

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:  
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES  
*April 2019***

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. Staff 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)**

***March 28 meeting summary:***

- **King County Proposed Parks Levy.** The RPC continued its discussion and voted to recommend adoption of a proposal for a renewed King County Parks Levy to be placed on the August ballot. The Parks Levy funds operations and maintenance of the County's parks, regional trails and open spaces. Cities also receive funding from the levy to invest in local parks projects.

The original levy was approved at the end of 2013 at a rate of 18.77 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value and will expire at the end of 2019 unless renewed by voters. Due to rising property values, in 2019 the levy is being collected at a rate of 12.68 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value (AV). In order to be on the August ballot, the County Council must adopt the final legislation by April 30.

Christie True, King County Natural Resources and Parks Department Director, attended the Bellevue City Council meeting on March 25 and presented an overview of the proposed parks levy as well as the striking amendment that had been sponsored by several County Councilmembers. Bellevue Councilmembers voiced general support for the levy and provided feedback to Councilmember John Stokes who serves as a member of the RPC.

The King County Executive's original proposal was for a levy rate of 16.82 cents per \$1,000 of AV. A home valued at \$941,000, which is the median home value in Bellevue, would contribute about \$158 per year under that levy proposal, compared to about \$126 under the current levy.

The RPC supported the striking amendment proposed by several County Councilmembers and added funds for swimming pools and other projects, raising the proposed levy rate to 18.32 cents per \$1,000 of AV. This would raise the annual contribution of a median house in Bellevue

to \$172. Councilmember Stokes spoke in support of flexible funding for pool projects that are being developed in a coordinated regional effort by multiple cities.

Bellevue currently receives about \$450,000 per year from the King County parks levy. The City uses the funds for a variety of projects, such as property acquisition, trail development and park development, including the recent Downtown Park capital project. It is estimated that Bellevue's direct share would increase to \$730,000 per year under the proposed levy.

The proposal includes regional funding for four Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) projects in Bellevue: the NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street over-crossing, the Wilburton Trestle retrofit, the I-90 – 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE trail connection and a connection to the SR 520 trail.

The RPC met on April 17, and a summary will be included in the May Regional Issues Packet.

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

### ***March 20 meeting summary:***

- **2019 RTC Work Plan.** The County Council's rule for regional committees calls for the RTC Chair to consult with the Vice Chair "in developing a draft work program for consideration by the full committee." The RTC reached consensus that the 2019 RTC Work Plan will include:
  - Updates on implementation of METRO CONNECTS, King County Metro's (Metro) long-range transit plan.
  - Discussions of smart mobility technologies and their impacts on equity.
  - An update regarding Metro's on-demand first/last-mile pilot projects, such as the Ride2 pilot at the Eastgate Park and Ride.
  - An update on Metro's plans to deploy an all-electric bus fleet.
  - A discussion of how Metro will restructure transit service when the Federal Way Link Extension service begins in 2024.
  - A report on Metro's capital program, which includes projects such as RapidRide expansion and bus base improvements.
- **Future Transportation Challenges and Opportunities.** The RTC received a briefing on upcoming changes in mobility and the implications, risks and opportunities for public transit. Metro is adapting to changes in mobility through its Innovative Mobility program. Several pilot projects have begun under this program, including:
  - Ride2. This is Metro's on-demand shuttle service to and from transit hubs. Bellevue staff participated in the planning for this pilot project and it was activated in October with service at the Eastgate Park and Ride. Customers use a smartphone application (app) to request a ride to or from the Eastgate Park and Ride, within a defined service area. Fares can be paid with an ORCA card, in cash, with a transfer or using a ticket purchased through Metro's mobile ticketing app. Metro is compiling ridership data to analyze the success of this program to date.

