

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

***November 15 meeting summary:***

- **Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy.** On November 7, voters approved the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL). Originally approved in 2005 and renewed in 2011, this is a replacement six-year (2018-2023) property tax levied at a rate of \$0.10 per \$1,000 in assessed value (a Bellevue homeowner with a median assessed valuation of \$791,000 would pay \$79.10 in the first year of the levy) generating about \$50.6 million in levy revenue in 2018 and \$343 million over the life of the levy. The levy includes funding for services for seniors for the first time. Levy proceeds are allocated at follows:
  - Set asides for technical assistance and capacity building (1%) and to mitigate pro-rationing of fire and park districts (\$300,000). The remaining funds would be split 1/3 each to services and capital investments in each of three categories: 1) veterans, military service members, and their families; 2) seniors; and 3) vulnerable populations. In each of these categories, at least half of first-year levy proceeds would be dedicated to housing stability, including capital investments, and one-quarter would be devoted to housing stability in future years.
  - Additionally, at least half of the funding for seniors 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).

**VSHSL Transition Plan**

King County Executive Dow Constantine transmitted the VSHSL Transition Plan to the RPC for its consideration. The Transition Plan outlines how programs funded under the expiring levy would continue to be funded into the first year of the new levy. The Transition Plan would govern the expenditure of levy proceeds until the subsequent adoption of a more comprehensive Implementation Plan to cover the balance of levy investments. In addition to continuing funding for existing programs, the Transition Plan:

- Allocates 1% of funding to capacity building (used to assess senior centers, provide technical assistance to currently funded levy programs, and provide technical assistance to groups who will apply for new funding in 2018);
- Outlines how the required 50% of first-year levy funds will be spent on housing stability; and
- Allocates \$3.5 million in new investments to at least 39 senior centers in King County. Prior to allocating this funding, stakeholders will help define “senior center.”

Both King County Councilmembers and Sound Cities Association members of the RPC proposed amendments to the Transition Plan transmitted by the Executive. In addition to amendments to correct technical issues in the Plan, RPC members introduced the following amendments to the Transition Plan:

- Amendment #1: Adds policy language to prioritize the collective impact of County housing stability investments (approved unanimously);
- Amendment #2: Includes Board staff support as part of the definition of planning and administration that comes under a 5 percent cap (approved unanimously);
- Amendment #3: Requires a Housing Oversight Coordination Report one year after adoption of the Transition Plan (approved 6-4);
- Amendment #4: Creates a revolving loan fund for purchase and foreclosure assistance in the veterans’ allocation (approved unanimously);
- Amendment #5: Dedicates a portion of rent subsidies to individuals involved in the criminal justice system who reside in affordable housing units supported by Transit-Oriented Development bonds and/or units in other county affordable housing programs targeting persons at 0-30% of Area Median Income (approved unanimously);
- Amendment #6: Adds housing counseling as an eligible service under the Preventing Housing Loss strategy (approved unanimously);
- Amendment #7: Includes community centers with specific senior programs in the definition of senior centers for the purpose of new senior center investments and technical assistance (Introduced per Mayor Stokes’ request. This ensures that Bellevue’s community centers that provide senior programs, as well as other programming, will be eligible for this funding. Approved unanimously);
- Amendment #8: Makes the maximum award for technical assistance to senior centers located in incorporated and unincorporated King County equal at \$30,000 (approved unanimously).

The ordinance accepting the Transition Plan, as amended, was approved by the RPC by a vote of 10–0.

#### VSHSL Governance Plan

The Executive also transmitted the VSHSL Governance Plan to the RPC for its consideration. The Governance Plan outlines the creation and composition of three boards – the Human Services Levy Advisory Board, the Seniors Levy and Healthy Aging Advisory Board, and the Veterans Levy Advisory Board - and the creation of an Executive Advisory Committee that will provide oversight of expenditures of the levy proceeds.

Due to time constraints, RPC consideration of the Governance Plan was postponed to a special RPC meeting on December 5, 2017.

- **Briefing on Emergency preparedness for the 2017-2018 Winter Storm Season.** King County staff from the Office of Emergency Management presented information about how the County is working with its partners to prepare for the 2017-2018 winter storm season. Staff discussed a Winter Weather Mobility Task Force; hosting a preparedness seminar for regional partners; and training on a new incident management platform to share information and manage resources.

The next meeting of the RPC is scheduled for December 5, 2017.

