

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES
*July 2021***

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 as appropriate (e.g., King County Flood Control District, King Conservation District, Affordable Housing Committee, King County Board of Health, King County Regional Homelessness Authority). Summaries also include the work of the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC). 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. These updates are intended to be summary briefings; staff can provide more details on any of the items below.

REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (RPC)

At its July 14 meeting, the RPC:

- **Approved an equity resolution.** In January, the RPC adopted a work program that includes developing “a policy statement that represents RPC’s commitment to review policies with a racial justice and equity lens.” The resolution is aligned with King County’s equity policies.
- **Received a briefing on the Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network (PSERN).** PSERN will replace the existing analog communications systems for emergency incident response. PSERN’s digital emergency radio system will increase coverage throughout the region and greatly expand interagency communication abilities in an emergency. PSERN will serve nearly 200 separate police, fire, emergency medical and other governmental agencies in the county, including Bellevue. To fund the project, King County voters approved a property tax levy in 2015 that will provide approximately \$300 million in revenue. However, increasing project costs may exceed available revenues. Bellevue staff is monitoring the project.
- **Received an update on the 2016-2021 Best Starts for Kids (BSK) levy,** which was approved by King County voters in 2015 and expires at the end of this year. The goals of the BSK levy are to strengthen early development, invest in programs to support key developmental milestones, and help create healthy communities that will support youth and families. King County staff provided a summary of work completed to date.

The next meeting of the RPC is scheduled for September 8. Councilmember John Stokes serves on the RPC.

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)

The RTC met on July 21 and a summary will be included in the September Regional Issues packet. The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for September 15. Councilmember Jennifer Robertson serves on the RTC.

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)

At its July 7 meeting, the RWQC:

- **Received a briefing on Ecology's new draft National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Nutrient Permit**, which will regulate the amount of nutrients 58 publicly owned wastewater treatment plants can discharge into Puget Sound. Comments to Ecology are due August 16. King County's Wastewater Treatment Division's (WTD) preliminary analysis indicates that costs exceeding \$28 billion in capital and \$11 million in operations may be necessary to comply with the Permit, including a 10-15 percent increase in staffing.

WTD staff plans to submit comments to Ecology related to the infeasible and unrealistic reporting requirements, significant costs and impacts to ratepayers, impacts to the private sector, and large uncertainties about the science used to support the Permit requirements.

- **Received a briefing on the Clean Water Plan draft strategic packages**, will provide policies, strategies, and actions to address an increasing list of challenges to successfully managing and operating the regional sewer system through 2060. The five packages include options to guide WTD's responsibilities regarding the treatment plants, pollution source control and product stewardship; stormwater and combined sewer overflows; wastewater conveyance; asset management, resiliency, and redundancy; legacy pollution, resource recovery, and finance.

Several proposed actions extend beyond WTD's responsibilities to provide regional sewer services and treatment. WTD still needs to develop costs and overall water quality benefits of each package.

The next meeting of the RWQC is scheduled for August 4. Councilmember Conrad Lee serves on the RWQC.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL (GMPC)

At its June 23 meeting, the GMPC:

- **Recommended the County Council approve the 2021 King County Urban Growth Capacity Report**. The Report includes development and capacity information for each jurisdiction, an assessment of countywide and Regional Geography trends, and data on growth target planned density achievement. The 2021 Report includes additional analysis and data

development to meet the new Growth Management Act requirements passed by the state legislature in 2017.

- **Recommended the County Council approve the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs).** The GMPC reviewed and incorporated amendments, including recommendations to locate housing closer to employment centers, strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and policies to improve social equity. The draft CPPs' employment target for Bellevue is 70,000 new jobs by 2044. This target is consistent with Bellevue's anticipated employment growth. Bellevue's 2044 housing target is 35,000 new housing units by 2044. This target supports a regional goal of improving the ratio of housing units and jobs.

The next meeting of the GMPC is scheduled for December 1. Councilmember Jennifer Robertson serves on the GMPC.

EASTRAIL REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)

The Eastrail RAC met on July 19 and a summary will be included in the September Regional Issues packet. The next meeting of the ERAC is scheduled for October 18. Bellevue Councilmember John Stokes serves on the RAC.

GREATER SEATTLE PARTNERS (GSP) EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

At its June 24 meeting, the GSP Executive Council:

- **Welcomed the new Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Chris Mefford and Executive Committee Co-Chair Katul Patel.** Former GSP CEO Brian McGowan resigned in late May to take another position in Atlanta. CEO of Community Attributes consultants Chris Mefford was appointed interim GSP CEO while an executive search is conducted. Virginia Mason Franciscan Health CEO Katul Patel was appointed Co-Chair of the GSP Executive committee in place of Brad Tilden, former CEO of Alaska Airlines, who retired earlier this year.
- **Received an organizational update.** Board Chair Bill McSherry shared that the organization is in good health both in terms of finances and staffing. GSP will start its CEO search this summer, with onboarding occurring later this year or early next. GSP is also hiring a research manager.
- **Received a work plan update.** Interim CEO Chris Mefford provided an update on the following:
 - Foreign Direct Investment – GSP is planning international business trips to promote foreign trade. GSP is meeting with key stakeholders, including the Port of Seattle, Washington and US Departments of Commerce, and District Export Council.
 - Business Attraction – GSP is recruiting three potential business partners. To promote investment in the Puget Sound region, GSP is visiting the San Francisco Bay area and other domestic markets.

- Recovery Framework – GSP is implementing a recovery plan and identifying partners and roles. Lead organizations are expected to be identified by August. Initiative design will take place from July to September and the taskforce will be reconvened for implementation in September.

GSP is creating subregional groups for more specific discussions. East King County was identified as a one of these groups. Membership level is to be determined. Bellevue staff is monitoring this effort.

The next meeting of the GSP Executive Council has not been scheduled. Bellevue Councilmember Conrad Lee serves on the GSP Executive Council.

KING COUNTY CITIES CLIMATE COLLABORATION (K4C)

At its June 3 elected official work session, the K4C:

- **Received an overview of the 2021 State Legislative session.** King County staff provided an overview of the 2021 legislation session and key climate and energy bills which passed, including the Clean Fuel Standard and the Climate Commitment Act. Both of these bills will assist Bellevue in achieving the City's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. Further study of the bills will continue as the rulemaking progresses.

King County staff presented a summary of federal climate change efforts, including rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement, establishing a national emissions reduction target of 50 percent by 2030, and setting a goal for 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2035.

- **Reviewed CPPs.** Staff provided a recap of the CPPs related to climate change, including the strengthened countywide greenhouse gas emissions reduction target which aligns with the statewide target. The recommended updated countywide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal includes a target of a 50 percent reduction by 2030, 75 percent reduction by 2040, and a 95 percent reduction and net carbon neutral target by 2050. As described above, this proposal was recommended by the GMPC to the King County Council.
- **Received briefings** on green affordable housing from Homestead Community Trust Executive Director Kathleen Hosfeld; on no- and low-carbon buildings from City of Seattle Energy Code and Energy Conservation Advisor Duane Jonlin; and on land use as a key to low carbon communities from City of Shoreline Mayor Will Hall. The briefings were followed by breakout discussions regarding affordable housing, transit-oriented development, and green building.

The next meeting of the K4C has not been scheduled. Bellevue Mayor Lynne Robinson serves on K4C.