- Carpooling program. Metro is partnering with ride-matching companies to offer discounted trips for riders and bonuses for drivers. Customers enter trip locations and times into an app and are matched with neighbors or co-workers making similar trips.
- **Access to Transit.** Staff from the King County Mobility Coalition addressed mobility options for the future and ways to make mobility options more accessible for people around the community. The Mobility Coalition facilitates the coordination of King County special needs transportation to better serve the community. Bellevue Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly is a Co-Chair of the Mobility Coalition and participates in a sub-regional coalition, the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative (EERC). The EERC identifies and initiates coordinated, creative and sustainable ways to assist individuals on the Eastside with specialized transportation needs. Targeted populations include people with limited-English proficiency, older adults, low-income individuals, people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, and youth.

The RTC met on April 17, and a summary will be included in the May Regional Issues Packet.

The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for May 15.

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

***The April 3 RWQC meeting was cancelled. In lieu of that meeting, the Sound Cities Association (SCA) Caucus members met April 3 in a work session to discuss the 2019 committee work plan, ideas for improving presentations to the RWQC, and increasing understanding of how policies are referred to the RWQC for consideration.***

- **Regional Water Quality Committee Scope of Work and Committee Referrals.** The members received a short briefing from a King County Council staff attorney about the process by which the County Council refers items to the RWQC and an overview of what topics are considered mandatory and non-mandatory referrals to the RWQC. The committee members reviewed the direction provided in the King County Code section 1.24 that states:

*“Plans and policies that must be assigned to the committee include, but are not limited to, water quality comprehensive and long-range capital improvement plans, service area and extension policies, rate policies, and the facility siting policy and major facilities siting process.”*

The caucus members noted that the County's Wastewater Treatment Division's Clean Water Plan (currently in the early stages of planning) would be considered a water quality comprehensive plan and as such should be a mandatory referral to the RWQC. The SCA staff agreed to confirm this assumption with RWQC staff.

- **Regional Wastewater Governance Discussion.** Kirkland Mayor Penny Sweet provided an update about a recent Kirkland City Council meeting where the Council discussed draft

letters to the King County Charter Commission and the King County Executive to highlight Kirkland's interests in improving wastewater governance in the region.

The caucus agreed to continue conversations on RWQC roles and wastewater governance interests at future caucus meetings.

The next meeting of the RWQC is scheduled for May 1.

### **KING COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL (GMPC)**

The GMPC typically meets three to four times per year to consider amendments to countywide planning policies and to monitor progress on implementation. Councilmember Jennifer Robertson serves as Bellevue's representative on the GMPC.

#### ***March 27 meeting summary:***

- **GMPC Affordable Housing Committee.** The King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force adopted a Five-Year Action Plan in December that recommends strategies for regional coordination to address affordable housing needs, including the development of a standing housing committee of the GMPC to guide implementation of the recommended strategies.

King County Executive Dow Constantine provided an overview of a draft of the Affordable Housing Committee Charter. With the help of County Councilmember Claudia Balducci, Executive Constantine emphasized that the Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) would serve as a coordinating body for the County and a place where elected officials and interested parties can work together, share information, and deepen their understanding of affordable housing challenges.

Executive Constantine responded to questions regarding landlord-tenant issues, the \$1.3 million budget to support three FTE's and the work of the AHC, how the budget would be allocated, and developing data needs and technical work. County staff was not able to provide a specific budget breakdown beyond the budget allocation for the FTE's and indicated that additional budget information would be brought to the GMPC as it was developed. SCA members then asked about the composition of the staff committee (the Housing Interjurisdictional Team or HIJT), and King County staff replied that the staff team would be fluid to manage the ebb and flow of work—there would be no hard and fast representation requirements. The GMPC supported the formation of the AHC.

The GMPC also heard that the non-governmental composition of the AHC would be individuals and organizations that represent charter mission areas such as landlords, renters, nonprofit and for-profit housing developers, the business community and anti-displacement representatives. The GMPC also heard that the elected and government members would be selected by individual caucuses and would be known by mid-May.

- **VISION 2050 Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS)** The GMPC received a briefing on the Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2050 update and the DSEIS, including a comparison of the three growth strategy alternatives (discussed in more detail in the Growth Management Policy Board (GMPB) committee summary in the PSRC document in this regional packet).

