

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES
*August 2018***

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. In addition, the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC), was 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. This is intended as a summary briefing; staff can provide more details on any of the items below.

REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (RPC)

June 27 meeting summary:

- **King County Flood Control District Update: Accomplishments and Future Plans.** The RPC received a brief overview of the King County Flood Control District's (FCD) activities and accomplishments since its formation in 2007. The FCD staff reported on capital projects, corridor planning and grant programs.

Each year, the FCD develops its budget proposal with input from the Flood Control District Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee). Bellevue has a seat on the Advisory Committee, and Councilmember Janice Zahn is the City's current representative. In 2017 the Advisory Committee concluded its review of the proposed 2018 FCD budget with a recommendation letter to the FCD Board of Supervisors. Many of the Advisory Committee's recommendations support the need for the FCD to improve its coordination with cities through both the Advisory Committee and the staff-level Joint Basin Technical Committee. At the RPC meeting, Sound Cities Association (SCA) representatives on the RPC, including Bellevue Councilmember John Stokes, asked the FCD staff about its plan to increase engagement with cities. The FCD staff said a response to the Advisory Committee letter will be provided at the next Advisory Committee meeting in late July.

SCA representatives also asked the FCD staff about how it is tracking and measuring the success of the investments made over the last 10 years. The FCD staff said that it is working on a list of projects with status updates, a dashboard to show what has been protected and other information to convey the accomplishments of the FCD.

- **Proposed Motion Accepting the Second Annual Report on the Best Starts for Kids Initiative.** The RPC received a briefing and voted to accept the Best Starts for Kids (BSK) Second Annual Report. In 2015, King County voters approved a six-year roughly \$400 million property tax levy to fund a prevention-oriented regional plan aimed at supporting the healthy development of children and youth, families and communities across the county. The BSK levy rate is \$0.14 per \$1,000 in assessed valuation, and Bellevue's annual contribution is approximately \$6.2 million out of a total of \$65 million generated per year.

The BSK Second Annual Report describes the programs funded, key milestones and preliminary data on outcomes and performance measures. Because the BSK funding is typically invested in programs with a two or three-year commitment, the outcomes in the report are not fully developed. Full evaluations and performance measures will not be reflected until subsequent reports.

To date, 14 agencies in Bellevue and the Bellevue School District have been awarded nearly \$4 million in BSK funds. The Second Annual Report, however, provides limited information regarding the specific populations served by the BSK-funded programs. SCA representatives requested that the BSK staff provide more detailed information, such as a map, to show where grant awards are being made and who is being served. Having this would help Bellevue staff identify where there might be gaps in services or where Bellevue residents are traveling long distances to receive services.

- **Proposed Motion Accepting an Outcomes Report on the Best Starts for Kids Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative.** The RPC received a briefing and voted to accept the Best Starts for Kids (BSK) Outcomes Report on the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative (YFHPI). A total of \$19 million of the first-year BSK levy proceeds were directed to provide and administer a YFHPI. The YFHPI includes flexible financial assistance and an adaptable approach that allows services to be customized to the unique and specific needs of the client.

The Outcomes Report includes preliminary data on those served by the YFHPI in 2017 using \$2.1 million in funding. In 2017, more than 1,100 families and 200 unaccompanied youth (over 4,200 people in total) received services through the YFHPI, with 94% of those served able to avoid loss of housing. One in five families served were able to resolve their housing crisis without financial assistance through case manager guidance that allowed families to use their own resources to address their housing crisis. In 2018, three Bellevue agencies received \$150,000 each to serve family and young adult segments of Bellevue's homeless population: Friends of Youth, LifeWire and Youth Eastside Services.

July 11 RPC meeting summary:

- **Proposed Ordinance adopting Financial Policies to Accelerate the Protection of Open Spaces in Accordance with the King County Land Conservation Initiative.** The RPC received a briefing and voted to support King County's ordinance that would change its financial policies regarding the use of Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) funding. The ordinance would: (1) allow bonding against a greater portion of existing CFT funds, and (2) remove the 50% match requirement for areas that need additional open space and are designated by the County as an open space equity area. Bellevue would still need to provide a 50% match for projects funded in the City, as it is not designated as an open space equity area.

