

*Last updated 05.21.2025*

## ***Dane County Sustainability Campus and Landfill No 3***

### ***Frequently Asked Questions – Local Negotiations***

#### **1. How does the Local Negotiated Agreement (LNA) process work? What's included with the Agreement?**

The Local Negotiated Agreement (LNA) process is administered by the State of Wisconsin Waste Facility Siting Board and is required as part of the Feasibility Study stage of landfill permitting. The process allows for neighboring municipalities to negotiate directly with the landfill owner/operator (Dane County) about operational concerns or compensation for economic impacts that are a direct result of the facility.

Dane County and the municipalities closely followed the LNA process outlined in the State statutes ([ss. 289.33](#)). The process began when the siting board mailed letters inviting affected municipalities to participate. Affected municipalities are defined as municipalities that are within 1,500 feet of the proposed edge of waste of the landfill, which for the proposed landfill, includes the City of Madison and Town of Cottage Grove. These letters were sent in April 2023.

Each affected municipality then had to appoint members to the LNA committee and pass siting resolutions, a step that was completed in June 2023. Finally, in August 2023, the WFSB authorized negotiations to begin.

Municipalities beyond 1,500 feet of the proposed limits of the waste are allowed to be brought into the LNA process with consent of the LNA committee. This approval was granted to the Village of McFarland in January 2024.

Starting in October 2023, the Committee met every few weeks to discuss a variety of topics including but not limited to:

- Access and haul routes,
- Mitigation of nuisances (litter, odor, dust, mud tracking, birds, etc.),
- Procedures for reporting and correcting operational concerns,
- Hours of operation,
- Environmental monitoring,
- Limitations to the site,
- Final use of the site, and
- Property compensation.

The final local negotiated agreement was approved in Fall 2024 and is [available here](#). The meeting minutes, recordings, and the final agreement can be found on [Dane County's Legislative Information Center](#).

## **2. What impacts will this project have on nearby properties and will they get compensation?**

Dane County's goal is to minimize impacts to neighbors and nearby communities to the extent possible. Discussion about how we will design and operate the facility to accomplish this follows in later responses. Despite these efforts, there is the potential for adverse effects on individual properties located near the landfill.

In an attempt to determine which properties might experience impacts from the proposed landfill, Dane County hired an environmental engineering firm, Tetra Tech, to visit surrounding residential properties and perform a survey of the potential for visual impacts, noise, dust, birds, odors, and traffic. They also modelled the potential for dust and odors through air dispersion modelling.

The results of the study were presented to the committee on February 7, 2024 and the recording of the presentation and written report can be found on [Dane County's Legislative Information Center](#).

Appendix A of the report includes a table that ranks each nearby address with an impact assessment score which is intended to be used to determine the amount of compensation that each property is eligible for. The LNA committee

is still in the process of developing compensation level recommendations. The amount of annual compensation to

Based on this study and input from the Committee, levels of compensation were established in the [local negotiated agreement](#) and range between \$1,800 and \$8,800 per year per eligible household (page 20 of 34).

### **3. What impacts will this project have on property values?**

Again, our ultimate goal is to be an asset and have positive impacts on our surrounding communities by being a source of economic growth, jobs, recreation, educational opportunities, and renewable energy. Additionally, the existing landfill is already relatively close to existing neighborhoods, so the proposed landfill is not expected to impact current property values.

To provide our closest neighbors added security and peace of mind, we have property value guarantees within the local negotiated agreement. This guarantee requires us to compensate these homeowners if their home does not sell for appraised market value. This is a provision in our existing agreement and since this agreement started in 1994, the County has only had to compensate neighbors under this provision three times.

### **4. What level of screening is going to be provided for nearby homeowners and golf course users?**

To the extent possible, Dane County will protect and save existing mature trees on the site. Additional screening, most preferably natural screening, such as trees and shrubs, will be planted in advance of the project to allow time for maturation of the trees. Screening could also come in the form of soil berms or fencing. We are required to provide adequate screening of the landfill and during the final stages of permitting, Dane County will need to obtain the WDNR' approval of plans for providing screening. The landscaping and screening plan for the proposed site was recently approved by the City of Madison with our application for a conditional use permit.

## **5. Who's waste is being disposed of in the landfill and does the landfill take waste from outside of the County?**

The majority of Dane County's waste is disposed of at Dane County's landfill, but not all of it. Each municipality is responsible for waste collections and can contract for their waste disposal services which sometimes results in waste leaving the County (most commonly if a contracted hauler also owns a landfill). To preserve the landfill as a resource for Dane County, the current draft of the local negotiated agreement indicates that only 5% of waste is allowed to be from outside of Dane County.

