

June 2012

Community Service Areas

by Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, June 4, 2012, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council (GMVUAC) held its regular monthly meeting. Our guest speaker was Alan Painter, King County's new Community Service Area Program Manager.

Community Service Areas

King County Community Service Area (CSA) Program Manager, Alan Painter, discussed a new framework for County communication with residents of the unincorporated areas. The purpose of the new CSAs is to improve public engagement in the unincorporated areas by providing residents a single County staff link to specific projects in parks, roads, land use, public health, and public safety.

There will be six CSAs that encompass all of unincorporated King County, including areas without previous representation by an Unincorporated Area Council (UAC). A seventh CSA will cover west King County Unincorporated urban areas. CSAs will include existing UACs and interested civic organizations and other local groups. The Area Council will be part of the Greater Maple Valley and Cedar River CSA, an area much larger than it currently covers. Once the King County Council approves final CSA boundaries, CSA maps will be posted.

County interdepartmental teams will hold public meetings at least once a year with each CSA, in close collaboration with the King County Councilmember for that district and with other countywide elected officials. Mr. Painter also described how unincorporated area residents will be able to participate in an annual work program for each CSA. Community organizations in each CSA will be able to apply for grants of up to \$5,000 to promote the engagement of local residents in community or civic activities. The grant process will start in August.

As Manager of the Community Service Area program, Mr. Painter and his group will: (1) Develop a schedule for annual public meetings in each CSA; (2) Develop CSA work programs that are linked to the annual budget cycle; and (3) Establish the new community grant program. Mr. Painter reports to the King County Executive's office.

Area Council members expressed frustration to Mr. Painter with King County service reductions, including road maintenance, police response, and permitting due to budget cuts. Hope was expressed that King County through Mr. Painter, in his new capacity as CSA Program Manager, will be of an advocate for Rural Area citizens and their concerns.

Specific concerns raised dealt with the myriad impacts from the proposed Black Diamond Master Planned Developments. In addition, concerns were expressed about potential precedents set by the recently King County-passed Pacific Raceways expansion Ordinance to allow Industrial/Commercial large-scale development in the Rural Area through so-called "Special Demonstration Projects." Mr. Painter ensured Area Council members that he will be unincorporated area citizen's one point of contact to bring matters such as these and others to the right people at the County.

New Member

Beverly Tonda was sworn in as a new member of the Area Council. Ms. Tonda will serve in the Area Council's Francis Community Area. The Area Council has several vacancies to fill (see *** NOTE *** below).

Area Council Information

Your Area Council serves as an all-volunteer, locally elected advisory body to the King County Council representing all rural unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District. Meetings are held the first Monday of each month. A Public Comment period at the beginning of each meeting provides citizens an opportunity to voice issues of concern to Area Council members and County and State government officials in attendance.

*** NOTE *** If you live in the Tahoma School District outside the City of Maple Valley, you are eligible to become a member of the Area Council. Rural Area citizens interested in applying can mail a brief letter of interest to GMVUAC, P.O. Box 101, Maple Valley, WA 98038 or e-mail gmvac_chair@hotmail.com.

Your Area Council's next monthly meeting will be Monday, July 2, from 7:00 - 9:30 PM at the Fire Station at 231st St & SR-169.

