

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES
May 26, 2015**

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. We will also include updates on other regional issues (e.g., King County Flood Control District, King Conservation District) as appropriate. This is intended as a summary briefing; staff can provide more details on any of the items below.

REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (RPC)

The Regional Policy Committee did not meet in May. The next RPC meeting will be June 10.

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)

May 20 meeting summary:

Metro will be able to add around 70,000 hours of service in September 2015 and March 2016 to increase service spanning the county. This is in addition to the 33,000 hours to be added to corridors serving Seattle because of the tax initiative Seattle voters passed. The service additions across the county are possible because of several factors: lower diesel prices; short-term improvement in sales tax revenues; cost control measures; an expected state grant to improve service on Route 522 and I-5; a set-aside for partnerships in Seattle's measure; and unused partnership funding from Transit Now. While these funding sources are not long-term, they can offer immediate service improvements.

Alternative Services Implementation Update: The Regional Transit Committee (RTC) received a briefing on current implementation of alternatives to traditional transit service, consistent with the 2015-2016 budget allocation of \$12 million for alternative service during the biennium. Metro's alternative services program brings service to parts of King County that don't have the infrastructure, density, or land use to support traditional fixed-route bus service. In such areas, alternative transportation services may be a better match for community transportation needs. They may also be more cost-effective. Three types of service presently under consideration include:

- (1) Community Shuttle: A route with flexible service areas that is provided through a community partnership;
- (2) Community Hub: A local transportation center, giving people access to transportation resources (e.g., community vans, bikes, and information); and,
- (3) Flexible Rideshare: Variable ridesharing via promotion of mobile and web-based applications.

The Bellevue Transit Master Plan (TMP) is supportive of cost-effective strategies that help make the public transportation system more efficient, more productive, and more effective at getting people where they want to go — including areas where regular bus service has been discontinued or is not available.

That said, the TMP's number one service investment priority is to direct additional resources to a grid of frequent routes connecting major activity centers—and if budget shortfalls necessitate, doing so at the expense of service to lower-density residential neighborhoods.

Transit Service Guidelines Task Force: The RTC received a briefing on the third meeting of the Transit Service Guidelines Task Force, which took place on April 30. Councilmember John Chelminiak is representing Bellevue on the task force. At its April meeting, the task force considered the following two questions: (1) What is the social equity problem we are trying to solve? And, (2) What outcome would the task force like to see with respect to social equity?

Answers to these and other questions are intended to inform the task force's recommendations regarding:

- How transit service performance is measured to reflect the varied purposes of different types of transit service;
- Approaches to evaluating how the goal of geographic value is included in the guidelines, including minimum service standards;
- Approaches to evaluating how the goal of social equity is included in the guidelines;
- Financial policies for purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities; and,
- Guidelines for alternative services implementation.

The task force will do this work in the first part of 2015 so that it can influence development of both Metro's long-range plan, scheduled to be complete by mid-2016, and its service guidelines update, scheduled to be complete by April 2016. The task force will continue its work at the next three meetings scheduled for May 21, June 3, and June 16.

King County Metro-Sound Transit Integration: The RTC received a briefing on King County Metro-Sound Transit integration actions aimed at realizing efficiencies, achieving savings, and ultimately delivering better transit service for the people of our region. These efforts were initiated in June 2014, when County Executive Dow Constantine announced an initiative to increase joint planning by transit agencies in the region. The RTC briefing highlighted efforts presently underway and areas (e.g., Metro bus route restructures to provide connections to Link Light Rail stations). Bellevue will want to encourage Metro to explore additional cost savings opportunities in the following focus areas: customer service, security and police, facilities maintenance, operations and maintenance facilities, service contracts, and procurement. Some of this information may arise from the June 11 Transit Summit which aims to bring together transit agency board members, transit executives, key staff, and transportation stakeholders in a discussion about what a truly regional vision for transit looks like in the central Puget Sound.

The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for June 17.

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)

May 6 meeting summary:

Executive Proposed 2016 Wastewater Rate: The King County Executive transmitted his wastewater rate proposal to the King County Council on April 16, 2015. The King County Council has not acted on

the proposal yet; action is required by the end of June. **There is no proposed rate increase, and the 2016 rate will be maintained at the current 2015 rate of \$42.03 per month. As planned, the capacity charge will increase by 3% from \$57.00 to \$58.70 per month in 2016.** County policy calls for updating the cost projections and other assumptions every three years and adjusting the capacity charge. In the intervening years, the capacity charge is increased to reflect inflation. Pursuant to this policy, the capacity charge was reviewed and adjusted in 2015 and is only proposed to increase by inflation in 2016.

Although operating expenses increased 4.7% over 2015, rates are being maintained at the current level due to savings from refinancing and higher growth and capacity charge revenues. The elements driving the 4.7% increase include increased cost of electricity and chemicals due to higher usage, contributions to fund potential future replacement of membranes at the Brightwater Sewage Treatment Plant as warranties expire, and other inflationary increases. Major capital projects in the budget include various combined sewer overflow (CSO) projects and a resiliency and recovery program. This project funds the capital component of the program to identify and modify existing facilities to increase their resistance to damage or allow rapid recovery from damage.

