Responsible Recycling Task Force (RRTF)

- Convened at request of King County SWAC and MSWMAC advisory committees in response to China Sword
- RRTF Members are a subset of advisory committee members (~ 27 people)
- RRTF is an information sharing forum; recommendations will be referred back to the advisory committees
RRTF Goals

• **Short Term Goal**: To help identify near-, mid- and long-term actions in response to reduction in export markets for mixed recyclable materials due to China National Sword policies.

• **Longer Term Goal**: To help establish commitment across the region to “responsible recycling” and domestic sorting/processing of curbside recyclables.
Outcomes

• **A report** to the King County advisory committees with actionable items and recommendations for future action

• **Interim tools** for communications and other topics where this is an immediate need
Meeting #1: Task Force Kick-Off

Date: April 30, 2018

Topics:

– Review Responsible Recycling Framework
– Task Force Goals, Outcomes, Role
“Responsible Recycling” Framework

- Quality vs Quantity
- Harmonized Messaging
- Regional Policy Alignment
- Domestic Processing and Markets
- Demand for Recycled Feedstock
- Responsible Recycling is Not Free
- Measure Real Recycling
Meeting #1: Recommendation

The region should make a commitment to responsible recycling and domestic sorting/processing of curbside recyclables.
Meeting #2: What’s in the Bin?

Date: June 1, 2018

Topics:
– Criteria for including (or not including) materials in the commingled curbside recycling bin
– Regional Communications Consortium
# What’s in King County’s Blue Bins?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accepted in 100% of KC jurisdictions</th>
<th>Accepted in 60% to 90% of KC jurisdictions</th>
<th>Accepted in &lt;40% of KC jurisdictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makes up 90% of curbside recycled tons</td>
<td>Makes up 6% of curbside recycled tons</td>
<td>Makes up 4% of curbside recycled tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper &amp; Cardboard</td>
<td>Plastic cups</td>
<td>Plastic bags and film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metals cans</td>
<td>Scrap metal</td>
<td>Shredded paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic bottles, tubs &amp; jugs</td>
<td>Aluminum foil &amp; trays</td>
<td>Non-bottle rigid plastics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>Five gallon buckets</td>
<td>Plastic trays &amp; clamshells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper cartons, frozen food containers, aseptic containers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meeting #2: Recommendation

All regional commingled curbside programs should remove plastic bags and shredded paper from curbside recycling bins.
Meeting #3: Contracts, Waivers & Surcharges

Date: June 18, 2018

Topics:

– Use of recycling contracts, waivers and surcharges to address disruptions in markets for mixed paper and mixed plastics.
Surcharges

• Utilities and Transportation Commission approved temporary surcharges to cover increased costs to sort and process curbside materials

• Covers unincorporated areas and non-contract cities
Waivers

• Temporary waivers were requested of some cities with recycling contracts to allow landfilling of unmarketable materials

• Various conditions and timeframes were granted
Meeting #3: Recommendation

The region should have a coordinated and consistent approach to waivers.
Meeting #4: Domestic Processing Infrastructure

Date: July 18, 2018

Topics:

– Washington Fiber (Paper) Markets Overview
– Plastic Sorting, Processing & Markets
– Secondary MRF Model
Domestic Processing

- 17 paper mills currently operating in WA and OR
  - 10 accept post-consumer fiber (only 2 accept MWP)

- **Merlin Plastics**, Vancouver BC
  - Sorts and reprocesses plastics into pellets

- **Titus Equipment**
  - Conceptual model of how a secondary MRF can process low volume and small format materials from primary MFRs and make market-ready bales
Meeting #4: Recommendation (*in discussion*)

• Prioritize sorting and processing in the United States and Canada, to ensure that the materials generated for use as feedstock in new products are clean and suitable for remanufacture.

• If there are no sorting and/or processing facilities located domestically, prioritize countries that are members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that have worker health and safety and environmental regulations comparable to those in the US and Canada.
Meeting #5: Working with Product and Packaging Producers

Date: August 24, 2018

Topics:

- Recycle BC Program Overview (EPR)
- National and Private Sector Sustainable Packaging Efforts
Recycle BC: Non-profit organization responsible for residential packaging and paper recycling in Vancouver BC

Sustainable Packaging Coalition: Mission is to create packaging that is good for people + environment

How2Recycle: Voluntary labeling program that helps to connect and educate brand owners, packagers and material manufacturers about sustainable packaging
Meeting #5: Recommendation (in discussion)

- Study Recycle BC’s province-wide, coordinated program in further detail to understand how a statewide “systems approach” might be applied to our operating environment in the Northwest.

- Engage producers in recycling solutions in order to achieve a system of sustainable and responsible recycling.
Meeting #6: Policy Approaches in Support of Responsible Recycling

Date: September 19, 2018

Topics:

– Legislation for Recycling and Recycling Markets
– Plastic Packaging Stewardship
– Local and Statewide Reusable Bag Ordinances
Legislation

• **E2SHB 2914**
  – Part 1: Public outreach and support
  – Part 2: Economic analysis

• **Plastic Packaging Stewardship**
  – Financed by plastic packaging manufacturers
  – 3rd party, non-profit stewardship organization runs the program
  – Disincentives for poorly designed packaging

• **WA Statewide Bag Legislation**
Meeting #6: Recommendation *(in discussion)*

The region should continue to elevate and put forth local and statewide policy and legislation that is consistent with helping establish a system of responsible recycling.
Upcoming Meetings (proposed topics)

• October 26, 2018: Systems Approaches and New Technologies

• November 15, 2018: Draft Report Recommendations & Review

• December: Finalize Report & Next Steps
Recommendation Report

- Standard approach and guidelines for waivers
- Common items in commingled recycling bin
- Coordinated communications and outreach
- Prioritize domestic sorting and processing that supports a healthy environment and worker safety
- Engage producers and manufacturers in recycling solutions
- Further study into successful EPR systems
Thank you!