

Seattle site may house bus base, garbage plant

by William Gough
Times staff reporter

A prime piece of industrial land a few blocks southeast of the Kingdome could become the site of both an expanded Metro bus base and a plant to convert garbage into energy.

Metro Transit and the Seattle Engineering Department want the eight acres of property, now occupied by Washington Iron Works Inc. The two agencies have been on a collision course over use of it.

Metro wants to double the capacity of its central bus base on the property. The city Engineering Department has been considering it for a plant where garbage would be burned and the energy converted into steam and electricity.

The dispute may dissolve, however, in joint redevelopment of the property and some adjoining properties.

In approving the site yesterday for an expansion of the bus base,

the Metro Council also left open the possibility of a garbage-to-energy plant there.

"There may be some way we can jointly occupy this site and meet objectives of both Metro and the city," said Metro Transit Committee chairman Bob Neir.

The Metro Council authorized negotiations to acquire an option to buy the property and the equipment of Washington Iron Works. It's expected to cost up to \$12 million.

The property is the largest piece of industrial land available in South Seattle, said David Birks, manager of the department's energy-recovery project.

Birks said it would be suitable for a plant where either 750 or 1,000 tons of garbage a day would be burned. Steam generated by the incineration could be sold to the Seattle Steam Corp., he said, and electricity that would be co-generated could be sold to City Light.