## **REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)**

### ***November 15 meeting summary:***

- **Policy Report for the METRO CONNECTS Development Program.** The policy report for the METRO CONNECTS Development Program identifies existing policy guidance Metro uses to guide service and capital decisions, identifies where the agency has policy gaps that limit how METRO CONNECTS is implemented, and identifies near and long-term strategies to address these gaps. The policy report also identifies the policy gaps where the RTC will be able to provide direction. Two needs were identified for additional policy consideration that will continue to be considered at future RTC meetings:

Policy Need 1: Clarity on Partnerships and Ways to Work Effectively with Cities. Current policy language in the Service Guidelines provides examples of how jurisdictions could support transit through policy changes or infrastructure investments. However, Metro's work with staff from various cities has continued to highlight the need for additional clarity on capital and infrastructure partnerships and other ways to collaborate with Metro.

To address this need, Metro intends to work with the region to:

- 1) Clarify the definition of the term "partnership," particularly related to capital partnerships, and the implications for Metro service and capital planning.
- 2) Consider potential implications of social equity and geographic value on the definition and execution of partnerships.
- 3) Clarify Metro's expectations for the level of support and engagement needed from cities for expanding RapidRide service and other major corridor projects.

Policy Need 2: Service Network Priorities. Current policy focuses on balancing investment in the needs of the existing network (the Service Guidelines) with the future network (METRO CONNECTS) and allows for investment in both sets of needs. However, additional clarity is needed on how Metro should prioritize service investment to create the METRO CONNECTS network, expand RapidRide, and deliver envisioned service levels on METRO CONNECTS routes. Updates to policy guidance should provide more clarity on how the Service Guidelines prioritize investments to reach service levels in METRO CONNECTS.

- **King County Metro Transit 2017 System Evaluation.** At a time when Metro ridership continues to grow, the Metro 2017 System Evaluation report identifies the need for over 13 percent growth in the transit system to reduce crowding, improve reliability, and meet target service levels on corridors throughout King County. Metro has invested approximately 160,000 annual service hours this year and is on track to invest the same amount again in 2018. About half of these hours are going to the priority categories identified in this report, in line with Metro's approved budget. The remaining

hours are mitigating construction impacts to its service and meeting other obligations, including providing operators reasonable access to comfort stations.

The report identified the following for City of Bellevue routes:

- Metro fixed routes needing investment to reduce crowding: 232, 240, and 255.
- Metro fixed routes needing investment to improve reliability: 218, 226, 234, 249, and B Line.
- Metro corridors needing investment during peak period: 226, 241, 245, 246, and 249.
- Metro corridors needing investment during off-peak period: 246.
- Metro corridors needing investment during night period: 226, 240, 241, and 246.

The RTC accepted the 2017 System Evaluation Report with a “do pass” recommendation.

The December 20, 2017 RTC meeting was cancelled; the next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for January 17, 2018.

## **REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)**

### ***November 1 meeting summary:***

- **Legislation in response to Treatment Plant Failure.** In response to the February 9, 2017 West Point Treatment System Failure, subsequent assessment of causes and the Washington State Department of Ecology’s related Administrative Order, the King County Council is considering legislation providing direction to the Executive and the Wastewater Treatment Division.

Proposed Ordinance Regarding Staff Reporting Tool. The AECOM Independent Assessment of the February 9, 2017 West Point Treatment Plant System Failure noted among its findings that retention of staff at the West Point Treatment Plant has been problematic. The proposed ordinance directs the King County Executive to provide a report with recommendations and a plan for implementing actions to address 1) development of an ongoing anonymous staff reporting tool, and 2) means to improve staff retention at the West Point Treatment Plant.

- King County Wastewater currently has in place a safety line by which staff may anonymously report concerns about specific safety conditions. However, the line is not intended for broader operational concerns; opportunity to report on these broader concerns could have beneficial implications for plant or staff wellbeing and could potentially help avoid future facility problems like those that contributed to the February 9 system failure.
- Staff turnover at West Point is significant with operators often training at West Point and then transferring to one of the other system plants (such as Brightwater near Woodinville or the South Treatment Plant in Renton). Reasons given for turnover include the difficult commute and cost of living in the area surrounding the West Point Treatment Plant.

The RWQC voted in favor of moving this ordinance forward.

