

TOWN OF ERIE LANDFILL TASK FORCE

LANDFILL TASK FORCE CHARTER

This Charter outlines the purpose, protocols, roles and responsibilities, and logistics for the Town of Erie Landfill Task Force (LTF).

Background

There are two landfill sites in Erie, south of Weld County Road 6 on the east and west side of Weld County Road 5. Denver Regional Landfill (DRL), on the west side, closed at the end of 2021. The active landfill on the east side is Front Range Landfill (FRL). Waste Connections (WC) operates both landfills. WC desires to expand FRL, extend its operational duration, and explore several other operational changes.

The Town of Erie and its residents are working with WC to create long-term community benefits at the FRL. An eight-member LTF will serve as a collaborative body that reflects the desires of the community as WC plans for the future of the FRL.

Purpose

The purpose of the LTF is to understand Waste Connections' potential plans for the FRL, provide feedback and recommendations through the lens of the surrounding communities, and discuss how to balance key WC initiatives to minimize negative impacts on the surrounding area and provide benefits to the Town and its residents.

The LTF, through the facilitation team, will develop recommendations for WC, on behalf of the Erie community, to meet the landfill needs of the Town and enhance the surrounding area to provide benefits that extend beyond waste management. WC will use this valuable insight to determine the appropriate next steps in landfill management.

The LTF will work towards this goal by completing the following objectives:

- Touring the FRL to understand how the landfill works, key issues and opportunities, the scale of the area, and its proximity to neighboring communities.
- Engaging with their respective communities to understand their interests, concerns, and needs as they relate to FRL.
- Meeting no fewer than six times between April and September 2024 to discuss key initiatives as a group and communicate feedback from their respective communities.
- Using their experience, knowledge, and community feedback to recommend a path forward for WC consideration.

The following principles guide the LTF process:

- Strive to set up WC for long-term success and to be a good neighbor.
- Ensure the LTF process is transparent, with opportunities for community members to receive information about the process and have a voice.
- Don't reinvent the wheel; learn from what is working elsewhere.
- Seek cost-effective, feasible, and sustainable strategies.
- Recommend solutions that are achievable, simple, and streamlined.
- Be flexible, if new alternatives are developed or become more cost-effective.
- Focus discussions on the "why," so the community can support the outcomes because they understand the need for and importance of them.

Membership

The eight-member LTF, appointed by the Erie Town Council, consists of five members representing neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the FRL, including the Ranch Eggs neighborhood, and three members representing the community at large. LTF members have experience in comparable efforts or bring characteristics, qualifications, skill sets, and/or other relevant experiences (e.g., education, training, service on governing or decision-making boards).

Roles and Expectations

LTF members will act in a manner that is open, transparent, inclusive, and accountable to their actions. They will adhere to the highest ethical standards and are committed to using informed judgment and thoughtfulness in their participation.

By agreeing to participate in the group, LTF members commit to the success of the process by:

- Attending all meetings and designating one alternative to attend meetings in the event of an absence.
- Preparing for meetings by reading materials, considering issues, reviewing the agenda, and engaging with their communities as needed.
- Speaking to the experience, concerns, and questions of their fellow community members and carrying key takeaways from each meeting back to the community.
- Staying on track with the agenda, working on the issues at hand.
 - Avoiding repetition and revisiting resolved issues.
 - Providing clear and specific recommendations that are connected to well-articulated objectives.
 - Seeking evidence-based recommendations while recognizing decisions will need to be made in the face of uncertainty and incomplete data.
 - Sharing relevant information.
- Participating in a constructive, focused, and respectful way:
 - Actively listening to new ideas without judgement.

- Seeking to understand differences.
 - Valuing all perspectives.
 - Explaining views, values, and interests, not positions.
- Not attributing LTF discussions to any individual member to protect opportunities for open discussion.

To ensure that a majority of LTF members can consider topics and provide their perspectives, an LTF meeting will not convene with less than four members in attendance.

If LTF members expect to miss at least one meeting, members are required to designate an alternate member who will attend meetings in their absence, at least two weeks before the next meeting but preferably at the beginning of this process to ensure a smooth transition during absences. LTF members must notify the facilitators at least one week before a scheduled meeting if their alternate will attend on their behalf. Once identified, the alternate member will need to be approved by the Town.

The alternate member must reside in the same community as the LTF member and be prepared to share perspectives from that community and collaborate to develop recommendations. The alternate member is expected to follow the LTF's progress, stay informed on key developments, and attend meetings fully prepared to engage and participate.

Process Facilitation

Facilitators from Kearns & West will lead this process with support from the Town of Erie.

The facilitation team will:

- Schedule and coordinate meeting logistics, including virtual meeting needs.
- Communicate directly with the LTF.
- Track actions, next steps, and deadlines.
- Develop meeting agendas, prepare draft and final meeting summaries, and generate draft written products as needed.
- Circulate materials at least one week before LTF meetings for review.
- Prepare draft written products based on LTF discussion for LTF review.
- Set and enforce ground rules.
- Structure and conduct inclusive, productive, and engaged LTF meetings.
- Help participants resolve their differences on the issues raised.
- Maintain neutrality during discussions.
- Guide meeting discussions and manage time per the agenda.
- Work to ensure that all participants can participate as effectively as possible.

- Facilitate dialogue that allows for multiple methods of participation and productive outcomes.
- Ensure that all voices are equal.
- Bring to light underlying concerns, needs, or interests.
- Help the group fulfill its purpose in a balanced and fair manner.
- Offer process expertise to support constructive, collaborative, and productive dialogue.

