

Appendix I

Waste Management Memorandum

MEMORANDUM



**PUBLIC
WORKS**

DATE: Monday, March 24, 2025

TO: Amanda Landry, Principal Planner

FROM: John Molinar, Assistant Public Works Director, Streets and Waste Management

SUBJECT: Field Service's Comments Related to the Media District Specific Plan Update

FIELD SERVICES

Background:

Burbank's Streets and Waste Management Division of the Public Works Department is responsible for the collection of solid waste, organics, and recyclables and transporting them to the City's Landfill and Recycle Center. The division is also responsible for the mandated reporting Burbank's diversion data from the City and private haulers per Agenda Bill (AB) 939, AB 341, and AB 1826, among others, as well as greenhouse gas reduction reporting per Senate Bill 1383.

Solid waste received and processed at Burbank's Landfill comes from 100% of the City's single-family residential, and approximately 50% of multi-family and 10% of commercial properties. Organics are transported to the Landfill and then transferred onto semi-trucks for transportation to a composting site in California's central valley. Recyclables are sorted at the Burbank Recycle Center and sold on the commodities market.

For health and safety purposes the Media District Specific Plan Update (MDSP) must not conflict with the Burbank Municipal Code or State mandates relating to Solid Waste or Streets. In the event that it does, then the BMC related to Solid Waste or Streets or relevant State mandates will take precedence over the Media District Specific Plan Update.

Discussion:

The MDSP will affect Solid Waste capacity regionally. The plan calls for densification that will increase the generation of solid waste impacting private haulers as well as City operations. Such impacts for both will cause the addition of routes (trip generation) and cart and bin inventories as well as a decrease in regional solid waste landfill capacity, including a reduction to the City Landfill's lifespan.

In the northern Los Angeles County region landfill capacity is rapidly dwindling.

- Chiquita Canyon Landfill in Castaic, California, stopped accepting waste effective January 1, 2025, due to ongoing regulatory and legal issues, and a smoldering chemical reaction causing noxious odors.
- Sunshine Canyon Landfill was expected to close in 2037; however, since January 2023, South Coast AQMD has received over 4,000 odor complaints from nearby residents and an elementary school. South Coast AQMD has issued more than 150 notices of violation against the landfill. With increased public and political pressure this landfill may close sooner than planned.
- Scholl Canyon landfill was expected to close in December of 2025, but is now expected to close in mid-to-late 2027. The delay is due to loss of revenue from lower waste tonnage as haulers seek capacity at other landfills.

The aforementioned landfills were the three largest in close proximity to Burbank. Los Angeles County is facing a dwindling landfill capacity issue, with the second-largest active landfill, Chiquita Canyon, closed to waste disposal and the other two closing soon. The MDSP will have a significant impact on waste capacity in the region.

Any impact to the Solid Waste routes and cart inventory means an impact to refuse operations. The main concentration of routes created by this plan will be commercial front loader which is primarily serviced by private haulers; however, state mandated reporting for all of this newly generated solid waste falls on the City's Public Works Department. So, the MDSP will trigger an increase in regional and City staffing and equipment to meet the needs of the additional units.

CalRecycle conducts periodic waste characterization studies to better understand the types and amounts of materials disposed in and diverted from California's waste stream. The state's last waste characterization (<https://calrecycle.ca.gov/stateofreport/>) showed that 53% was landfilled, 21% was recycled, and 26% went to organics processing or beneficial use related. Solid waste generation rates depend on the land use type (CalRecycle <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastecharacterization/general/rates>). The waste characterization percentages and waste generation rates are used to estimate the impacts on solid waste operations.

Preferred Plan

The Preferred Plan would:

- Reduce Burbank's landfill's lifespan by approximately ten percent.
- Increase recurring Refuse Fund expenditures for agency fees, recycling processing, composting, staffing, and equipment by approximately four percent.
- Require one-time costs for additional vehicles and equipment up to approximately nine percent of the Refuse Fund budget.

Increased Development Alternative Plan

The Increased Development Plan Alternative would:

- Reduce the landfill's lifespan by approximately fifteen percent.
- Increase recurring Refuse Fund expenditures for agency fees, recycling processing, composting, staffing, and equipment by approximately six and one-half percent.
- Require one-time costs for additional vehicles and equipment up to approximately twelve percent of the Refuse Fund budget.

Conclusion:

Though there is current local capacity to meet the needs of the plan, it is estimated to reduce Burbank's Landfill's lifespan between ten and fifteen percent and with northern Los Angeles County's capacity dwindling there is a question as to whether there is sufficient regional capacity. Locally, there will also be significant upward pressure on the Refuse Fund Budget for both recurring and one-time costs. The Preferred and The Increased Development Plans as a part of the MDSP will have a significant impact on solid waste capacity, and operational budgets for both the City of Burbank and the region.