## **6. What are the opportunities for public input and what approvals are needed?**

Public input is key to the success of this project and we look forward to engaging with the community about what the future of waste management looks like for Dane County. There have been and will continue to be many opportunities for public input during the planning process, and Dane County will consider all of that feedback as we work to design and develop this site.

Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the process by attending meetings, submitting written feedback, or attending upcoming meetings. Information about these meetings can be found of [Dane County's Legislative Information Center](#).

Following submittal of the Feasibility Report in early 2025, there will be a formal public comment period facilitated by the WDNR.

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Waste/Comment.html>

In addition, we have heard recent requests for additional ways to provide comments and concerns and have created a feedback section on our webpage [here, under our Contact Us webpage](#)

## **8. How and when will access to the site be determined and how will this project impact traffic?**

The preliminary access points were recently approved by the City of Madison with our application for a conditional use permit. The current proposal can be found in the documents section of our project webpage. Additionally, as part of the Local Negotiations process, the committee is proposing to restrict access to the site to be from US Hwy 12/18 and County Hwy AB. This will minimize impacts to traffic on town and county roadways such as Siggelkow Road.

## **9. How high will the landfill go?**

There are physical limits to how high a landfill can be built based on stability of the slopes and geotechnical investigations. The height of the landfill also determines the capacity and the length of time the landfill site could serve the community.

With the preliminary design submitted as part of the Feasibility Report, the final elevation is proposed to be 1,135 feet high or about 230-240 feet above current ground elevation. For comparison, the existing landfill is approved to go to 1,060 feet high, but the Rodefild site is narrower which limits the vertical height. The final elevation of the proposed landfill will be determined through the Local Negotiations and the Plan of Operations.

## **10. What will be done to control landfill odors?**

We are committed to doing everything possible to minimize odors. Landfill odors are caused by constituents in biogas that are produced during the breakdown of the waste we all generate from our households and businesses. The most effective way for us to control odors is to control the landfill gas with a robust and well-functioning landfill gas extraction system. To achieve this, we have and will continue to use the following management practices:

- Install permanent cap over closed areas of the landfill. This cap is engineered to include multiple layers, including a layer of HDPE plastic, and the cap is over 4-feet thick in depth. Covering the waste with a cap creates a physical barrier that prevents gas from leaving the waste.
- Install temporary cover soils over as much of the uncapped landfill area as possible.
- Cover the active area of the landfill at the end of each day.
- Install landfill gas wells sooner and closer together than required to collect landfill gas as it is generated. To learn more about our landfill gas collection and treatment system, check out [this video](#).
- Utilize advanced gas collection and monitoring systems that remotely monitor our gas extraction wells every 15 minutes and automatically make adjustments to maximize the gas collection effectiveness.
- Monitor the gas extraction system on a daily basis and inspect and monitor our entire wellfield at least monthly. We also perform a scan of the surface of the landfill each quarter to identify any areas where gas could be travelling through the cover.

Varying conditions such as barometric pressure, wind patterns, and humidity do temporarily impact gas collection abilities and odors. We have invested in a number of tools and practices to respond to these conditions including:

- Mobile odorant misting system
- Perimeter odor neutralizing vapor system
- Surface application of deodorant, as needed
- On-site weather stations to monitor these conditions

We have heard recent requests for additional ways to provide comments and concerns and have created a feedback section on our webpage [here](#).

## **11. Will there be a compost site at the Yahara site?**

Dane County recently announced that after receiving multiple innovative proposals, the County is partnering with Purple Cow Organics to expand food waste and yard waste composting services in the county over the next five years. With this partnership, Dane County will provide investment and equipment for Purple Cow to expand their existing site on Meier Road to accept

food waste. There will likely be a residential drop off for collection of food waste and yard waste included at the Campus, but this means that for the foreseeable future, there will not be a need to construct a composting facility at the Yahara Hills site.

## **12. Will the landfill attract pests?**

We are required to minimize conditions that would attract pests and animals such as rodents, birds, and burrowing animals. These efforts include covering the waste daily, paid professional pest control, and regular visual checks for signs of animal intrusion on the landfill. We don't commonly receive comments or concerns from our existing neighbors about pests.

Of note, we have invested in native pollinator seed mixes on our landfill cover and are committed to habitat restoration so that the site attracts a diversity of species of wildlife.