



DATE: April 24, 2023

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Genesee Adkins, Chief of External Affairs

SUBJECT: King County Regional Committees Update

Regional Policy Committee (RPC)

At its April 3, 2023 special meeting, the RPC:

- **Reviewed and acted on fifteen amendments prior to approving the ordinance for the renewal of the Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy (VSHSL), which would appear on the ballot as part of the August primary election.** The RPC approved amendments including substance abuse, food security, firearm violence prevention, senior residences, and gentrification limits into the levy description.
 - The VSHSL renewal raises the levy rates from .08 to .10 per \$1000 assessed property value. Several amendments were submitted that proposed to raise the levy rate from .10 (incremental) to .15 per \$1000 assessed property value. All amendments raising the levy rate failed.
 - The King County Council's Budget and Fiscal Management (BFM) Committee met on April 17. BFM approved raising the VSHSL renewal rate from the RPC approved .10 to .12 per \$1000 assess property value. To meet the ordinance approval schedule, the RPC is required to convene prior to May 2 to approve or disapprove an amended VSHSL ordinance.

The next RPC meeting is scheduled for April 24. Councilmember John Stokes serves on the RPC.

Regional Transit Committee (RTC)

At its April 19 meeting, the RTC:

- **Heard a briefing on Metro's Service Recovery Plan.** In response to ridership safety and declines during the pandemic, Metro began implementing emergency transit service reductions and suspensions in March 2020. The emergency directive expired in March 2023. The Transit Service Recovery Plan (Plan) outlines that Metro will use service restructure projects, such as East Link Connections Mobility Project, as the primary tool to reshape service and reinvest suspended hours back into the transit network. The restructure projects would not restore the pre-pandemic service network but would maintain or add service hours within their geographic project areas.



- **Heard a briefing on Metro's zero-emission fleet plan.** The King County Council and Metro are 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. The adopted 2023-2024 biennial budget includes \$1.3 million in the operating budget and \$248.5 million in the capital budget to continue the work of implementing a zero-emission revenue fleet.

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for May 17. Councilmember Janice Zahn serves on the RTC.

Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC)

At its April 5 meeting, the RWQC:

- **Acknowledged receipt of the report on toxics in King County wastewater effluent.** The study evaluated the presence and effects of toxic chemicals in wastewater treatment plant effluent on Puget Sound Southern Resident Orcas, and their primary prey, Chinook salmon. Significant concerns were raised regarding the presence of toxics in wastewater effluent and their impacts on Orca and Chinook. The study findings will contribute to understanding of key factors contributing to the decline of salmon populations in Puget Sound and help inform plans to recover and protect salmon.
- **Discussed the Regional Water Quality Committee work program for 2023,** including regulatory, capital and operational needs.
- **Heard a briefing on 2024 sewer rates and capacity charges.** King County Wastewater Treatment Division's (WTD) proposed 2024 monthly sewer rate is an increase of 5.75 percent, or \$55.11 over last year. A significant portion of each rate increase is to pay off debt which comprises about 40 percent of WTD's 2024 revenue requirements. WTD's primary rate drivers include regulatory compliance including the Combined Sewer Overflow Consent Decree and Ecology's General Nutrient Permit, constructing asset management and capacity improvement projects, protecting water quality and adding another 75 new positions in addition to the 96 that were added in 2023. The proposed 2024 monthly Capacity Charge for new connections to the regional system is \$74.73 per residential customer equivalent. This is a 2.4 percent increase from last year's rate of \$72.50.

The next RWQC meeting is scheduled for May 3. Councilmember Conrad Lee serves on the RWQC.

**Affordable Housing Committee (AHC)**

AHC has not met since the last IA packet on March 23. The next AHC meeting is scheduled for May 1. Mayor Lynne Robinson serves on the AHC.

Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC)

GMPC has not met since the last IA packet on March 23. The next GMPC meeting is scheduled for May 17. Deputy Mayor Jared Nieuwenhuis serves on the GMPC.