

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:  
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES  
*April 2022***

This briefing summarizes recent actions taken by the three regional committees formed as a result of the merger of King County and Metro. The three regional committees are the Regional Policy Committee, the Regional Water Quality Committee, and the Regional Transit Committee. Staff will also include updates on other regional issues as appropriate (e.g., King County Flood Control District, King Conservation District, Affordable Housing Committee, King County Board of Health, King County Regional Homelessness Authority). Summaries also include the work of the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC). Formed in the early 1990s to comply with the Growth Management Act requirements for collaboration of counties and their cities on Countywide Planning Policies, the GMPC meets three to four times per year to consider amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies and to monitor progress on implementation. These updates are intended to be summary briefings; staff can provide more details on any of the items below.

**REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (RPC)**

At its March 30 meeting, the RPC:

- **Discussed the Restorative Community Pathways (RCP) program**, new community-based youth diversion program which began in November 2021 serving first time juvenile felony offenders. The County's 2021-2022 adopted biennial budget appropriated \$6.2 million for the program and required an Implementation Plan, which was transmitted in August 2021 and adopted by the County Council on March 15.

The RCP operates as a consortium consisting of community-based organizations selected through a request for proposals process. RCP consortium members hire, train and support community navigators who work with referred youth and their families, as well as people who have experienced harm. Eligible youth are immediately referred by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO) to the RCP consortium rather than filing and referring to the court system.

- **Discussed the Veteran Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL)**. King County voters originally approved a six-year Veterans and Human Service Levy in 2005 and renewed it in 2011. Funding for seniors was added to the ballot measure in 2017 and voters approved the 2018-2023 VSHSL. It assesses a property tax levy of \$0.10 per \$1,000 assessed value, estimated to yield \$350 million over six years. The owner of a home in Bellevue assessed at \$961,000, which is the median, contributes approximately \$96 per year. Bellevue's annual contributions to the levy are approximately \$6.8 million.

In May, the RPC will consider recommending the County Council adopt a motion requiring the Executive to provide an assessment report on the current VSHSL and recommendations relating to a potential renewal levy. This item would also be referred to the King County Law,

Justice, Health and Human Services Committee. Per the King County Charter, the proposed levy legislation must be referred to the RPC, who will have the option to recommend the County Council adopt the proposal or request changes. If adopted by the County Council, the legislation would place the replacement levy on the ballot for voter approval.

- **Received a briefing on Seattle King County Public Health’s response to the opioid crisis.** Fatal overdoses have been steadily increasing in King County over the past decade. Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 80-100 times stronger than morphine, is a significant contributor to overdoses in King County and nationwide. King County staff demonstrated overdose data dashboards available at [www.kingcounty.gov/overdose](http://www.kingcounty.gov/overdose). King County conducts overdose prevention activities and distributes naloxone, a medicine that rapidly reverses opioid overdose. King County helps people access and navigate treatment and supports people in treatment and recovery.

The April RPC meeting was canceled. The next RPC meeting is scheduled for May 13. Councilmember John Stokes serves on the RPC.

### **REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)**

At its March 16 meeting, the RTC:

- **Received a briefing on the Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative.** Metro has adopted fare enforcement and security operations strategies to ensure the safety of customers and employees, while deterring disruptive behavior onboard coaches and at transit facilities. Through review of the 2021-2022 biennial budget, the County Council included a proviso that required Metro to transmit a scoping report and an implementation report outlining Metro’s efforts to: reexamine, restructure and reduce its security; fare enforcement; and law enforcement practices, partnerships and resource allocation. During the briefing, Metro responded to questions about how to encourage a safe return to riding transit at a time when security incidents have increased.
- **Received a briefing on federal and state funding for transit.** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the *Move Ahead Washington* transportation package represent a historic investment in infrastructure funding. From the federal BIL, Metro estimates it could receive \$150 to \$175 million more than was assumed in the adopted budget and could potentially secure additional funding through new or increased competitive grant programs. From the 2022 statewide Move Ahead Washington transportation revenue package, Metro anticipates receiving approximately \$642 million over 16 years, with additional funding possible from new or increased grant programs. The package stipulates transit support grants will only be distributed to transit agencies that adopt a fare-free policy for youth 18 years and younger by October 1.
- **Received a briefing on the Strategic Plan Performance Measures Dashboard.** The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021-2031 outlines ten goals, each with strategies and

performance measures. The Strategic Plan also includes performance measures to track progress towards achieving Metro Connects, Metro's long-range plan. The performance measures dashboard tracks these measures, is posted online and is publicly accessible in ten languages.

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for April 13. Bellevue City Councilmember Jennifer Robertson serves on the RTC.