Background on the King County Land Conservation Initiative

At its final meeting in December, the King County Land Conservation and Preservation Advisory Committee approved a final report and recommendations regarding a plan to protect 65,000 acres of remaining high value conservation lands over 30 years.

The Advisory Committee recommended a financial model with a total cost of \$4.14 billion, which included land acquisition priorities from the County as well as cities and included inflation over a 30-year period. After current funding sources are deducted, such as the Conservation Futures Tax, the King County Parks Levy, the Real Estate Excise Tax and others, the funding gap for the full plan is \$1.89 billion.

The Advisory Committee made a series of recommendations, including the following:

- Reset Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) Funding. The CFT was originally authorized by the State Legislature at 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value (AV) to acquire conservation rights in real property. The increase in King County AV over time has reduced the tax rate to 4.4 cents per \$1,000 of AV. King County voters could increase the CFT back to 6.25 cents with a 51% affirmative vote.
- Accelerate the Pace of Acquisition through a Change in Bond Policy. County policy currently limits the amount of CFT funds that can be used to repay bonds to 50% on an annual basis. The County could access additional funding by increasing the bond limit to 80%.
- Remove the Funding Match for Open Space Equity Areas. Remove the 50% match requirement for areas that are defined as “open space equity” areas.
- Consider Increasing the King County Parks Levy. This option would increase the King County Parks Levy to fund operations and maintenance as well as additional acquisition priorities from the conservation initiative. A two-cent increase is being discussed. The King County Parks Levy is currently collected at a rate of 13.9 cents per \$1,000 AV. It is a six-year levy, last approved in 2013, that provides an average of \$70 million per year for King County parks, local trails and parks in cities, and the Woodland Park Zoo. Cities in King County receive approximately \$5 million per year for local parks projects, with funding allocated by a formula based 50% on population and 50% on assessed value. Bellevue taxpayers contribute over \$7 million per year under this levy. Bellevue receives approximately \$400,000 per year from the King County Parks Levy.

Bellevue staff is reaching out to neighboring cities to discuss common interests around potential King County proposals to change or increase the King County Parks Levy. Bellevue staff will continue to update Council as needed and as King County proposes actions to implement the Advisory Committee recommendations.

UPDATE: On July 30 the King County Council voted to approve the ordinance to (1) allow bonding against a greater portion of CFT revenues, and (2) remove the 50% match requirement for areas that need additional open space and are designated by the County as an open space equity area.

- **Proposed Ordinance adopting the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy Implementation Plan.** The RPC approved an ordinance adopting the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL) Implementation Plan. Once the Implementation Plan is adopted by the King County Council, it will supersede the previously approved Transition Plan to guide investments until the levy expires in 2023. Bellevue Councilmember John Stokes and Redmond City Council President Angela Birney proposed an amendment to ensure that levy investments will provide access to services across the entire county and that annual reports include

information on the geographic distribution of services for transparency and future analysis of the delivery of services. The amendment was supported unanimously by the RPC.

Background on the VSHSL

King County voters approved the VSHSL in November 2017 to replace the expiring Veterans and Human Services Levy. The new VSHSL will expand investment in services for veterans and human services and will also fund new services for seniors and their caregivers. The new VSHSL will be levied at \$0.10 per \$1,000 in assessed value and is anticipated to collect a total of \$53.3 million in 2018, with approximately \$5.6 million from Bellevue property owners.

The next meeting of the RPC is scheduled for August 22.

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)

June 20 meeting summary:

- **METRO CONNECTS Development Program.** The King County Council adopted the METRO CONNECTS long-range transit vision in 2017. Later that year, the Regional Transit Committee (RTC) approved the METRO CONNECTS Development Program (MCDP) to implement the long-range vision. The work plan requires King County Metro to provide twice-yearly status updates to the RTC. This briefing addressed the regional service and capital projects envisioned in the METRO CONNECTS 2025 service network and the role of partnerships in the MCDP.

