

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 4/14/99
Department Name: Public Works
Department No.: 054
Agenda Date: 5/25/99
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 1 hour
Continued Item: YES
If Yes, date from: 1/5/99

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Phillip M. Demery, Director
Public Works

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SUBJECT: Recommendations from Tajiguas Alternatives Community Advisory Committee and
Recommendations from Public Works regarding Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project
EIR Process
First, Second and Third Supervisorial Districts

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive the recommendations from the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for an alternative to the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project to be analyzed at a project level in the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR),
- B. Upon approval of the CAC's Alternative for project level environmental review, direct the Public Works Department to initiate the RFQ/RFP process for material recovery facility (MRF)-composting companies, and
- C. Upon approval of the CAC's Alternative for project level environmental review, direct the Public Works Department to prepare a contract amendment with TRC to include all necessary EIR tasks associated with the CAC Alternative; additional tasks necessary for completing the preparation of the EIR; and prepare a Technical Financial Analysis Document of the project-level options and alternatives, as a stand-alone document separate from the EIR.

ALIGNMENT WITH BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN:

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION:

On January 27, 1998, your Board directed staff to proceed with the environmental review process for the expansion of the Tajiguas Landfill. This comprehensive environmental review includes the analysis of a full range of feasible and reasonable alternatives to the proposed landfill expansion project. This analysis will include, an analysis of potential new landfill sites within the County; transportation of waste to other disposal sites both within and outside of the County; other waste management technologies; and alternatives that may require the use of a new or expanded in-County transfer station. To ensure public participation in the EIR process, your Board formed the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project Community Advisory Committee on July 28, 1998. This committee was asked to review the alternatives in the EIR, add any additional alternatives or combination of alternatives that they might identify, and recommend an alternative to the Board to be elevated to a "project level" environmental review, similar to that which was being completed on the Tajiguas disposal site.

The Community Advisory Committee has completed its recommendations and Public Works staff has outlined the additional tasks that will be required to include the CAC's recommendation in the EIR and to complete the draft EIR. These tasks include preparing a contract amendment to complete the additional environmental review, issuing the Notice of Preparation, preparing a financial analysis of the proposed project and identified alternatives, and releasing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify companies capable of supplying the necessary equipment for the CAC's recommendation.

The determination of a disposal destination is a difficult and critical decision that will affect South Coast residents for years to come. This additional work will ensure that upon completion of the EIR, your Board will have a complete review of all available disposal options, ensuring the Board's flexibility to choose the appropriate option for the South Coast community.

Community Advisory Committee Recommendations

On January 5, 1999, your Board received preliminary recommendations from the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for an alternative to the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project. The Board also directed staff to convene a subcommittee of CAC members to complete a detailed Project Description for the alternative. The CAC was asked to report back to the Board with a recommendation for an alternative to be elevated for project level environmental analysis in the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The CAC designated four members: Paul Relis, John Trotti, Barry Keller and Jonny Wallis to serve on this subcommittee. The subcommittee was assisted by County and City Public Works Department staff and consultants to further define the alternative. After considerable work and discussion by all members, the CAC voted 12 to 1 to approve the alternative as described. Two Committee members were absent and did not vote. A report summarizing its recommendations has been prepared (Attachment A).

CAC Recommended Alternative

The Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project Community Advisory Committee recommends that the Board of Supervisors review an alternative project to the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR. This alternative project includes a materials recovery facility (MRF), a composting facility, and a transfer station to be located on a single campus on the South Coast, as well as accompanying policies necessary to ensure

diversion of the waste which is currently being landfilled. The Committee also recommends that the County and City immediately implement a comprehensive source reduction program and further evaluate diversion opportunities from waste conversion technologies for inclusion in 5 to 10 years as those technologies become economically viable.

The project was designed to meet the following goals:

- Reduce the community's reliance on landfilling.
- Provide the local processing capability to meet the AB 939 mandate requiring a 50% reduction of landfilled waste.
- Increase the community's control over the wastestream and preserve valuable landfill airspace.
- Provide opportunities for increased diversion of landfilled waste, as new technologies become available for residual materials.