Town of Erie staff will:

- Work with the facilitation team, as applicable, to develop focused agendas.
- Maintain a website for information, documents, and notice of dates and events.
- Coordinate among Town staff, managers, and elected officials.
- Provide the necessary in-house and consulting technical assistance to aid the LTF in their work to help ensure a well-informed, technically credible, operationally feasible set of final recommendations.
- To the extent possible, provide additional information that the LTF may request throughout the course of the process to advance its discussions.

Waste Connection staff will:

- Work with the facilitation team, as applicable, to develop focused agendas.
- Present on topics to spark LTF discussion.
- Work with the LTF to think through recommendations, scenarios, and land use options.
- Provide the necessary in-house and consulting technical assistance to aid the LTF in their work to help ensure a well-informed, technically credible, operationally feasible set of final recommendations.
- To the extent possible, provide additional information that the LTF may request throughout the course of the process to advance its discussions.

Decision Making

The LTF's recommendations for WC will reflect the perspectives of the LTF members and peripherally, the perspectives of their neighbors and communities. The LTF will strive to make consensus recommendations that all members "can live with."

Reaching this outcome requires all LTF members to educate each other about important needs and concerns, and address individual and group interests to the greatest extent possible. If one or more LTF members oppose(s) a recommendation, LTF members are encouraged to explore ways to hear and understand each other's interests and concerns, and to offer alternatives for consideration. If the relevant interests and concerns cannot be met in the recommendations, the case for and against the recommendation and the nuances of each will be outlined in the final report.

Members are discouraged from blocking or withholding consensus unless they have serious reservations with the proposed approach – the “can live with” approach doesn’t strive for perfection, but rather, a reflection of the complex needs and interests of the community framed in the context of recommendations for Waste Connections. Members may “abstain” from providing input on a recommendation to not lend their endorsement. Absence is the equivalent of abstaining.

Meeting Process

The LTF meeting process and communications protocols are established as follows. Suggestions can be made to improve the process, but these must be reviewed and approved by the facilitation team.

If an LTF member requires accommodation to participate in the meeting, they are encouraged to submit their accommodation needs to the facilitation team when they are selected for the LTF, or before each meeting if needs should arise unexpectedly.

Meeting Schedule

The LTF will meet monthly for two-hour meetings, between April – September 2024 (approximately seven meetings). At the first meeting, the LTF will view a meeting schedule and is asked to reserve the meeting times in advance or designate one alternate. The LTF meetings will build on each other, with discussions in one meeting shaping and informing the discussions at the next meeting. Continuity between each meeting is enhanced by consistency in attendance and participation. Because of this, the Town encourages consistent participation in meetings whenever possible.

Meeting Location

Meetings will be conducted in person at the Erie Town Hall with a virtual option if needed. In-person attendance is strongly encouraged and preferred. If a member plans to attend a meeting virtually, they are asked to notify the facilitation team at least one week before the meeting so that the appropriate accommodations can be made.

Agenda and Meeting Materials

LTF meeting agendas and materials will be circulated at least one week prior to the meeting date. Members are expected to review the materials and think through questions and talking points in advance. Additional materials may be provided at the start of the meeting if those materials do not require review or consideration prior to the meeting.

Meeting Summaries

The facilitation team will prepare meeting summaries capturing key discussion points and action items. Meeting summaries will not be transcripts of the meeting, but participant names will be attributed to statements and input will be recorded. Draft summaries will be circulated to LTF members one week after the meeting, and LTF members can suggest edits, within one week of receipt, to ensure accuracy. The facilitation team will incorporate comments as appropriate into the final summaries, which will be disseminated to LTF members, Town staff, and WC.

LTF Transparency

LTF meeting summaries will be recorded and available for the public to review on the Town's website. The LTF will formulate policy ideas and propose recommendations at LTF meetings, which will be open for public review, but not comment. Members may informally engage each other on an individual basis to build relationships, discuss their interests, and generate ideas, however, group deliberations by e-mail are discouraged. Any information meant to be shared with the group should be sent to the facilitation team.

Pre-Meeting Actions

Regular action items leading up to each LTF meeting include:

Kearns & West:

- Confirm the availability of all LTF members.
- Send a save-the-date for the LTF meeting to members.
- Circulate the agenda and meeting materials for review.
- Discuss LTF issues as needed with LTF members individually.

LTF Members:

- Actively engage with community members to gather comments and questions regarding the landfill expansion.
- Review the agenda.
- Review all materials distributed in advance and come to the meeting ready to deliberate and discuss.

Regular Meeting Actions

Action items to ensure meetings are productive in moving the LTF towards identified goals include:

Kearns & West:

- Facilitate a productive conversation.
- Record comments, questions, and feedback shared by the LTF.

LTF Members:

- Provide input, ideas, comments, and feedback that incorporate local expertise, knowledge, resources, and understanding of communities.
- Share key takeaways from discussions held with community members about the landfill.
- Present ideas on how to incorporate the needs of the adjacent neighborhoods with the ongoing use of the landfill.

Post-Meeting Actions

Action items to be completed after the meeting include:

Town of Erie/Waste Connections/Kearns & West:

- Contact subject matter experts if a question posed by an LTF member cannot be answered.
- Develop a summary of the previous LTF meeting.
- Follow up with LTF members as needed to understand needs and interests.
- Prepare for the next meeting based on the last.

LTF Members:

- Share key takeaways from the LTF meeting with the community.

Points of Contact

Town of Erie

- David Frank, Director of Environmental Services, dfrank@erieco.gov
- Eryka Thorley, Sustainability Manager, ethorley@erieco.gov
- Gabi Rae, Director of Communications & Community Engagement, grae@erieco.gov

Kearns & West

- Morgan Lommele, Facilitator, mlommele@kearnswest.com
- Colin Johnson, Project Support, cjohnson@kearnswest.com