Proposed Ordinance Regarding Implementation of the Independent Assessment Final Report. The AECOM Independent Assessment of the February 9, 2017 West Point Treatment Plant System Failure included four summary recommendations and an extended list of mitigation strategies. The four summary recommendations are:

- Initiate Life Safety Management practices to strengthen maintenance and operations
- Implement enhanced emergency training

- Implement a strategic plan with short-term and long-term improvements
- Make improvements to enhance plant capacity

The Washington State Department of Ecology issued an Administrative Order attached to its penalty assessed against the County for water quality violations associated with the February 9 system failure. The Order included mandated corrective actions. Proposed Ordinance 2017-0429 does the following:

- 1) Requires the Executive to develop an implementation plan for the recommendations included in the Independent Assessment Final Report and the requirements of the Department of Ecology Administrative Order.
- 2) Requires the Executive to provide quarterly reports on progress of implementation per the implementation plan for the duration of the implementation plan timeline.
- 3) Requires the County Auditor to oversee the Executive's execution of the implementation plan and provide a report on the results of this oversight by March 1, 2019.

The RWQC voted in favor of moving this ordinance forward.

- **Combined Sewer Overflow Program Background and Context; Joint Ship Canal Combined Sewer Overflow Project-Status Report.** King County and the City of Seattle are participating in a partnership to design, construct and operate the Joint Ship Canal Water Quality Project. This project is responsive to respective consent decrees signed by each of the parties with state and federal agencies, requiring control of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) that discharge untreated wastewater and stormwater into regional waters.

The Joint Ship Canal Water Quality Project will control CSO discharges in to the Lake Washington Ship Canal from CSO outfalls owned by each of the parties. A Joint Project Agreement spells out the roles for Seattle and King County in this project.

- Seattle is in the lead for design and construction and will own and maintain the facility for the long-term.
- The project will address CSO discharges from six overflow locations (two King County and four Seattle).
- The project will include a 2.7-mile-long storage tunnel with a minimum 14-foot interior diameter. The location is generally in the street right of way along the north side of the ship canal.
- Both parties are contributing financially. Seattle has some independent costs for delivery of influent to the project, and the remainder of the project costs are split with Seattle paying 65% and King County paying 35% of design and construction costs. The same proportionality will also guide future operations and maintenance costs.
- Project changes are the responsibility of a Project Review and Change Management Committee composed of senior management from both agencies.

As part of the County's participation in the joint project, the King County Council requires semiannual project status reports. The second semiannual report was transmitted in July 2017. This recent report noted some changes that have been approved by the Project Review and Change Management Committee and some changes that are being considered. Most significant is the possible increase in tunnel diameter.

Seattle currently estimates that the total project cost of the Ship Canal Project at \$540 million compared with the projected costs at the time of signing the Joint Project Agreement of \$423 million. There has been no final determination whether, or to what extent, the cost escalation will impact the County's cost share. Drivers for cost increases include tunnel size expansion, increased regional construction costs, design changes, construction methodology changes and sales taxes.

The next meeting of the RWQC is scheduled for December 6.

### **KING COUNTY REGIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE**

#### ***October 31 meeting summary:***

This was the third meeting for the King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force (Task Force). The Task Force approved a work program that will guide the activities of the Task Force. A final report and recommendation is due to the King County Council by the end of 2018. As a reminder, the Task Force purpose and objectives are:

- Assess the current state of regional housing affordability in King County, including efforts by jurisdictions;
- Develop a recommended statement of intent to address the regional affordable housing crisis in King County;
- Identify collective tools and actions that can be taken at the regional level to create more affordable options where needed and preserve affordable housing where it exists today. This could include a recommended plan for new partnerships, local strategies, regulatory reform, and funding approaches that could include, but is not limited to, evaluating a countywide sales tax increase of one-tenth cent under RCW 82.14.530;
- Develop a recommended state legislative strategy to address issues relating to affordable housing and homelessness; and
- Develop a dashboard for displaying region-wide progress in meeting the Countywide Planning Policies.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to provide the Task Force members with a common base of knowledge about affordable housing in King County. The Task Force received a presentation regarding the definition of affordability and cost burdened households, the countywide need for affordable housing, and the economic market drivers influencing housing in King County.

The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for November 30.

### **KING COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT (FCD) UPDATE**

On November 13, 2017, the King County Flood Control District Board of Supervisors (the King County Council) adopted the 2018 Flood Control District tax levy and the 2018 operating and capital budgets for the FCD. As allowed under state law, the FCD adopted a tax increase of 1% plus new construction for 2018. Total tax revenue for 2018 will be \$55,685,024, an increase from 2017 tax revenues of \$55,133,687. The Office of Economic Forecasting and Analysis calculates the 2018 tax levy rate to be approximately 10.7 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. This is a decrease from the 2017 rate of 11.7 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

The 2018 FCD budget includes \$1,646,361 for the WRIA 8 Cooperative Watershed Management Grant Program and \$608,198 for Bellevue's Subregional Opportunity Fund.

