feral cat population that is attracted to these pests, which bring its own set of problems. Of course, the odor and disease that accompanies improperly-stored garbage is unhealthy too. Ellensburg is growing up and needs to take on grown-up responsibilities, such as residential household waste management by requiring in-town residential garbage collection and disposal. Trashy-looking alleyways denigrate pride in community. The City of Cle Elum has been doing this for years and you don't hear about these aforementioned problems there.*

### **Do you have any other comments about the siting process?**

- **Community meeting – comment form**
  - *Growth is going to happen. Current facility is barely adequate but folks going to hem/haw for \$\$\$ keep going!*
  - *Any location is going to increase water runoff with construction similarly to all the new housing construction - the water has to go somewhere. Increased funding is already a problem, partially due to poor siting considerations.*
  - *Designs, functions, etc. will all naturally follow after the location. We don't need an architect's dream, but functionality at the location.*
- **Online engagement platform**



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- *The process looks good, with one big flaw: there is no customer location data. You do not know where everyone is coming from and that should greatly influence where the new site is located. In my mind, that could be a dealbreaker.*
- *Let Public Works know how we can assist.*