

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES
September 2017**

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)

September 13 meeting summary:

- **Best Starts for Kids (BSK) Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan.** Best Starts for Kids (BSK) is a voter-approved initiative in King County that is based on the King County Youth Action Plan. BSK offers a comprehensive approach and invests in prevention and early intervention strategies that promote healthier, more resilient children, youth, families, and communities. BSK provides a myriad of service strategies, commencing with prenatal support, sustaining strategic gains through children, teens and young adult development, and reinforces system changes that lead to safe and healthy communities.

The BSK property tax levy generates approximately \$65 million annually countywide. Bellevue's annual contribution is \$6.2 million, based on a median home value of \$690,000 at an average cost of \$70 per household per year. The levy rate is \$0.14 per \$1,000 in assessed value. The approval of the BSK levy, King County Ordinance 18217, called for the creation of a King County Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB). The CYAB is an oversight and advisory board comprised of King County residents and stakeholders with geographically and culturally-diverse perspectives charged with making recommendations and monitoring distribution of levy proceeds.

The BSK Implementation Plan, approved in September 2016 by the Regional Policy Committee (RPC) and the King County Council, included a requirement for a BSK Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan (Evaluation Plan) to be submitted to the King County Council in July 2017. The draft Evaluation Plan has been reviewed by the CYAB and referred to the RPC and the King County Council Health, Housing and Human Services Committee.

Five percent of the levy proceeds are dedicated to developing a data-driven process to identify what is working for kids and communities. The Evaluation Plan focuses on several elements to determine BSK results, which impact funding allocations and programmatic approaches.

The primary issues addressed by the Evaluation Plan are:

- (1) The definitions of performance measures and how BSK will use this approach with grantees.
- (2) Answering the questions – How much did BSK/grantee do? How well did BSK/grantee do it? Is anyone (clients served) better off?

- (3) Evaluation – Criteria used for evaluation; types of methods, standards and evaluation frequency depending on the size of grant award.

The King County Auditor's Office is also in the process of reviewing the Evaluation Plan and will be releasing the results of its review in November. The RPC discussed how BSK staff will be collecting and analyzing data, including tracking services by zip codes to see who is accessing services and where. This is important to Bellevue and other cities because it will help highlight service gaps and barriers to access. In addition, the RPC discussed coordination of evaluations across all King County human services programs funded through the BSK, the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) sales tax and the Veterans and Human Services Levy.

The RPC voted to accept the Evaluation Plan (with technical amendments) and the measure will be expedited to the King County Health, Housing and Human Services Committee.

- **The Future of the Regional Solid Waste System.** The RPC received a briefing regarding recent discussions between King County and Bellevue about the future of Bellevue's participation in the regional solid waste system.

The King County Executive has transmitted a proposed ordinance that would cancel demand management; recognize that the "upper" solid waste property owned by King County in Eastgate will not be used to expand the Factoria Transfer Station; and allocate funding to the process for identifying northeast transfer capacity when the Houghton Transfer Station in Kirkland closes. The ordinance will only take effect if Bellevue signs the extended agreement by October 31, 2017. Once King County has acted on the ordinance, Bellevue staff will schedule a briefing for the Bellevue City Council.

King County's proposed ordinance is currently before the King County Budget and Fiscal Management Committee (BFM). The item was discussed by BFM on September 13 and will be discussed again on September 27. No action has been taken to date on the ordinance.

Background:

Bellevue's current Solid Waste Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with King County for solid waste transfer and disposal services remains in effect until June 30, 2028. In 2013, the Bellevue City Council did not sign King County's Amended and Restated Interlocal Agreement, which would have replaced the current agreement with an agreement that extended the end date for King County's transfer and disposal services from 2028 to 2040. (In addition to Bellevue, four other cities did not sign the extended agreement: Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina and Yarrow Point).

Between 2013 and 2015, the County initiated two transfer plan review efforts to analyze the need for a new northeast transfer station once the Houghton Transfer Station closes. The second review concluded that the County could implement a series of actions, called demand management, as an alternative to building a new northeast station. Demand management involves closing Houghton, extending the operating hours at the Factoria Transfer Station, and increasing rates during certain hours to influence when customers use the station. These changes would double the traffic and tonnage at the Factoria Transfer Station, negatively impact already congested local and regional roads, increase rates for customers in northeast King County and would not be in compliance with the County's current Conditional Use Permit for the Factoria facility. In addition to Bellevue, many

cities in the region are opposed to demand management.