Executive Constantine led the discussion on whether to develop a GMPC-authored letter commenting on the three growth alternatives in the DSEIS. SCA members continued to express concerns regarding this approach and reiterated their intent to have member cities respond individually rather than sign the GMPC-authored letter. Executive Constantine acknowledged the concerns but also indicated that the County will draft and share a letter for review due to his preference for a group letter if possible. The deadline for comment letters to the PSRC is April 29.

The next meeting of the GMPC is July 24.

### **EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR (ERC) REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)**

#### ***April 5 meeting summary:***

- **ERC Trail Branding Elements.** The King County Department of Parks and Natural Resources (DNRP) is leading an effort to establish a brand for the ERC and to build support and awareness around the multiuse trail. The County hired ICON, a creative agency out of Atlanta, Georgia to help the RAC and the broader group of ERC stakeholders build the brand for the ERC. King County, Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond, Renton, Woodinville, Puget Sound Energy, Sound Transit, and the Eastside Greenway Alliance contributed funding to the branding effort. In January, the RAC selected "Eastrail" as the new name for the ERC.

With input from stakeholders, ICON generated four logo options and two tagline options for the Eastrail. Prior to the RAC meeting, Bellevue staff sought input from key City advisory groups, the Bellevue Youth Council and the Bellevue Diversity Action Network, to help ensure that brand development and communications are as welcoming as possible to everyone in the community.

The RAC selected a logo and a tagline, which will be officially unveiled at an ERC event later this year. The location and date of the event have not been determined.

- **Funding Commission Report.** The ERC Trail Funding Commission is made up of 17 representatives from the private and non-profit sectors. The Funding Commission was convened by the RAC last year to make funding recommendations for development of the ERC. During the meeting, the RAC received additional information about the Funding Commission's final report.

In the report, the Funding Commission recommended creating an independent organization to advocate for the entire corridor, lead private-sector fundraising, and provide a full-corridor perspective on funding decisions and priorities for trail construction and enhancement.

The Funding Commission Co-Chairs included an estimate that the independent organization would need \$200,000 for the first year of funding. The Co-Chairs proposed that the RAC members provide \$100,000 total and that the King County Parks Foundation provide \$50,000. The Funding Commission committed to soliciting contributions from private-sector organizations for the remaining \$50,000. The RAC members supported the Funding Commission's proposal.

- **ERC Projects in the King County Parks Levy.** The RAC received a briefing on the proposed King County six-year parks, trails and open space replacement levy.

The proposed 2020-2025 levy has a total of \$50.5 million allocated to ERC projects throughout the corridor. Additional information about the proposed levy can be found in the RPC meeting summary above.

The next meeting of the ERC RAC has not been scheduled.

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

### ***Willowmoor Flood Control Project 2019 Update***

The King County Flood Control District (FCD) is developing 30 percent design alternatives for the Willowmoor Project - a flood control project at the outlet of Lake Sammamish. The Willowmoor project was initiated by the FCD to achieve multiple benefits including improving flood control measures, lake level control and enhancing habitat.

As Council will recall, Lake Sammamish property owners have experienced increased lake levels during winter storms and spring runoff. Landowners have indicated that higher lake levels have submerged and damaged docks and led to increased shoreline erosion from wave action. The lakeshore property owners have been meeting and working with King County since 2010 to develop a long-term solution to the issues.

In 2013, to help scope the Willowmoor project, the County convened the Willowmoor Stakeholder Advisory Committee (WSAC), a group comprised of lakeshore property owners, agency staff and citizens. This group has continued to meet to provide feedback as project alternatives have been developed.

In 2016, the Bellevue City Council sent a letter to the FCD supporting a "Split Flow Channel" design alternative after receiving a briefing from King County staff on the project. Although all of the 30 percent design alternatives developed to date for the project are considered "split flow" alternatives, lakeshore

property owners and City staff are concerned that impacts to the lakeshore property owners are not being adequately considered in the analysis of the alternatives.

#### Next Steps

The WSAC members have asked for the opportunity to review and provide comment on the results of the alternatives analysis prior to the FCD Board of Supervisors' selection of a 30 percent design alternative, expected sometime in 2019. The 60 percent design of the project is anticipated in summer 2020.