A siting study for the proposed alternative has been completed and sites were ranked using regulatory criteria, zoning designation, parcel size, and development plans, as well as siting criteria based on developmental, environmental and social considerations that the CAC indicated were important. Based on the ranking methodology, the CAC found the Tajiguas Landfill at Canada de la Pila to be the preferred site for a single campus facility.

A cost estimate for the alternative has been prepared for planning purposes. The estimated capital cost for the identified alternative is \$17-21 million. The estimated annual operating cost range is \$8-9 million. After inclusion of a projection for revenue from sale of recyclables and compost product, the annual capital and operating cost is estimated at \$5.7-10.3 million. This would result in a tipping fee of approximately \$27-48 per ton as compared to the existing cost of disposal which is approximately \$22.50 per ton. The alternative cost includes the cost to transport and dispose of the remaining trash and residual material from the MRF, which can not be recycled. The actual facility cost will be determined when vendors submit proposals to the County during a public bid process.

RFQ/RFP Process

As part of this work, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) has been prepared and will be distributed to MRF-Composting companies. The responses to the RFQ will provide additional information to your Board, the City of Santa Barbara, and the consultant preparing the EIR for the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project regarding capabilities, facility sizing, etc. Prior to the release of a RFP, staff will need to identify a financing plan for this facility and return to your Board for its approval.

Additional Environmental Review Tasks

If your Board accepts the CAC alternative and directs its inclusion in the EIR, staff will need to prepare a contract amendment with TRC, our environmental consultant. Also included in the amendment will be the alternatives analysis and financial feasibility study (a stand alone report). The items were previously identified, but placed on hold by your Board until the CAC reviewed the alternatives and identified an alternative to be considered at the "project level".

Out-of-County Alternatives Analysis

At the January 5, 1999 Board of Supervisors meeting, questions were raised about the depth of environmental review being conducted for disposal of waste at landfill sites located outside of the County. The Board asked if the analysis would provide sufficient detail to evaluate specific out-of-county options.

TRC, the consulting firm preparing the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR, will complete an analysis of those alternatives that would result in the diversion of municipal solid waste, recyclables and/or organic materials from the County to out-of-county waste management facilities. Out-of-County waste management facilities include out-of-county landfills, transfer stations/materials recovery facilities, organic waste processing facilities, or other out-of-county waste processing facilities. A summary of the Out-of-County Alternatives Analysis Methodology to be utilized in the preparation of the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR is presented as Attachment B.

The determination of the destination of the County's residual waste, recyclables, and/or organic materials is a policy decision, as whether to maintain or relinquish control of the municipal solid waste generated by our community. At the conclusion of the EIR if your Board were to choose this alternative your Board would need to direct staff to solicit proposals from identified facilities able to properly dispose of the County's waste.

Next Steps

A Revised Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR will be prepared as the next step in the EIR process. The Revised NOP will include a project description of all project-level options and a brief discussion of potential environmental effects from each of these options. In addition, a list of the full-range of alternatives to be considered in the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR will be included in the Revised NOP.

At this time, the existing project-level options include the Tajiguas Front Canyon Landfill Expansion Configuration and the Tajiguas Back Canyon Landfill Expansion Configuration. With your Board's approval, the CAC's Recommended Alternative including the disposition of the residual waste will be analyzed at a project level in the EIR. Through this process, your Board will be provided the full-range of environmental information and fiscal impact regarding the disposal options for the waste generated by Santa Barbara County to ensure the Board's flexibility to choose the appropriate disposal option for the South Coast.

Once completed, the Revised NOP will be released to responsible agencies, trustee agencies and interested public for a 30-day comment period. Public Works staff anticipates that the Revised NOP will be completed in July 1999.

MANDATES AND SERVICE LEVELS:

There are no changes in mandates or service levels associated with the inclusion of the CAC's alternative in the EIR process or with any of the recommendations regarding the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR process.

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FACILITIES AND FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no facility impacts associated either with the inclusion of the CAC's alternative in the EIR or with any of the recommendations regarding the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project EIR process. Inclusion of the CAC alternative in the EIR will require the amendment of the TRC contract. The TRC contract will also need to be amended to include the recommendations regarding the EIR process. This contract amendment will be brought back to your Board for approval as soon as it is prepared.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

None.