Based on changed conditions in the regional solid waste system since 2013, King County and Bellevue staff began discussions about the future of Bellevue's participation in the system. The most significant change is the potential for King County to expand the disposal capacity at the Cedar Hills Landfill. In 2013, Cedar Hills was expected to reach capacity in 2023, well before the 2040 termination date of the new agreement. Investments in Cedar Hills to extend its capacity to 2040 allows the system to benefit from the most cost-effective and most reliable disposal option and addresses one of the Bellevue City Council's primary reasons for not signing the extended agreement in 2013.

Other significant changes include new County projections for system tonnage and transactions that are substantially higher than originally forecasted, coupled with the recognition that the County's ambitious recycling targets may be harder to achieve than originally anticipated. The additional tonnage and transactions, combined with the potential for Bellevue to sign the extended agreement, create a situation where demand management is not a viable strategy to meet transfer needs in northeast King County.

July 20 RPC meeting summary:

The entire July 20 meeting was devoted to the proposed ordinance to replace the **Veterans and Human Services Levy** with a new, expanded levy.

Background:

The Veterans and Human Services Levy (VHSL) was first approved by King County voters in November 2005 and was renewed in 2011, with an expiration date of December 31, 2017. On May 22, King County Executive Dow Constantine transmitted a proposed ordinance to place a six-year (2018-2023) levy on the ballot in November to replace the expiring levy with a new, expanded levy that included seniors (the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL)). The rate of the new levy and how the funding should be allocated were considered and amended several times over the summer by both the RPC and the County Council.

Finally, on July 20, the RPC unanimously approved an amendment to the Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy (VSHSL) ordinance referred by the King County Council. Immediately following the RPC meeting, the King County Council approved the ordinance placing the VSHSL on the November ballot as follows:

- A replacement six-year (2018-2023) property tax levied at a rate of \$0.10 per \$1,000 in assessed value generating about \$52 million in levy revenues in 2018 and \$354 million over the life of the levy.
- From levy proceeds, there are first set asides for technical assistance and capacity building (\$520,000) and to mitigate pro-rationing (levy suppression) of fire and park districts (\$300,000). From there, the remaining funds would be split 1/3 each (\$17.08 million each) to services and capital investments in each of three categories: veterans, military service members, and their families; seniors; and vulnerable populations. In each of these categories, at least half of first-year levy proceeds would be dedicated to housing stability (\$8.5 million), including capital investments, and one-quarter would be devoted to housing stability in future years (\$4.25 million).

- Additionally, at least half of the funding for seniors (out of the seniors funding allocation) would be dedicated to seniors who are also veterans or military service members until one of two thresholds is met:
 - 75% of the seniors who are also veterans or military service members and who are homeless as of the date of the ordinance are housed, OR
 - \$24 million in county-administered funding is spent to house senior veterans/military service members (not including the roughly 1/3 of funds from this levy otherwise set aside for veterans).

The RPC is scheduled to consider the VSHSL Governance Plan and Transition Plan at its October 18 meeting. The levy will be on the November 7 general election ballot.

Implications for Bellevue:

Under the proposed \$0.10 levy, Bellevue would contribute \$4.9 million during the first year of the levy. Under the current levy rate of \$0.04 per \$1,000 in assessed valuation, Bellevue will contribute \$1.96 million in 2017. A Bellevue homeowner with a median assessed valuation of \$690,000 would pay \$69 in the first year of the proposed levy compared to \$28 under the current levy.

Services provided by the levy to Bellevue and the greater Eastside would depend on the levy implementation plan. The City's Human Services Commission would take into consideration services the levy funds when making funding recommendations to better leverage the County dollars.

The next meeting of the RPC is scheduled for October 18.

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)

July 19 meeting summary:

- **King County Metro's Transit Speed and Reliability Program.** Metro staff provided an overview of Metro's transit speed and reliability program and specifically its new *Transit Speed and Reliability Guidelines and Strategies Manual*. Metro regularly monitors the on-time performance of its bus routes and strives to achieve its performance guidelines. Its speed and reliability program places high priority on corridors with high ridership and bus volumes, such as Metro's six RapidRide corridors, and on corridors impacted by major construction projects, such as the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the SR-520 Bridge. Speed and reliability problems include congested intersections, delay turning left or right, congested freeway on-ramps and inefficient route design. Metro uses a range of speed and reliability improvements to address these problems, including traffic signal coordination, transit signal priority, bus lanes, queue bypass, safety improvements and stop consolidation.