Bellevue staff will work with County staff to schedule a briefing so City Councilmembers can receive an update on the project status and the lakeshore property owners' concerns about the alternatives being considered.

#### **KING CONSERVATION DISTRICT (KCD)**

On April 10, the Sound Cities Association's Public Issues Committee (PIC) discussed the King Conservation District's (KCD) 2020-2024 proposed rate increase and work program. The SCA staff provided a briefing about the proposal and shared information received from the KCD regarding details of the proposal. However, SCA staff reported that some questions remain unanswered by the KCD including a full accounting of how the proposed rate and program would vary from the current program and what necessitated the proposed changes. Several PIC members expressed concern about the rate increase and felt that some of their questions had not been adequately addressed by the KCD. Several other members expressed support for the proposal.

SCA members who serve on the KCD Advisory Committee provided a statement which noted the value and multiple benefits in the services provided by the KCD. The PIC members discussed whether the SCA members on the KCD Advisory Committee could vote for the proposal without an official SCA position. The PIC did not direct the SCA members to the KCD Advisory Committee as to how to vote on the proposal at this time. The PIC discussed potentially taking a position on the proposed rate increase but did not decide whether to take this action. The PIC will revisit the issue at its May meeting. The KCD Advisory Committee met on April 17 and did not take any action.

#### Background

The King Conservation District (KCD) has been working with its Advisory Committee and other stakeholders to develop a proposal for a five-year work program for 2020-2024. 2019 will be the fifth and final year of the KCD's current work program. Later this year, the KCD will submit a proposed 2020-2024 rate increase and work program proposal to the King County Council for approval. The KCD staff will continue working with the Advisory Committee and other stakeholders through the spring to develop the proposal. Bellevue Councilmember John Stokes serves as Chair of the KCD Advisory Committee.

The KCD serves 35-member jurisdictions (34 cities and King County) representing a total population of 1.8 million. The KCD currently describes its program of work as focusing on four main areas:

1. Agriculture and Local Food, including agricultural drainage, regional and community agriculture programs;
2. Forest Stewardship, including wildfire preparedness and work with cities and rural landowners;
3. Clean Water, including riparian and rural stewardship; and
4. City Partnerships, including member jurisdiction grants.

#### Current KCD Rates and Charges

Funding for the KCD is based on a system of rates and charges assessed on properties in the County that are within the KCD. The annual rates and charges are \$9.45 per residential parcel, \$9.23 per commercial parcel, and \$10 per agricultural parcel. The rates and charges provide annual revenue of approximately \$6.1 million. The rate was approved by the County Council in 2014 to fund the 2015-2019 work program. The KCD leverages this revenue with grants and other resources to cover additional expenses. In 2019, KCD's total budget including all revenue sources is approximately \$7.5 million.

In 2018, property owners in Bellevue paid approximately \$525,000 in KCD rates and charges. Of the \$6.1 million collected countywide, approximately \$1.4 million is returned to the contributing jurisdictions in the form of jurisdictional grants each year. In 2018, Bellevue applied to use approximately \$95,000 in jurisdictional grant funding for City parks, forestry and Bellevue Botanical Garden investments. Under the KCD rate structure, Bellevue is eligible for approximately \$78,000 in grant funds each year. Funds not used in one year roll over to the next.

In January, the KCD hosted workshops and meetings with stakeholders to explore alternative program and rate scenarios and get feedback on the work program. On March 13, KCD presented its current proposal at a SCA Workshop.

#### KCD Proposal for 2020-2024

The KCD's proposed 2020-2024 work program and rate proposal would carry forward the same priorities and services the organization provides with some minor changes and additions. The KCD is proposing a rate increase of close to 40 percent, or approximately an additional \$3.90 per parcel per year, depending on the parcel type. This increase would raise roughly \$2.8 million more per year for the District. This would increase the annual KCD revenue collected from rates and charges from \$6.1 million to \$8.9 million.

The KCD staff has stated that this increase is needed to replace one-time funding that has been used for program costs in recent years, expand current programs, and to cover the cost of inflation.

