



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: August 28, 2014
AGENDA DATE: September 4, 2014
SUBJECT: Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project Draft SEIR
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning and Environmental Services Divisions

Matt Fore, Environmental Services Manager *DPG FOR MF*
 Daniel Gullett, Project Planner *DPG*

I. ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING

The purpose of the environmental hearing is to receive comments from the Planning Commission on the adequacy and completeness of the Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) prepared by the County of Santa Barbara for the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project. Written comments on the Draft EIR, incorporating those made by the Planning Commission, will be prepared by City staff and submitted to the County prior to the close of the comment period at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 24, 2014. **No action on the Draft SEIR or project will be taken at this hearing.**

The County will accept written and oral comments on the Draft SEIR until the close of the comment period. The County will also hold a public hearing and take public testimony on the Draft SEIR at 5:00 p.m. September 4, 2014 at the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department Auditorium, 300 N. San Antonio Road, Santa Barbara. Members of the public are encouraged to provide comments at the County's public hearing or directly to the project environmental planner, Joddi Leipner, at 130 E. Victoria Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, Phone 805-882-3614, Fax 805-882-3601.

II. PROPOSED PROJECT

The Tajiguas Landfill, owned and operated by the County of Santa Barbara, is the primary disposal facility for all waste generated by the cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Buellton and Solvang, as well as portions of the unincorporated County located on the South Coast. The Landfill is located approximately 26 miles north of the City of Santa Barbara on the Gaviota Coast, in the Unincorporated County.

For several years, the County, along with the Cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Buellton and Solvang, have investigated alternatives to landfill disposal. In response to a Request for Proposals issued by the County in October 2009, Mustang Renewable Power Ventures

submitted a proposal to construct and operate a Resource Recovery Project (RRP) at the Tajiguas Landfill. The project as proposed consists of the following components, all to be located at the Tajiguas Landfill:

1. *Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)* – A 60,000 square foot (sq ft) facility that uses mechanical sorters, magnets, air blowers and manual labor to sort municipal solid waste (MSW) currently received at Tajiguas Landfill into three streams:
 - Recyclables – Includes paper, cardboard, glass, metals and plastics separated from the trash. As an optional element, a slightly larger MRF (70,000 sq ft) would also process commingled source-separated recyclables (CSSR) currently collected in blue recycling containers and sent to a separate facility for processing. Recovered commodities would be baled and sent to market;
 - Organics – These materials would be recovered for processing in the Anaerobic Digestion Facility (ADF). The ADF would also be designed to process source separated organic (food and green) waste from the region's existing and future collection programs; and,
 - Residue – This represents non-recoverable materials left over from the MRF and ADF, which would ultimately be disposed at the existing Tajiguas Landfill.

The MRF would have a design capacity of up to 250,000 tons per year of municipal solid waste (MSW). Inclusion of the optional element, processing of source-separated recyclables, would result in a total processing capacity of the MRF of 290,000 tons/year (250,000 tons/year MSW + 40,000 tons/year CSSR).

2. *Anaerobic Digestion Facility (ADF)* – A 63,000 sq ft building in which bacteria would be used to anaerobically (i.e., in the absence of oxygen) break down organic material (e.g., green waste, plant material, food and soiled paper) recovered from MSW into the following two products:
 - Bio-gas (primarily composed of methane and carbon dioxide) that would be used to power two (2) 1,537 horsepower onsite combined heat and power engines to generate approximately 1 megawatts (net) of renewable power continuously; and,
 - Digestate that could be cured into compost and/or soil amendments. The curing would take place on an approximate 5 acre area (located at one or more sites on the Landfill's permitted operations and/or waste disposal footprint). The resulting compost and/or soil amendments would be marketed for agricultural or landscape use or used for reclamation projects, primarily in the northern portion of Santa Barbara County.

Based on current waste disposal rates, the Tajiguas Landfill may reach its permitted disposal capacity (23.3 million cubic yards) in approximately 2026. With the additional diversion provided by the proposed RRP, the permitted disposal capacity would not be expected to be

reached until approximately year 2036, extending the landfill life by approximately 10 years.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Environmental review of the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project is being conducted pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The County of Santa Barbara is the lead agency for this project. The City of Santa Barbara would participate as a responsible agency if the City decides to participate in the project or if a project alternative is proposed within the City limits.

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors certified an EIR (01-EIR-05) for, and approved, the Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project (Front Canyon Expansion) on August 13, 2002. All applicable permits to construct and operate the expansion were received in 2003 and waste disposal is currently occurring in the permitted area. The Tajiguas Landfill Expansion Project consists of the horizontal and vertical expansion of the landfill outside of the Coastal Zone, providing 8.2 million cubic yards of additional waste disposal capacity for a total permitted capacity of 23.3 million cubic yards. Reconfiguration of the waste footprint associated with the Expansion Project (Tajiguas Landfill Reconfiguration and Baron Ranch Restoration Project) was proposed to reduce earthwork requirements and improve waste disposal operations. A Subsequent EIR (08EIR-00000-00007) was prepared for this project and certified by the Board of Supervisors on May 5, 2009. The Subject Draft SEIR is a subsequent EIR to these previous documents.

The County circulated a Notice of Preparation of the Draft SEIR for the Resource Recovery Project in April of 2012 with a comment period that closed on May 18, 2012 and held a public scoping meeting on May 14, 2012. The County published a Notice of Availability of the Draft SEIR on August 11, 2014.