Metro works both independently and in coordination with local jurisdictions to make improvements that enhance the speed and reliability of bus service, help maintain even intervals between buses, and reduce overcrowding and delays. To assist with identifying partnership opportunities to address speed and reliability challenges, Metro partnered with the City of Bellevue and the Seattle Department of Transportation—the primary local jurisdictions within King County with existing RapidRide lines—to create the *Transit Speed and Reliability Guidelines and Strategies Manual*. This manual functions as a toolbox of ideas, processes, and examples designed to help Metro and

local jurisdictions collaborate to improve transit service speed and reliability. Examples from the manual include altering traffic control to benefit transit through movement restriction exemptions or bus only traffic signals, and infrastructure improvements such as queue jumps (area for bus to pull around traffic) and bus only lanes.

With the passage of “Metro Connects”, the long range plan that guides King County Metro’s capital and service planning through 2040, cooperative speed and reliability work is at the forefront of efforts to implement the long-range vision of an expanded, more efficient network of transit service. Metro Connects acknowledges that improving transit effectiveness will be more important than ever in light of projected regional growth in population and jobs. This is one of the top areas targeted for interjurisdictional partnership in the plan. Partnership opportunities could include local jurisdictions incorporating transit speed and reliability improvement design elements into existing capital projects or identifying transit-funding opportunities that may align with non-transit investments. Potential partnerships are one of the key areas of interest for the RTC members and will be an ongoing part of discussions throughout the implementation of Metro Connects.

- **The “In Motion” Program: Tailoring Transit Promotion to Communities.** Metro staff provided an overview of the In Motion program. In Motion, which began in 2004, is a Metro program that works with individuals in communities and neighborhoods to help connect people with transportation options, including transit, rideshare, biking, and walking. In Motion projects are intended to encourage and grow transit, pedestrian and bike travel through incentives and communication about available travel modes. In Motion partners with many different organizations that have similar goals, including public health agencies, other departments of transportation, active transportation organizations, schools, employers, and neighborhood groups.

Projects are neighborhood focused and include partnerships with local community organizations, direct contact with residents, tailored promotional materials, and incentives to switch transportation modes. Projects are generally identified in conjunction with new light rail and bus rapid transit stations, bus network restructures, new Community Connections services, or during major construction projects. Projects are funded by the federal government’s Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Regional Mobility Grants.

Metro tailors the program to each community in which the program operates. In Motion customizes its messages for each neighborhood and within one program may offer tools for the technology and social media-savvy markets, while also addressing issues of social equity, including cultural and language barriers when needed.

Metro has seen the highest success rates in communities with:

- An established sense of neighborhood identity
- Residential density of more than six dwelling units per acre
- Availability of transit services with 30-minute midday frequency or better
- Excess capacity on most transit routes
- Fairly level topography and existing sidewalk network
- Access to local services within a quarter mile from the center of the residential area
- Approximately 5,000 to 10,000 households

The RTC did not meet in August. The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for September 27, which is after the time of this writing. A full summary will be included in the October regional issues packet.

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)

September 6 meeting summary:

- **AECOM Briefing on the February Failure of the West Point Treatment Plant.** The majority of the September 6 RWQC meeting was dedicated to a briefing by AECOM, the consulting firm hired by the King County Council to conduct an independent review of the February 9, 2016 failure of the West Point Treatment Plant. The King County Council hired AECOM to provide its assessment of the causes and contributing factors to the flooding event, an evaluation of how it could have been averted, and recommendations for preventive approaches, practices, and systems to help avoid future problems.

The cause of the failure began with a power outage, which led to a failure of the plant pump system and subsequent flooding. Problems were exacerbated by the size of the storm, high tide, and the hydraulic constraints of the plant. AECOM provided four key recommendations going forward:

- Implement a Life Safety Management System for all critical systems,
- Conduct comprehensive emergency response training in different failure scenarios and develop guidelines for by-pass decision-making by operations staff,
- Conduct an integrated system-wide evaluation to address capacity constraints, redundancy and reliability, and
- Optimize capital investment to maximize redundancy.

