



City of
Bellevue

City Manager's
Office

DATE: April 15, 2025

SUBJECT: King County Regional Committees Update, March 2025

Regional Transit Committee (RTC)

At its March 19 meeting, the RTC:

- **Elected Issaquah Deputy Council President Barbara de Michele as Vice Chair** of the RTC for 2025. The Vice Chair is consulted on developing a draft work program, setting a schedule for the RTC's work program, and canceling or changing the date, time or place of an RTC meeting.
- **Adopted the 2025 RTC work program.** The RTC's 2025 work program includes taking action on the System Evaluation annual report and receiving briefings on the performance measures dashboard annual report, as well as transit safety and security.
- **Received a briefing on Metro research program.** Metro seeks to measure its progress toward achieving the vision of its long-range plan, Metro Connects. Metro does this through the Strategic Plan dashboard, which is a required part of the adopted Strategic Plan, as well as efforts to strengthen Metro's learning and impact. At King County, there is an emphasis on using evidence to inform programs, policies, and investments. Metro is working to expand evidence and its use via internal efforts and productive research partnerships.
- **Received a briefing on Metro fare inspection.** Metro suspended fare enforcement operations at the onset of the pandemic. In 2024, Metro saw approximately 45 percent of riders using ORCA cards and tapping. Starting March 31, 2025, Metro fare inspectors will ask riders for proof of fare payment. Verbal reminders will be given to riders who did not pay. Starting May 31, 2025, fare inspection will fully resume. In place of verbal reminders, riders who do not pay will receive a written warning. Riders can receive two written warnings without consequence. However, third and subsequent violations may result in a fine or an alternative resolution, which could include:
 - Paying a fine of \$20 within 30 days, or \$40 within 90 days;
 - Loading \$20 onto an ORCA card or, if eligible, \$10 onto a reduced fare program card (this demonstrates a good faith effort to pay the fare in the future. One of Metro's goals is to provide alternatives for people who cannot afford the penalty.);
 - Enrolling in a reduced fare program if eligible;
 - Performing two hours of community service; or,
 - Appealing to the Fare Adjudication Program Manager or request a customized resolution.

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for April 16. Bellevue no longer has a member serving on RTC once Councilmember Janice Zahn resigned her position on the Council. A call for

nominations is due on April 18.

Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC)

At its March 5, 2025 meeting, the RWQC:

- **Heard that the Pollution Control Hearings Board invalidated the Washington State Department of Ecology's Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit.** The Department had until the end of March to appeal that decision.
- **Discussed the King County Wastewater Treatment Division's (WTD's) preliminary rate proposal.** WTD initially projected that their 2025 rate would increase by 7.5 percent. The 20-year forecast showed anticipated rate increases over 10 percent through 2031, starting in 2027, with rate increases below five percent starting in 2032. However, WTD shared there is significant uncertainty in the second decade of the 20-year rate forecast. RWQC members expressed concern about the drastic rate increases forecasted and requested additional information related to project prioritization.
- **Received a briefing on WTD's capital program and market factors influencing delivery.** In a typical year, WTD has about 250 active capital projects with an additional 550 conceptual projects in development.
- **Received a briefing on the Lower Duwamish Waterway Superfund Site Cleanup Consent Decree and settlements.** WTD shared that cleanup and construction is planned over the next 10 years, between October and February each year.
- **Received a briefing on the Regional Wastewater Services Plan and WTD's framing of challenges and opportunities.** RWQC members provided feedback on the challenges and opportunities, which will inform development of the King County Executive's Vision for Clean Water.

The next RWQC meeting is scheduled for April 4. Councilmember Conrad Lee serves on the RWQC on behalf of the Sound Cities Association.

Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC)

At its March 26, 2025 meeting, the GMPC:

- **Approved growth target reconciliation for Snoqualmie and Carnation.** The motion reduces the housing growth targets for Snoqualmie and Carnation, per the request of the cities. The motion also calls for a county-led assessment of growth assumptions and capacity in comprehensive plans in 2026 and allows - but does not require - a willing jurisdiction to take on the housing growth that was removed from Carnation and Snoqualmie's targets. This action does not affect the growth targets in Bellevue's 2024 comprehensive plan.
- **Adopted the 2025 work plan.** The work plan was adopted as presented, including revising the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) to better address Tribal coordination

and full designation of countywide centers. Bellevue has five candidate countywide centers that will apply for full designation.

The next GMPC meeting is scheduled for June 25. Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis serves on the GMPC.

Affordable Housing Committee (AHC)

At its March 6, 2025 meeting, the AHC:

- **Approved a comment letter for Skykomish's comprehensive plan.** This letter acknowledges that Skykomish completed its housing-related comprehensive plan review, as required by the countywide planning policies (CPPs).
- **Discussed the 2025 work plan.** The work plan includes completing the plan review process, updating the committee's strategic direction and corresponding charter amendments, and early work on monitoring and reporting on implementation of comprehensive plans. The committee will revisit the work plan as the strategic direction discussion continues, see below.
- **Discussed the committee's strategic direction.** The AHC discussed its current focus on implementing the Housing CPPs and many committee members expressed interest in continuing with this work. Changes in the committee's strategic direction may result in amendments to the committee's charter. The committee will discuss more in April and May, with tentative action in June before GMPC-approval.

The AHC met on April 3, which will be included in the April Intergovernmental Affairs packet. The next AHC meeting is scheduled for May 1. Mayor Lynne Robinson serves on the AHC on behalf of the Sound Cities Association.