Several issues have been raised by staff from Bellevue and other jurisdictions, including whether the KCD utilized one-time funding to establish on-going programs, how much benefit urban property owners receive from the KCD programs and why expansion of its programs is appropriate. To date, the KCD has not adequately answered these and other questions about its proposed rate increase.

## **SOLID WASTE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

On April 1, the King County Council unanimously voted to approve seven amendments to the King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Plan) and related authorizing legislation. The amended Plan must now be re-referred to the Regional Policy Committee which had previously recommended approval of the Plan. The Regional Policy Committee will consider the amended Plan on April 17.

Christie True, Director of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP), reported to the County Council that the proposed amendments are acceptable to the County Executive branch. Some of the amendments restate and emphasize current County obligations deriving from a settlement agreement between the County and landowners proximate to the Cedar Hills Landfill (Cedar Hills Landfill). Other amendments are aimed at improving management practices at the Cedar Hills Landfill, scoping and reporting back to the County Council on a planning process to develop the next long-term regional disposal solution, and allowing the County Road Services Division to study the ability to charge the Solid Waste Division for Landfill-related road impacts.

The following is a summary of the amendments:

**Amendment One** requires the King County Solid Waste Division (SWD) to maintain a 1,000-foot buffer from the property line of the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (Cedar Hills Landfill) where waste and soil will not be disposed or stockpiled. This is consistent with a settlement between the County and the Cedar Hills Landfill neighbors in response to a lawsuit by the neighbors against the County. County Councilmember Reagan Dunn introduced this amendment to affirm the settlement conditions and demonstrate that the County will adhere to the terms of the settlement. It amends King County Code Chapter 10.25 to add a requirement that the SWD report annually on its compliance with this settlement.

**Amendment Two** requires the SWD to develop a bird management plan to be updated annually. The plan is intended to reduce the impact of birds carrying Cedar Hills Landfill waste and dropping it in people's yards. The bird management plan must include an inventory of birds inhabiting the Cedar Hills Landfill area, design suggestions to minimize bird attraction, a proposal for bird control, identification of resources needed to implement a bird control plan, performance metrics for bird management, and a monitoring plan.

**Amendment Three** requires the SWD to provide a follow-up report related to best practices for using top lifts and temporary cover no later than April 1, 2020. Top lifts and temporary covers are currently used to contain disposal areas and limit methane gas emissions at the Cedar Hills Landfill.

**Amendment Four** adds clarifying language regarding the maximum height of Cedar Hills Landfill areas numbered five, six, and seven. The Cedar Hills Landfill is divided into nine areas, or cells, for management purposes. Some Cedar Hills Landfill areas are full and capped, while others are being used for disposal. Areas five, six, and seven are still active for disposal. The settlement dictates a maximum height of 788 feet above sea level for areas five, six, and seven. The settlement, and this

amendment, do not dictate the height of the other areas or cells, including area eight (under development) and new area nine (proposed in the Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan).

**Amendment Five** requires the King County Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget to work with the SWD and regional partners to develop a plan for selecting the next waste disposal method for use after the Cedar Hills Landfill has reached its capacity. A report on the development of this plan would be required by December 31, 2021.

**Amendment Six** adds language allowing the King County Department of Local Services (DLS), Road Services Division, to study the ability to charge the SWD to mitigate impacts to roads near the Cedar Hills Landfill. The Restated and Amended Solid Waste Interlocal Agreement allows cities to charge the County for impacts of Solid Waste Facilities in their communities, including traffic impacts to nearby roads. This would allow the DLS to consider similar charges. The proposed amendment states:

*"Similar to the cities' authorization to receive mitigation, and due to the longer life of the Landfill, the Road Services Division of the Department of Local Services will study the ability to charge the Solid Waste Division to mitigate impacts directly attributable to the regional facility, including wear and tear on nearby roads." (emphasis added)*

**Amendment Seven (Amendment "T1")** amends the title of the authorizing ordinance for adoption of the Plan to include appropriate code references necessitated by Amendment one.

The Regional Policy Committee will consider the amended Plan at its next meeting on April 17.