King County Wastewater Treatment Division Director Mark Isaacson provided comments from the Executive Branch. The Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) worked closely with AECOM as it conducted its review, and the WTD agrees with the mitigation recommendations that were made. Mark Isaacson outlined several steps that will be taken to address the AECOM recommendations, including employing new technology to help with plant operations, conducting emergency response training, and evaluating existing plant constraints. Committee members emphasized the need to also address culture change at the plant to ensure that staff are comfortable making tough operational decisions that may be necessary to protect health and safety.

The meeting also included a briefing on a “dashboard” to be provided on the WTD’s website that will report on key system parameters, such as flow volumes, biosolids distribution, system upsets/penalties, fiscal information, etc. WTD staff provided a briefing on the system template, allowing committee members to ask questions and provide suggestions prior to the tool being finalized. The “dashboard” of system metrics is projected for completion in November.

The next RWQC meeting will be on October 4, 2017.

KING COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT

July 26 and August 10, 2017 meetings:

The King County Flood Control District (FCD) Advisory Committee met over the summer to complete

its review of the preliminary 2018-2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and 2018 Operating Budget. The Committee met a total of four times to discuss the budget and associated policy matters and prepared a letter to the Flood District Board of Supervisors (the King County Council) dated August 31 recommending approval of the annual budgets. Mayor Stokes represented the City of Bellevue in the Advisory Committee meetings. The FCD Board of Supervisors will act on the final budget in the fall.

FCD revenues are expected to increase from \$54.57 million in 2017 to \$56.07 million in 2018. The 2017 tax levy rate is 11.7 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. Bellevue property owners contribute approximately 8.1%, \$5.8 million, to the total FCD budget. Bellevue's Lower Coal Creek Flood Hazard Reduction Project is being funded as part of the FCD's capital program. This project will replace five culverts and improve two outfalls in lower Coal Creek in Newport Shores. Construction on the first phase started this summer. As part of this budget proposal, the FCD Board Chair Reagan Dunn increased the total Lower Coal Creek project amount from \$8.2 million to \$14.2 million to reflect the true cost of the project. Bellevue also receives approximately \$500,000 - \$600,000 annually in FCD funds for local flood control projects from the Subregional Opportunity Fund. The FCD also provides flood reduction grants to individual jurisdictions as well as grant funding to the Watershed Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) for salmon recovery projects.

As part of its budget approval letter, the Advisory Committee made a number of recommendations to the FCD Board of Supervisors:

- Regarding the overall budget process, the Advisory Committee recommended more direct involvement with the staff-level Basin Technical Committees throughout the year, clear budget comparisons from one year to the next, and a 20-year capital needs projection, including risks that could affect project delivery.
- The Advisory Committee also requested an established role in the Flood Hazard Plan Update, preparation of realistic projections of flood damage repair needs, and a review of the home elevations program in order to provide input on the appropriate level of funding and pace of implementation. The Committee encouraged the FCD Board to facilitate a strong relationship with the newly-named Seattle District Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers given concerns regarding the Ballard Locks, the Howard Hanson dam and other projects involving the federal government.
- In terms of the 2018 Operating Budget, the Advisory Committee requested additional information about the District's maintenance level of service, including considering the potential need for a higher level of vegetation management in residential areas and exploring innovations that might help reduce maintenance costs going forward.
- The Committee made some specific recommendations regarding the Subregional Opportunity Fund. While Bellevue has a flood control CIP list and spends the annual allotment of \$500,000 - 600,000 on local flood projects, several smaller jurisdictions need to wait several years in order to accumulate sufficient funds to conduct a project. The Advisory Committee made two recommendations intended to help improve the rate of expenditure of the Subregional funds:
 1. Consider development a revolving fund similar to the Public Works Trust Fund to allow jurisdictions to borrow money to build projects and use future Subregional Opportunity Fund allocations to pay back the loan. This approach needs to be further studied and refined so it

does not put limits on jurisdictions that have sufficient funding for viable projects based on the current funding formula for the Subregional Opportunity Fund.

2. Consider removing barriers for voluntary inter-jurisdictional partnerships.

Future discussion of these recommendations will be of interest to Bellevue to help ensure that they do not create any overall increase in program cost or decrease funds available to the City.

KING COUNTY REGIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE

The next meeting of the King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force (Task Force) is scheduled for **Friday, September 22**, which is after the time of this writing. A report on this meeting will be included in the October regional issues packet. The agenda for the September 22 Task Force meeting includes a review of the Task Force working rules and a draft work plan and schedule for the work of the Task Force through the end of 2018. Mayor Stokes was selected by the Sound Cities Association to represent East King County cities on the Task Force.