

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES
*May 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)

The April 13 RPC meeting was canceled.

The next RPC meeting is scheduled for May 11. Councilmember John Stokes serves on the RPC.

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)

At its April 20 meeting, the RTC:

- **Received a briefing on the future of Metro's fare collection system.** Metro Transit currently accepts cash, ORCA card, paper tickets, paper transfers and mobile tickets through the Transit Go Ticket app. Metro's long-range plan envisions a future "system without cash payment on-board buses, paper tickets, and paper transfers." Further, Metro's cash fareboxes on buses have exceeded their designed lifespan. The County Council included a proviso in its 2021-2022 biennial budget requiring Metro to consider potential adverse impacts from a transition to a cashless onboard fare payment system, and ways to address those potential impacts. The report found that riders are more likely to pay a cash fare if they are eligible for reduced fare; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); from households where English is not the primary language; and/or have disabilities. Metro is committed to working with potentially adversely impacted rider populations to improve access and affordability to the transit system.
- **Received a briefing on progress on RapidRide K and R Lines.** Metro had begun planning RapidRide K Line (Bellevue, Kirkland) and RapidRide R Line (Seattle) prior to the pandemic; however, the work was paused in 2020 due to budget impacts of COVID-19. In 2021, the King County Council directed Metro to resume work in 2021 and summarize progress through a restart report. For the K Line, the report states that an additional \$3 to \$5 million is needed to

reach 10 percent design and prepare for National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) submittal and application for federal funding. If the K Line is funded in the 2023-2024 budget, a 16-month community engagement process would begin in May 2023 leading to NEPA submittal.

- **Received a briefing on the electrification of the Metro fleet.** Metro is committed to a 100 percent zero-emissions fleet by 2035. Over the next 20 years, Metro expects to have approximately 2,200 battery-electric and electric trolley buses. Currently, Metro owns 188 zero-emission buses, which includes electric trolley buses that use overhead wires, and an additional 14 battery-electric buses (BEBs) with charging stations at the Bellevue Campus and Eastgate Park-and-Ride. Metro has purchased 40 long-range BEBs for service in south King County. The South Base Test Facility in Tukwila will provide charging for newly acquired BEBs for operation in south King County.

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for May 18. Councilmember Jennifer Robertson serves on the RTC.

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)

At its April 6 meeting, the RWQC:

- **Received a briefing on King County Wastewater Treatment Division's (WTD) proposed 2023 and projected 2023-2032 sewer rates.** WTD's proposed 2023 monthly sewer rate increase is 5.75 percent, larger than their forecasted 4 percent increase made last year. WTD's 10-year rate plan forecasts rate increases of 5.75 percent for 2023-2027 and 9 percent for 2028-2032. This will result in more than a doubling of WTD's monthly wholesale sewer rates from \$49.27 in 2022 to \$100.33 in 2032.

A significant portion of each rate increase is to pay off debt which comprises about 40 percent of WTD's 2022 revenue requirements. Other rate drivers include accelerating the Combined Sewer Overflow program, adding 95 new positions, adding new asset management projects, and upgrading West Point Treatment Plant. The County Council will act on the rates in June.

- **Received a briefing on WTD's decennial flow monitoring study.** WTD evaluates the flow volumes and projected flow demands within its regional separated sewer system every 10 years. The information is used to identify and prioritize capital projects that address sewer capacity and operational needs.

The next RWQC meeting is scheduled for May 12. Councilmember Conrad Lee serves on the RWQC.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE (AHC):

At its April 8 meeting, the AHC:

- **Received a briefing on the Community Partners Table**, a group of stakeholders with lived experience who analyze AHC recommendations to address the housing crisis. The Table has met four times to discuss the AHC's workplan and to develop a shared vision for their work. The Table presented an initial report that will serve as a vision document and provide connections to community stories.
- **Recommended actions to implement the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) Motion 21- 1 Draft Accountability Framework.** GMPC Motion 21-1 requires the AHC to develop a framework for equitably meeting affordable housing needs across King County. The AHC discussed draft recommendations, including:
 - Expand the AHC's role to provide guidance and support. The AHC would review cities' updates to Housing Elements prior to adoption. The AHC supported this draft recommendation.
 - Expand the GMPC's role, with support from the AHC, to review and certify plans. AHC members did not support this draft recommendation.
 - Modify the current annual monitoring system to measure benchmark and data trends that more closely align with the accountability framework. The AHC supported this draft recommendation.
 - Expand the AHC's role to provide midcycle review of jurisdictional progress to accommodate their affordable housing targets and require adjustments. The AHC supported this draft recommendation.

The draft recommendations were presented to the GMPC on April 27 and a meeting summary will be included in the June Regional Issues packet. The AHC will incorporate the GMPC's feedback and finalize the recommendations in May, recommending that the GMPC adopt the framework.

- **Received a briefing on the 2022 legislative session.** King County staff presented provided an updated on proposed legislation relevant to the AHC's priorities.

The next AHC meeting is scheduled for May 18. Mayor Lynne Robinson serves on the AHC.

KING COUNTY CITIES CLIMATE COLLABORATION (K4C) ELECTED OFFICIAL WORK SESSION

At its April 21 meeting, the K4C:

- **Received a briefing on federal and state funding:** Nina Collier of Washington 2 Advocates provided a summary of funding opportunities through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). She highlighted climate and transportation funding allocations in the bill, including funding for electric vehicle charging (\$2.5 billion over five years), carbon reduction formula funding (\$6.42 billion over five years), Safe Streets and Roads program (\$1 billion over five years), and other opportunities. King County staff provided information

on the statewide transportation investment Move Head Washington (MAW) package, which was signed into law in the 2022 session. 36 percent of the funding in MAW will support climate mitigation strategies.

- **Discussed integrating climate and resiliency into comprehensive planning.** Redmond Mayor Angela Birney provided an overview of Redmond's approach to incorporating climate resiliency and mitigation into their comprehensive plan update. Redmond is using the requirements of Washington State Legislature House Bill 1099, regarding climate response in the state's comprehensive planning framework, as a guide. King County staff presented information on the potential use of joint K4C funds to develop resources for K4C cities to support them in incorporating climate resiliency into their comprehensive plans.
- **Mobility Safety is a Climate and Public Health Policy:** King County Executive Dow Constantine provided an overview of the importance of safety to supporting walking, biking, and public transit – keys strategies to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Bellevue City Councilmember Janice Zahn presented the City's Vision Zero plan, the plan development process, safe systems approach, and some example projects resulting from the plan.