In the METRO CONNECTS vision, Metro planned to partner with jurisdictions, Sound Transit, and other stakeholders to carry out its long-range plan. METRO CONNECTS assumed \$2.1 billion (in value, not cash) from partners for capital by 2025, which represents 38% of the \$5.5 billion total estimated capital need. Metro intends to partner with jurisdictions to build transit capital projects, make transit easier to use, and address the mobility needs of jurisdictions. Metro intends to ask jurisdictional partners to commit resources, including financial, in-kind, staff, right-of-way, and other contributions. Jurisdictional partners have not committed to contributing specifically toward METRO CONNECTS because Metro needs to first define how these partnerships will be administered and tracked.

- **Access Paratransit.** King County Metro's Access Paratransit is a supplemental transit service provided to people with disabilities who are not able to ride fixed-route transit. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires transit agencies to provide paratransit service that is at a minimum comparable in scope to fixed-route transit service. Metro's Access program provides most of its trips in County-owned wheelchair-accessible vans operated by contractors. In 2017, Access provided about 960,000 trips with an operating cost per trip of about \$59.50. The Access budget is about 7.1% of the Metro operating budget.

In April 2017, Metro released an RFP for Access services. Members of a Metro-convened Community Action Group expressed concerns about Access Paratransit's increasing costs and declining ridership. Participants also reported performance problems such as excessively long trips compared to fixed-route standards and riders being dropped off more than 30 minutes in advance of appointments. Metro convened an RFP work group – including Community Action Group members, other stakeholders, and King County Council staff – to study the service and

identify potential improvements. On June 7 Metro issued an amended RFP with submissions due in early August.

Metro is working to serve Access Paratransit customers with traditional fixed-route service whenever possible because traditional service provides more transportation options and is more cost-effective. To increase access to fixed-route service, Metro has been retrofitting bus stops to make them wheelchair-accessible, acquiring low-floor buses, and training people with disabilities to use special infrastructure and tools to access traditional transit. For example, Metro provides many types of reflective and fluorescent gear to Access customers so they can safely cross roads to reach bus stops.

The RTC did not meet in July. The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for September 18.

KING COUNTY METRO AND SOUND TRANSIT JOINT PARKING PERMIT RECOMMENDATIONS

This summer and fall, King County Metro and Sound Transit staff are making joint recommendations to the King County Council and the Sound Transit Executive Board regarding implementation of a solo driver permit program at existing park and ride lots. Under the recommended program guidelines, transit riders would apply for a parking permit at lots owned by Sound Transit and King County Metro that are more than 90% full on an average weekday. Permit holders would be guaranteed a parking spot on a weekday if they arrive before 8:00 a.m. After 8:00 a.m., unoccupied spaces would be available for drivers without permits. In 2016 and 2017, Sound Transit and King County Metro launched a similar permit program that was exclusively available to people who carpool. The new solo driver permits would be available to transit users who drive alone to park and ride lots. Sound Transit and King County Metro staff are jointly recommending that the solo driver permits cost \$90 per month, with permits available for \$30 per month for OCRA LIFT participants. Carpool permits will continue to be free.

The Eastgate Park and Ride is operated and maintained by King County Metro but owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). As such, the Eastgate Park and Ride will not be impacted by Sound Transit and King County Metro's solo driver permit program. WSDOT is not authorized to charge for parking and therefore cannot delegate that authority to others.

To develop the solo driver permit recommendations, Sound Transit and King County Metro conducted joint public outreach in February through April. The transit agencies conducted nine open houses and deployed street teams at 27 locations. A total of 3,600 responses revealed support for single-occupancy vehicle permits. Respondents stated that the primary purpose of the solo driver permit program should be to "manage demand and ensure there's always a space." Respondents preferred the number of permitted stalls be limited to 50% of any lot. When asked how much the solo driver permits should cost, respondents preferred the lowest option of \$15-30, which would only recover the costs of implementing the parking program. However, the transit agency staff concluded that if the option that only covered costs was selected, it could create overwhelming demand for the permits, with extensive waiting lists. Staff is instead recommending permit prices be set at \$90 with staff authorization to make monthly adjustments to permit prices and the number of permits available. In addition to general public outreach, King County Metro reached out to jurisdictions through the King County transportation boards and presented to the Eastside Transportation Partnership on February 9.

