

King County Code Recommendations

By Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, October 4, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council held its regular monthly meeting. The major topic discussed was **Recommended Changes to the King County Code**. Your Area Council serves as an all-volunteer, locally elected advisory body to the King County Council, representing all unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District.

King County Code Recommendations

The Area Council reviewed and agreed to a final set of recommended changes to the King County Code (KCC). The Growth Management and Transportation Committees conducted a three-month comprehensive review of the KCC. The objective of the review was to "*protect the Rural Area from massive urban development and its 'overflow' (intentional or not).*" This exercise was precipitated by the Yarrow Bay-proposed Master Planned Developments in Black Diamond, which are expected to have major adverse effects on all of southeast King County, including the Rural Area.

The committees' overarching recommendation is for King County to enforce the KCC. While many KCC provisions protect Rural Area citizens from the impacts of adjacent urban development, in many cases meaningful or timely enforcement is lacking. [The full KCC can be found here.](#)

At its August monthly meeting, the Area Council agreed to a set of recommendations for KCC TITLES: 7-Parks & Recreation; 9-Surface Water Management; 10-Solid Waste; 14-Roads & Bridges; and 26-Agriculture & Open Space Lands.

During this meeting, the Area Council discussed probably the most complex KC TITLE, 21A-Zoning. The Area Council was guided by the KCC 231A.04.060-A-Rural Area Zone, which states that "*The purpose of the rural zone is to provide for an area-wide long-term rural character and to minimize land use conflicts with nearby agricultural or forest production districts or mineral extraction sites.*" The following recommendations were agreed to for the Residential Rural Area and are listed by KCC subsection:

21A.08.030-Residential Land Uses

1. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Conditional Use) of Community Residential Facility-1 (up to 9-10 residents and staff who provide counseling, rehabilitation, and medical supervision). These do not meet Rural Character, off-street parking is limited, and nearby supporting activities are lacking.

21A.08.050-General Services Uses

1. Require a Conditional Use permit for social services facilities when re-using a public school. King County should recommend size and use limitations for review by the Area Council.
2. Require a Conditional Use permit for office/outpatient clinics when re-using a public school.
3. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Conditional Use) of both middle/junior high schools and secondary/senior high schools. There are little to no facilities to support such complexes including roads/road maintenance. Also, expanding public sewer lines would enable possible future development in conflict with long-term rural character.
4. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Conditional Use) of school district support facilities. Traffic congestion created by such facilities does not fit in the Rural Area and what happened with the Tahoma School District bus facility should be avoided in the future.
5. Eliminate the technical loopholes in notes 15 and 16 (that apply to items 3 and 4 above) regarding expansion of public sewer facilities in any way, shape, or form.

21A.08.100-Regional Land Uses

1. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Special Use) of jail/farm camp facilities.
2. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Special Use) of work release facilities.
3. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Special Use) of wastewater treatment plants.
4. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Special Use) of airport/heliport facilities unless the heliport is restricted to emergency use only.
5. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Conditional or Special Use) of school bus base facilities. The transportation infrastructure is unable to handle the trips generated by such facilities.
6. Eliminate the permitting (even as a Special Use) of racetrack facilities. The transportation infrastructure is unable to handle the trips generated by such facilities.
7. Eliminate any permitting of colleges/universities especially as re-use of surplus non-residential facilities. The transportation

infrastructure is unable to handle the trips generated by such facilities.

21A.24.100-Critical Area Review

When initial Critical Area Reviews are performed, charges should be reasonable -- \$250 to \$350.

All Area Council recommendations will be presented to the KCC Review Committee for consideration. The Committee Chair will be invited to discuss these recommendations at a future Area Council meeting.

Landsburg Road Speed Limits

Recently, King County has posted a 45-mph speed limit sign on Landsburg Rd. in Ravensdale. We question this, considering the history of the "Landsburg Curve," where there have been a number of accidents. The history of this stretch of road includes a death at the intersection of Summit Landsburg Rd. and Landsburg Rd. SE involving an auto entering the road from a private drive. The problem is limited sight distance of less than 300 ft. to both the north and south. In addition, common speeds on this stretch of road usually exceed 50 mph. For the past six years, this has been one of the primary routes of travel for truck and trailers delivering gravel to various jobs in the county.

There is an inconsistency in the legal speed limits from each direction. Approaching from the south, the posted limit is 30 mph; from the north, 40 mph. This makes very little sense, as the sight distance is the same in either direction. The new posted limit of 45 mph takes place going northerly for a period of about 1,000 ft, then slows down to navigate the 25 mph curve at Summit Rd. and Landsburg Rd.

Maple Valley/Yarrow Bay MPD Transportation Mitigation Agreement

On September 20, the Black Diamond City Council passed an Ordinance of Approval for Yarrow Bay-proposed massive Master Planned Developments (MPDs) in Black Diamond. Part of that ordinance referenced an initial agreement addressing traffic mitigations in Maple Valley reached between the City of Maple Valley and Yarrow Bay. The Area Council discussed some of the potential pitfalls and risks associated with that agreement.

The original mitigations proposed by Yarrow Bay are based on the flawed traffic model rejected by the hearing examiner. Maple Valley's own traffic expert, and other expert witnesses including KC DOT and WS DOT. The Area council is encouraged to see the agreement goes beyond those mitigations, but hopes they are based on solid traffic modeling and not the flawed model used by Yarrow Bay. If not, these mitigations could very well prove to be insufficient to protect the future integrity of the greater Maple Valley transportation infrastructure.

13th Annual Model Train Show

The Area Council finalized preparations for the 13th Annual Maple Valley Operating Model Train Show, to be held again at the Gracie Hansen Community Center at 27132 SE Ravensdale Way in Ravensdale on Saturday, October 16, and Sunday, October 17, between 10 AM and 5 PM. [Please click here for more details.](#)