Technical Working Group on Cost Estimating: Overview of Work Plan and Schedule: As a result of a King County performance audit of the Georgetown CSO project and a finding that the King County Wastewater Treatment Division could improve in some key areas in project management, the King County Council included a budget proviso in the 2015-2016 budget that required the establishment of a technical working group for capital projects. The technical group would be charged with reviewing and making recommendations to the Executive and Council regarding:

- Establishing and updating planning level cost estimates through 30% design, and
- Processes used to consider or reconsider projects as they move from project identification to 30% design and establishment of a baseline budget.

The group will be looking at such things as guidelines, tools, trend analyses, and contingency policies as it works through the cost estimating issues. The proviso required participation from King County Council staff, Executive staff, stakeholders from the RWQC and Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC). Two MWPAAC members are proposed to be group members – one Seattle staff person and Andrew Lee, Bellevue Utilities Deputy Director. The group has about an 18 month timeframe to complete its work.

Lower Duwamish Remediation: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Record of Decision:

The EPA has issued its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Lower Duwamish, which defines a remedial strategy for addressing the extensive sediment contamination in the area. In 2000, the City of Seattle, King County, the Port of Seattle, and Boeing (known as the Lower Duwamish Waterway Group – LDWG) voluntarily entered into an Administrative Order on Consent with EPA and the state Department of Ecology to conduct a remedial investigation/feasibility study. In 2012, the LDWG completed a feasibility study that evaluated a range of alternatives, which was then published for comment as EPA developed its final remedial alternative and preparation of the ROD.

The ROD includes a mix of strategies including active cleanup (dredging and capping; placing clean materials over contaminated sediments), natural recovery (reliance on natural processes such as burial of contaminated sediments by cleaner sediments from upstream), and institutional controls and monitoring. The selected remedy is estimated to take seven years and cost \$342 million (net present value), with \$295 million for capital and \$48 million for operations, maintenance and monitoring. Next steps will

include EPA's completion of an allocation of responsibility for the cleanup costs. LDWG members, including King County Wastewater Treatment Division, have already completed some early actions and the feasibility study; those contributions will be considered in the final allocation.

The next meeting of the RWQC is scheduled for June 3.

KING COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The King County Flood District Advisory Committee met for the first time this year on May 13. Councilmember John Stokes is Bellevue's representative on the Advisory Committee. This first meeting was used to orient the new Committee members and provide background information regarding flood programs and accomplishments, capital project prioritization processes, and updates on corridor planning. The next meeting is scheduled for June 3, where staff will present a preliminary work program and budget for 2016. Total Flood District revenues for 2015 are projected to be \$53 million. This is based on a levy rate of 13.8 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value (this rate has dropped slightly from 15 cents in 2014 due to increases in assessed values).

As you will recall, WRIA 8 receives grant funding from the Flood District. For 2015, WRIA 8 is receiving \$1.5 million, which is slightly higher than previous years. Bellevue also receives a direct allocation of funds through the Subregional Opportunity Fund in the Flood District. In 2015, Bellevue's allocation is \$570,775. Bellevue is using this funding for the Valley Creek/NE 21st Street Flood Control Project, which will construct an enlarged culvert and provide in-channel improvements to alleviate flooding of nearby businesses and roads. In addition to this funding from the Subregional Opportunity Fund, Bellevue has a major project on the Flood District's capital project list. This project, which is estimated at about \$8 million, will address Newport Shores flooding issues. The investigation phase has been completed and the next phase will design five new fish passable structures and drainage improvements to systems connected to the creek.

Finally, Council will recall that the Flood District implemented a new grant program in 2014. This program allocates a total of about \$2.6 million outside of the regular capital project list and subregional funding. Bellevue is preparing a grant application (due May 29) to implement improvements to the drainage system around Larsen Lake to alleviate high waters upstream of the lake. As of this writing, the proposal is expected to be in the \$200,000-\$300,000 range.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL (GMPC)

April 22, 2015, meeting summary:

The GMPC approved Motion 14-6 amending the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) to add new policy PF-19A outlining the process for jurisdictions working together to identify future school sites within the urban growth area. The genesis of this issue was about urban districts siting schools in rural areas, which was ultimately resolved with additional policy language in the CPPs.

The new policy PF-19A addresses an additional recommendation of the School Siting Task Force to create a framework for ongoing coordination and cooperation among all cities and school districts in King County. The language requires all school districts and cities with overlapping jurisdictions to work cooperatively at least every two years to evaluate the districts' ability to site needed facilities. The policy suggests sharing data and information about growth and enrollment projections as well as

potential strategies to address any capacity shortfall. There is also a requirement to report to the GMPC in 2017 and every two years thereafter on whether the framework is achieving the desired goals and, if not, requiring the GMPC to identify corrective actions.

The policy will be considered by the King County Council later this year and, if adopted by the County Council, it will be submitted to all King County cities for ratification.

The next meeting of the GMPC is scheduled for July 22, 2015.