Sound Transit staff presented the joint recommendations to the Sound Transit Board on July 26. Board members discussed the value of using permits to manage parking and emphasized the importance of a robust public engagement campaign when the permits are implemented. Following discussion, the Board unanimously approved the parking recommendations.

King County staff has submitted the joint recommendations to the County Executive, who could make a recommendation to the King County Council as soon as September. The King County Council could take action on the recommendations in November through the County's budget process. Rather than implement the solo driver parking permit program at all park and ride lots at once, the transit agencies plan to roll out the program incrementally over many months. Park and ride users will be notified of the program by the transit agencies more than a month in advance of implementation. Permit applications will be accepted over a period of time. When reserved parking begins, there will be a one-week grace period for non-permit holders who park in reserved spaces between 6:00 and 8:00 a.m.

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)

The July and August RWQC meetings were canceled.

The next meeting of the RWQC is scheduled for September 5.

REGIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE (RAHTF)

June 29 meeting summary:

- **Review of Countywide Planning Policies.** The RAHTF received a briefing regarding the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), specifically the housing chapter. The housing chapter of the CPPs contains policies and a process for implementation of the policies. The implementation includes an analysis of housing conditions and need; implementation of policies and strategies to address unmet needs; measuring results; and responding to the measurement by adjusting strategies, if needed.
- **Review of Draft Goals and Strategies.** The RAHTF reviewed a draft discussion list of goals and potential policy recommendations that were developed and refined from previous RAHTF discussions, community input and staff work. Although the list is shorter than the original draft considered by the committee earlier in June, it still is a very extensive list of potential strategies for the committee to consider.

Although some of the policy recommendations appear consistent with Bellevue's Affordable Housing Strategy, most of the recommendations would require additional Council direction for support. The RAHTF discussion focused in large part on governance and accountability, including discussion around the potential for creating a new organization and what kind of authority that organization would have to implement affordable housing strategies. Although the group did not discuss specific funding sources, King County Councilmember and RAHTF Co-Chair Claudia Balducci mentioned the need for a governance organization to have authority to direct a funding source.

July 26 meeting summary:

- **Task Force Review of the Draft Action Plan.** The RAHTF reviewed a draft Five-Year Action Plan for addressing affordable housing in King County. The draft plan includes goals, strategies, options for a new governance organization and a discussion of the need to identify a funding source. The RAHTF provided feedback on the document at the meeting, and during the month of August, additional feedback will be sought from the RAHTF, local jurisdiction staff and Sound Cities Association staff with the goal of developing a draft Action Plan that can be circulated for broader review beginning in September.
- **Schedule for Review and Potential Action on the Draft Action Plan by Sound Cities Association and local governments.** The RAHTF discussed a schedule for receiving feedback on the draft Action Plan from the public, cities, stakeholders and the Sound Cities Association (SCA). The current schedule provides the SCA with the ability to review the draft Action Plan in September and October, with a SCA vote in November. The current schedule assumes that the RAHTF will review all feedback and take a final vote on a proposed Action Plan at the end of November.

The next meeting of the RAHTF will be scheduled for mid-to-late September.

One Table Meeting Scheduled

One Table is a group of elected officials and stakeholders working to address issues around homelessness. The next One Table meeting has been scheduled for August 3, which is after the time of this writing. A summary of that meeting will be included in the next Regional Issues Packet in September.

METROPOLITAN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSWMAC)

The King County Executive transmitted his proposed Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Plan) to the King County Council for its consideration on July 26. The major recommendations in the Plan are consistent with previous Bellevue City Council direction regarding the siting of future solid waste transfer capacity in northeast King County and the development of future solid waste disposal capacity that would not negatively impact the Factoria Transfer Station.

The Plan recommends: 1) the siting and construction of a new Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station to address transfer capacity needs that is in addition to the existing Factoria Transfer Station; and 2) maximizing the capacity at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill for future disposal needs from 2028 to 2040. The Plan also contains language regarding recycling programs and notes that King County, cities and haulers have formed a Responsible Recycling Task Force to identify common ground for advancing recycling given China's restriction on accepting recyclables. The King County Council is expected to begin review of the Plan in September. Staff will provide briefings for Council on the Plan in the fall.