The Draft SEIR determined that the following impacts would result from the proposed project:

- Class I Impacts (Significant unavoidable adverse impacts for which the decisionmaker must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations): None.
- Class II Impacts (Significant environmental impacts that can be feasibly mitigated or avoided for which the decisionmaker must adopt Findings and recommended mitigation measures): Aesthetics, biological resources, hazards/hazardous materials, geologic processes, cultural resources, land use, and water resources.
- Class III Impacts (Adverse impacts found not to be significant for which the decisionmaker does not have to adopt findings under CEQA): Air quality, noise, transportation/circulation.
- Class IV Impacts (Impacts beneficial to the environment): Greenhouse gas emissions, public health/nuisance.

IV. ALTERNATIVES STUDIED

The Draft SEIR studied the following seven alternatives to a detailed level of analysis:

- A. No Project Alternative: continued disposal of MSW at the existing, permitted Tajiguas Landfill until the disposal capacity is reached in approximately 2026.
- B. Urban Area MRF Alternative 1 (MarBorg Industries, Inc. MRF): the proposed MRF would be located at MarBorg Industries, Inc., at 620 Quinientos Street, within the City of Santa Barbara and the ADF would be located at the Tajiguas Landfill, with disposal of residue at the Tajiguas Landfill.
- C. Urban Area MRF Alternative 2 (South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station [SCRSTS]): the proposed MRF would be located at SCRSTS, 4430 Calle Real, in unincorporated Santa Barbara County and the ADF would be located at the Tajiguas Landfill, with disposal of residue at the Tajiguas Landfill.
- D. Off-Site Aerobic Composting: the proposed MRF would be located at the Tajiguas Landfill and the ADF would be replaced with aerobic composting of organics at the Engel and Gray Composting Facility located in Santa Maria, with disposal of residue at the Tajiguas Landfill.
- E. No Project Alternative AND Tajiguas Expansion: disposal at the Tajiguas Landfill under the existing capacity and parameters through approximately 2026, then expansion of the existing landfill to provide additional waste disposal capacity to approximately 2036 (equivalent to the proposed project).
- F. No Project Alternative with Waste Export to the Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center (SVLRC): disposal at the Tajiguas Landfill under the existing capacity and parameters through approximately 2026, then export of MSW to SVLRC after capacity at Tajiguas Landfill is reached in approximately 2026.
- G. No Project Alternative with Waste Export to the Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility (SMIWMF): disposal at the Tajiguas Landfill under the existing capacity and parameters through approximately 2026, then export of MSW to the proposed SMIWMF after capacity at Tajiguas Landfill is reached in approximately 2026.

Although not required, since Class I impacts were not identified to result from the proposed project, the Draft SEIR identified Alternative C (SCRSTS) to be the Environmentally Superior Alternative of the seven alternatives studied in detail.

V. **ALTERNATIVE B: URBAN AREA MRF ALTERNATIVE 1 (MARBORG INDUSTRIES, INC. MRF)**

The only alternative studied in detail within the City of Santa Barbara is Alternative B, which would involve construction and operation of the proposed MRF component of the Resource Recovery Project (including processing of CSSR) at a site owned by MarBorg Industries, Inc. located at the southeast corner of Quinientos Street and Calle Cesar Chavez. The MRF would be located on several parcels (APN 017-113-025 to -028 and a portion of -031) encompassing a total area of 4.19 acres. Site specific design information and construction and operational parameters for the MRF at this location were provided by MarBorg.

The Draft SEIR determined that the following impacts would result from Alternative B:

- Class I Impacts (Significant unavoidable adverse impacts for which the decisionmaker must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations): Visual Impacts resulting from degradation of public and private views; Air Quality impacts; Cumulative traffic impact at the southbound Highway 101 ramp at Garden Street; and Disproportionate impacts on the minority population surrounding the MRF site.
- Class II Impacts (Significant environmental impacts that can be feasibly mitigated or avoided for which the decisionmaker must adopt Findings and recommended mitigation measures): Nighttime lighting, Odor-related nuisance, disturbance or nesting migratory birds and/or raptors, Exposure to hazardous waste or hazardous material during construction, Potential spread of solid waste during a tsunami, Potential damage to MRF by liquefaction and seismically-induced settlement; Exceedance of noise standards during construction and operations; Potential land use conflicts; Increased storm runoff; Adverse effects on surface water quality.
- Class IV Impacts (Impacts beneficial to the environment): Greenhouse gas emissions.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Receive a Staff presentation outlining the environmental and public review process, and summarizing the Draft EIR analysis, and hold a public hearing to receive Planning Commission comments on the Draft EIR.

VII. NEXT STEPS

Following the end of the public comment period on the Draft SEIR, County staff will consider all written and public hearing comments, and will prepare a Final SEIR, including written responses to comments, and any clarifications or revisions to the document or analysis needed. The proposed Final EIR will then be forwarded to the County Planning Commission for recommendation to the County Board of Supervisors.

As originally proposed, the project's physical improvements are located within the County's Jurisdiction. If the County and the other participating jurisdictions elect to proceed with Alternative B, the MRF would be located within the City's jurisdiction. If the City decides to participate in the project or if a project alternative is proposed within the City limits, the City would serve as a responsible agency. As a responsible agency, the City would be required to consider the EIR prior to any action on the project and to make findings required by CEQA Guideline 15091 for any significant effects identified in the EIR.

Exhibit: The Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report is available for review at the Santa Barbara County, 130 E. Victoria Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, and at:
<http://resourcerecoveryproject.com/pages/downloads.php/environmental-documents.php>