As reported in Council's September 2017 regional issues update, the King County Flood Control District Advisory Committee met four times over the summer to review a work plan and budget for 2018 and voted to recommend the budgets to the FCD Board of Supervisors. The Advisory Committee also included a letter with the following additional recommendations:

- Increase Advisory Committee's direct involvement with the staff-level Basin Technical Committees throughout the year and include clear budget comparisons from one year to the next, as well as a 20-year capital needs projection.
- Establish an Advisory Committee role in the Flood Hazard Plan Update.
- 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 issues involving the federal government.
- Provide additional information about the 2018 Operating Budget, including the FCD's maintenance level of service, and the potential need for a higher level of vegetation management in residential areas.
- There were 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.
  - 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 costs or decrease funds available to the City.

#### Background Information

As you will recall, Bellevue receives a direct allocation of funds through the Subregional Opportunity Fund in the FCD. The allocation is based on the assessed value of the jurisdiction. In 2017, Bellevue's allocation is \$592,392. Bellevue is using this funding for the Meydenbauer Basin/NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Ave NE Conveyance Improvement Project. This project will construct conveyance system improvements to reduce or eliminate flooding at 100<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street and the vicinity. The project is in design and expected to go to bid for construction in 2018.

Bellevue's 2018 allocation from the FCD's Subregional Opportunity Fund is \$608,198 and has also been earmarked for the Meydenbauer Basin/NE 8<sup>th</sup> St & 100<sup>th</sup> Ave NE Conveyance Improvement Project.

In addition to this funding from the Subregional Opportunity Fund, Bellevue has a major project on the FCD's capital project list. This project, which is estimated at about \$14 million, will address Newport Shores flooding issues. The first of five fish passable structures was recently completed. Final design for four more new fish passable structures and new storm drain outfalls will be completed in 2018. Construction of these improvements will occur in 2018 and 2019.

The FCD also has a small flood reduction grant program. The City was awarded a \$94,500 grant in 2016 to replace culverts in Kelsey Creek in the Larsen Lake Blueberry farm area. The five culverts under the pedestrian trail will be replaced with a wooden bridge to improve flow. The design of this

project is nearing completion, and it will be constructed in 2018.

The next meeting of the Flood Control District Advisory Committee is anticipated to be in mid-2018.

## **KING COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION INITIATIVE UPDATE**

### ***November 2 and November 16 meetings summary:***

On October 23, Council received a briefing regarding the King County Land Conservation and Preservation Initiative. The King County Land Conservation and Preservation Advisory Committee has met twice since that briefing. The final meeting of the Advisory Committee is currently scheduled for December 7, and the Committee will be asked to approve a final report with recommendations to the King County Executive and the King County Council on that date.

The Advisory Committee discussed an updated financial model with a total cost of \$4.14 billion that includes land acquisition priorities and costs from cities, as well as inflation for all the properties over the 30-year period. \$1.58 billion is included for cities' priorities, and a "plug" number of \$500 million is included in that total to account for cities that have not provided acquisition priorities (Seattle, Bellevue, Issaquah, Kent, Algonia, Pacific). The Advisory Committee is not being asked to address how funding would be allocated to meet cities' needs. This is a topic of future discussion for the County and the cities apart from the Advisory Committee's work.

Current revenue sources are expected to pay for \$2.25 billion out of the total \$4.14 billion estimate. Out of that current revenue total, private philanthropic sources are expected to fund \$294 million. After taking into account current funding sources, the funding gap is \$1.89 billion.

Over the course of the last two meetings, the Advisory Committee provided feedback on the assumptions that determine the size of the funding gap:

- Equity – include \$160 million to address inequities related to access and proximity to green space.
- Current Use Taxation (CUT) – include \$750 million for acquisition of certain properties in the CUT program. Properties in the program receive a property tax reduction in exchange for voluntary preservation of open space on the property. The King County staff prepared an analysis of the risk of properties exiting the program based on property distance from roads, adjacent development and development potential. Instead of assuming that all CUT properties need to be acquired, the Committee assumed that "low" and "medium-low" "risk of exit" properties will not be slated for acquisition.
- Operations and Maintenance – \$530 million for full staffing costs, including field and supervisor support, to ensure newly acquired lands are kept clean and safe when public access is allowed. This amount is not included in the \$4.14 billion estimate as the Advisory Committee recommended that this be funded from the King County Parks Levy.

