

Rural Area Impacts

By Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, May 3, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council held its regular monthly meeting. Three major topics discussed were: (1) Proposed Covington Multi-Care Hospital, (2) Proposed Master-Planned Developments in Black Diamond, and (3) Rural Area Impacts from Urban Development.

Proposed Covington Multi-Care Hospital

Hugh Kodama, Administrator of the Covington MultiCare Clinic, discussed the proposed expansion of the Multi-Care Clinic in Covington into a hospital. The MultiCare Health System has filed plans with the State Department of Health (DOH) to build a 58-bed hospital with a 24/7 Emergency Department in Covington.

Mr. Kodama stated the new hospital will expand the services available and provide better access for residents in southeast King County. These new services will include a Women's and Children's Center, Childbirth Services, and expanded Surgical Services. New technologies will be employed including robotic-assisted surgeries and telemedicine.

The MultiCare plan provides for medical center expansion over the next five years: (1) a 24-hour Emergency Department by the end of 2011; (2) a first phase of the new hospital with 34 beds by 2014; and (3) a second phase with additional 24 beds by the end of 2015.

MultiCare has filed a Certificate of Need with DOH detailing its plans. Mr. Kodama stated other facilities in SE King County also have notified DOH of their intentions to add additional beds. It will be up to DOH to make the final decision on where those added beds go.

The estimated cost of the project is \$178.5 million. Mr. Kodama was asked about the source for those funds and stated MultiCare is a non-profit and intends to use private bonds and some of its own reserves to fund the expansion. He stated there will be no expansion of the hospital district, nor public levies.

The state DOH will be holding [Public Hearings](#) on the hospital needs for SE King County sometime later this year.

Proposed Master-Planned Developments in Black Diamond

On Monday, May 10, the Hearing Examiner will release his recommendations on the Yarrow Bay-proposed Master Planned Development (MPD) Applications (Permit) in Black Diamond. Those recommendations will then go to the Black Diamond City Council, which will make the final decision to accept, modify, or reject them. Area Council Chair, Steve Hiester, and several members attended the hearings, as well as offered public testimony. Specific concerns remain the impacts of urban development both directly and indirectly on the Rural Area and its citizens.

The Black Diamond City Council will hold Closed-Record (i.e., no new information allowed) Hearings on the MPD Applications. The Hearings will be open to the public. Only those who testified at the recently completed MPD Application Hearings will be able to address the City Council at the Closed-Record Hearings. The schedule for these hearings will be established at the Thursday, May 20, City Council meeting. Actual hearing dates are TBD.

Once the Black Diamond City Council makes a decision on the MPD Applications, work will begin on the Development Agreement. Here, Yarrow Bay will prepare their plan to meet any conditions placed on the MPD Applications by the City Council. This plan will be negotiated with City Staff. Once the Development Agreement is complete, Open-Record Hearings will be held. These will be open to the public and testimony will be taken from any members of the public who wish to speak.

The timing on the Development Agreement is somewhat dependent on the breadth of the conditions placed on the MPD Applications. Members of the public can check the [City of Black Diamond website](#) for hearing dates.

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The Area Council's Growth Management Committee Chair Peter Rimbos and Transportation Committee Chair Gordon Moorman described their committees' joint effort to review King County Code (KCC) to address potential Rural Area impacts from large urban developments. This was precipitated by the recently completed set of Hearings on the Yarrow Bay-proposed 6,000-home

Master Planned Developments in Black Diamond.

The objective of the effort is to provide specific KCC change recommendations to the King County Executive and King County Council "to protect the Rural Area from massive urban development and its overflow (intentional or not)." This effort, by necessity, also will review applicable KC Comprehensive Plan provisions and the state's Revised Codes of Washington (RCWs).

The committees have already met jointly twice and have begun their review of KCC Titles 7--Parks & Recreation; 9--Surface Water Management; 10--Solid Waste; 13--Water & Sewer Systems; 14--Roads & Bridges; 16--Building & Construction Standards; 17--Fire Code; 20--Planning; 21A--Zoning; and 26--Agricultural & Open-Space Lands. Three subcommittees have been created and each are working on specific KCC Titles.

The joint committees' effort is planned to be completed in July. Final recommendations and supporting rationale will be reviewed by the full Area Council at its July 12 monthly meeting. Area Council recommendations will be presented to the King County Executive and King County Council later in the summer to coincide with the County's annual budget cycle.