

Public comment report

Attachment 1 to Staff Report for Resolution No. 25-5527



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Background

Adoption of Resolution No. 25-5527 will authorize the Chief Operating Officer to issue a renewed solid waste facility franchise to GSS Transfer, LLC (GSS) to operate a transfer station for a term of five years.

On July 16, 2025, the applicant submitted to Metro a complete solid waste facility franchise application accompanied by payment of the requisite application fee of \$500. The applicant did not request any changes to its current authorization.

Public notice and opportunity to comment

Metro posted a public notice and invited public review and comment on the franchise application. The notice was posted to Metro's website and postcards were mailed to approximately 156 property owners and residents within one-quarter mile of the facility. Metro also emailed the notice to 254 community-based organizations, neighborhood associations, local governments, solid waste industry members, and other interested parties.

The 30-day public comment period began on August 15, 2025, and closed on September 15, 2025. Metro received two comments about the proposed franchise renewal and shared them with GSS. Metro redacted all personal identifying information prior to providing the comments to the applicant. GSS declined to provide a response to public comments.

Summary of written public comments on application

Metro received two public comments on the franchise renewal application for GSS:

Comment #1: Gresham Sanitary has always been a good neighbor, acting very responsibly. Keeping their facility clean and nice. Super convenient for recycling electronics.

Metro response # 1 - Convenience and cleanliness:

Public comments, including this submission, are appreciated and considered as part of staff's analysis and recommendations.

Comment #2: Wish to move to a remote areas where it is far from residential area because the trash smell is more heavy now.

Metro response # 2 – Facility location and odors

Metro is responsible for planning, managing and overseeing the region's solid waste system. It has an obligation to the public to ensure that the waste intended for reuse, recycling and other purposes is handled properly and sent to appropriate markets, and that all other waste is safely managed and disposed.

Metro and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regulate GSS and closely monitor the facility to ensure it meets applicable regulatory requirements. Metro routinely performs inspections at the facility to monitor compliance and coordinate with other regulatory agencies including DEQ and the City of Gresham to address and resolve compliance issues.

The proposed solid waste franchise includes requirements for the facility to control and minimize off-site impacts. In particular, the proposed franchise requires the operator to meet performance standards in three areas:

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1. **Environment:** The franchisee must design and operate the facility to avoid undue threats to the environment including, but not limited to, stormwater or groundwater contamination, air pollution and improper acceptance and management of hazardous waste, asbestos and other prohibited wastes.
2. **Health and safety:** The franchisee must design and operate the facility to avoid conditions that may degrade public health and safety including, but not limited to, fires, vectors, pathogens and airborne debris.
3. **Nuisances:** The franchisee must design and operate the facility to avoid nuisance conditions including, but not limited to, litter, dust, odors and noise.

Additionally, the proposed franchise carries forward a requirement that the facility operate in a manner that controls and minimizes the generation of odors that are detectable off-site including sweeping and washing of the tipping floors, managing materials inside of buildings and containers, and removing putrescible waste from the site within 24 hours.

The facility is zoned as heavy industrial (IH) by the City of Gresham and the use of the property to conduct activities defined in the proposed franchise are permitted outright. According to the City of Gresham, GSS is located in a "Heavy Industrial Zone" and holds the necessary land use approval for a transfer station operation. Metro relies on local governments, like the City of Gresham, to determine land use compatibility within their respective jurisdictions. Metro also relies on local governments to evaluate and address traffic concerns.

Gresham Sanitary began operations as an exempt solid waste reload facility in 1992 at its base of operations located at 2131 NW Birdsdale Avenue in Gresham. In 2016, the Metro Council authorized Gresham Sanitary to expand its operations from reloading waste to other transfer stations, to becoming a franchised transfer station that transports waste directly to a landfill.

The facility plays an important role in the region's solid waste system. The solid waste system is currently comprised of two publicly owned transfer stations and six privately owned transfer stations within the region.

During the current franchise term (January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2025), the City of Gresham reported it has not received any complaints, taken any enforcement action and expressed no concerns about the facility or the facility operator.

In addition to performing routine site inspections, Metro investigates facility complaints and works with facility operators to address issues and concerns that arise. The public can share feedback, including complaints to Metro using its [Solid waste facility complaint form](#). The public may also report concerns to DEQ, the City, or directly to the facility operator. City of Gresham and DEQ have reported to Metro that there are no current enforcement or compliance issues associated with this site. The applicant is well known to Metro as an operator of a Metro-franchised solid waste facility and staff concludes that the applicant is qualified to operate and manage this facility in a competent and efficient manner.