### **Public Funding Options**

The Committee discussed potential funding sources and ways to structure the public funding to achieve the most acquisition in a 30-year timeframe. The funding sources considered included the Conservation Futures Tax (CFT), new real estate excise tax authority (REET), a property tax levy or general obligation bonds. The final recommendation from the group is to:



- Utilize CFT funding. CFT was originally authorized by the state 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 4.45 cents per \$1,000 of AV. King County voters could reset the CFT to 6.25 cents with a 51% affirmative vote.
- Reset CFT to 6.25 cents two to three times over the 30 years. This strategy would reset the rate as the King County AV increases, allowing the County to reach its funding goal for property acquisition in 30 years.
- Fund operations and maintenance from future parks levies by adding between 7 tenths and 2 cents per \$1,000 of AV when it is up for renewal. This is because King County Code does not authorize operations and maintenance funding out of CFT funds. State law does allow up to 15% of the CFT total to be spent on operations and maintenance activities.
- Allow bonding up to 100% of CFT revenues by amending the County debt policy. Current County debt policy allow bonding up to 50% of CFT revenues.

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee is December 7.

### **METROPOLITAN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSWMAC) UPDATE**

- **Solid Waste Interlocal Agreement.** In October, King County and Bellevue each took legislative actions documenting their intentions for future solid waste services in Bellevue through 2040.

At the October 23 Study Session, Council reviewed several changed conditions since Bellevue's decision in 2013 not to sign the Amended and Restated ILA. Those changes include an extension of the Cedar Hills Landfill closure date from 2023 to 2040 and increased tonnage in the regional system. In addition, King County committed to cancel its "demand management" plan to significantly increase tonnage and traffic directed to the Factoria Transfer Station and to plan for additional solid waste transfer capacity at a different location in the northeast County. (Additional background and details are available in the October 23 Study Session Agenda Memorandum.)

Council authorized the City Manager to sign the Amended and Restated ILA by October 31. The City Manager did so on October 30, 2017.

As noted during the Council briefing, decisions regarding the future transfer station network in the regional system and future disposal options are planned for as part of the King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan.

- **Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan.** The King County Solid Waste Division is moving forward with drafting an update of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Plan), previously adopted in 2001. The Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee (MSWMAC) received a preliminary draft of the Plan in October and an overview presentation on the draft Plan at its October 13, 2017 meeting. Members agreed to review and comment on the draft Plan by November 3, 2017.

Bellevue submitted comments to the King County Solid Waste Division. Key Bellevue comments included recommending that the Plan include:

- A preferred alternative for meeting transfer capacity in the northeast service area: site and build a new northeast transfer facility
- A preferred alternative for meeting future disposal needs for the entire service area: develop additional Cedar Hills Landfill capacity

- Consistent language to reflect Bellevue’s signing the Amended and Restated ILA and King County’s October legislation that (1) cancels demand management, (2) commits to additional northeast transfer capacity in addition to the existing Factoria Transfer Station, (3) commits to no expansion of Factoria onto the “upper Eastgate Way” property, and (4) allocates transfer capacity equitably in the region.

On November 15, King County staff provided a revised draft of the Plan in response to comments received by MSWMAC members and others. The revised draft addressed some of Bellevue’s concerns, but not all. Plan language has been improved to reflect the fact that demand management has been cancelled, planning for new northeast transfer capacity is needed and that Bellevue has signed the ILA. While many parties requested it, the Plan continues to lack preferred alternatives for transfer capacity or future disposal needs, and the County staff indicates that no alternatives will be selected until a public review of the plan is completed.

MSWMAC met on November 17 and discussed the revisions to the draft Plan. Many parties had had only limited time to review the Plan. King County took additional comments at the meeting and accepted additional edits. In conclusion, the majority of MSWMAC members voted to allow King County to proceed to issue a public draft of the Plan for public review in early 2018. Bellevue staff voted against proceeding with this draft due to the lack of preferred alternatives and lack of transparency for the public.

Bellevue will have additional opportunities to review and comment on the Plan as it moves through public review, King County Council and Regional Policy Committee review, and Bellevue City Council consideration of adoption at the end of 2018.

Following is the draft schedule for plan completion:

Approximate date	Action
January 2018 – mid early March 2018	Release Public Review Draft Plan and draft Environmental Impact statement for public review and comment
January 2018 – mid-April 2018	up to 120 days Department of Ecology (Ecology) review of Public Review Draft Plan and Environmental Impact Statement
May 2018	Revise to incorporate Ecology’s comments and Executive Recommendation
June – August 2018	Regional Policy Committee and King County Council adoption process
September – December 2018	120-day period City adoption process
February - March 2019	Submit County/City-Approved Plan to Ecology for final approval (45-day period)