### **REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)**

At its March 2 meeting, the RWQC:

- **Held a special orientation meeting for the RWQC's new members** on the history and purpose of the committee. Information on the role and responsibilities of the RWQC was also shared.
- **Approved the RWQC 2022 workplan.** Topics include 2023 and long-term sewer rates, Clean Water Plan, Ecology's Nutrient General Permit, Infiltration and Inflow, stormwater, Combined Sewer Overflow Consent Decree negotiations, and wastewater contract negotiations.
- **Received a briefing on the County's projected 2023 and 2023-2032 sewer rates.** WTD's 2022-2031 Sewer Rate Plan showed annual forecasted rate increases of 4 percent for 2023-2025, 5 percent in 2026, 6 percent for 2027-2030 and 7.5 percent in 2031. A significant portion of each rate increase is to pay off debt which comprises about 40 percent of WTD's 2022 revenue requirements.

WTD's preliminary rate analysis indicates the 2023 sewer rates may be as high as 5.5 percent leading up to annual rate increases of 9 percent between 2028-2032.

The RWQC met on April 6 and a summary will be included in the May Regional Issues packet. The next RWQC meeting is scheduled for May 4. Councilmember Conrad Lee serves on the RWQC.

### **GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL (GMPC):**

At its March 2 meeting, the GMPC:

- **Approved the 2022 workplan.** Key topics include GMPC's Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) work directed by GMPC Motion 21-1. Important facets of this affordable housing work include establishing and allocating the countywide and local affordable housing need, reporting and monitoring, accountability mechanisms, and identifying Countywide Planning Policy (CPP) amendments for consideration by the GMPC. Most of this work will be completed in 2022. Other topics include the City of Sammamish's revised growth targets, and the Urban Growth Area (UGA) expansion policies including the Four-To-One program to add open space along the

UGA boundary.

- **Received a briefing on the AHC GMPC Motion 21-1 work program and AHC appointments.** A primary topic for GMPC in 2022 will be to participate in the work being done by the AHC under GMPC Motion 21-1 which adopted recommended amendments to the King County CPPs, including amendments to further modify the King County CPP Housing Chapter to align with recent changes to the Growth Management Act and address stakeholder input. Due to time constraints, the adopted Housing Chapter did not incorporate all proposed amendments or resolve all stakeholder concerns. On February 9, the AHC approved the scope and schedule for responding to GMPC Motion 21-1.

The King County and Sound Cities Association AHC caucuses recommended that the GMPC Chair appoint three new members to serve on the AHC this year to fill vacancies. GMPC members took action to concur with these appointments:

1. Councilmember Jeanne Kohl-Welles, King County
2. Mayor Nigel Herbig, Kenmore, on behalf of Sound Cities Association
3. Councilmember Marli Larimer, Kent, on behalf of Sound Cities Association

- **Received a briefing on the Urban Growth Area Expansion Policies and Four to One Program.** The King County Council ordinance that adopted the 2021 Countywide Planning Policies, which is currently out for city and town ratification, did not include the Urban Growth Area expansion policy changes recommended by the GMPC. Instead, the County Council requested that the GMPC review the policies and the Four-to-One Program as part of a future work program.

The next GMPC meeting is scheduled for April 27. Deputy Mayor Jared Nieuwenhuis serves on the GMPC.

### **REGIONAL LAW, SAFETY, AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE (RLSJC)**

At its February 24 meeting, the RLSJC:

- **Discussed Response Awareness, De-escalation and Referral (RADAR) program expansion.** RADAR is an effort by the Police Departments in Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, Bothell and Kirkland to address the rights and needs of individuals with behavioral health issues and/or developmental disabilities.

RADAR aims to decrease use-of-force incidents between police and individuals with behavioral health and/or developmental disabilities and to reduce the repeated and inappropriate use of emergency services by institutionalizing department-wide and regional information sharing. RADAR also offers connection to services and resources through a mental health professional accompanied by a law enforcement co-responder.

At its March 24 meeting, the RLSJC:

- **Discussed sequential intercept mapping (SIM)**, an analysis tool that details how individuals with mental and substance use disorders come into contact with and move through the criminal justice system. The “intercepts,” or points when individuals may encounter the system, include:
  - Community Services. Involves opportunities to divert people into local crisis care services. Resources are available without requiring people in crisis to call 911, but sometimes 911 and law enforcement are the only resources available. Connects people with treatment or services instead of arresting or charging them with a crime.
  - Law Enforcement. Involves diversion performed by law enforcement and other emergency service providers who respond to people with mental and substance use disorders. Allows people to be diverted to treatment instead of being arrested or booked into jail.
  - Initial Court Hearings/Initial Detention. Involves diversion to community-based treatment by jail clinicians, social workers, or court officials during jail intake, booking, or initial hearing.
  - Jails/Courts. Involves diversion to community-based services through jail or court processes and programs after a person has been booked into jail. Includes services that prevent the worsening of a person’s illness during their stay in jail or prison.
  - Reentry. Involves supported reentry back into the community after jail or prison to reduce further justice involve of people with mental and substance use disorders. Involves reentry coordinators, peer support staff, or community in-reach to link people with proper mental health and substance use treatment services.
  - Community Corrections. Involves community-based criminal justice supervision with added supports for people with mental and substance use disorders to prevent violations or offenses that may result in another jail or prison stay.

The next meeting of the RLJSC is scheduled for May 26. Councilmember Jeremy Barksdale serves on the RLJSC.