

March 2012

King County Budget

by Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, March 5, 2012, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council (GMVUAC) held its regular monthly meeting. Our guest speaker was Dwight Dively--Director of the King County Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget.

King County Budget

King County Budget Director Dwight Dively provided an overview of the 2012 budget and potential issues for 2013 and beyond. The annual Budget is designed to meet the regional needs of King County. This includes assessing various demands, making good use of limited resources, and looking at the region as a whole.

The 2012 Proposed Budget totals \$5.3 billion and was developed in the context of the Strategic Plan which is intended to guide all of the County's policy, management, and financial decisions. For 2012 there are significant reductions in the King County Roads Services Division due to declining property tax, gas tax, and reimbursable revenues.

The only flexible source of money is the General Fund--\$648.1 million is proposed for 2012. The General Fund, which supports the function of county government, includes the Sheriff's Office, Superior and District Courts, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, public defense, corrections, the Assessor's Office, Elections, and various administrative functions. The Sheriff's Office and Detention make up nearly half of General Fund outlays. In all Criminal Justice makes up about 80% of the General Fund.

Regional economic conditions have substantial effects on King County's revenues, notably the sales tax, which has lagged improvements in the economy. King County receives sales tax revenues in several funds, with the largest amounts for the General Fund (15%) and transit (40%).

The outlook for the 2013 budget includes likely fee increases for surface water, waste water treatment, and solid waste and further cuts in Roads Services and the Department of Development and Environmental Services.

School Siting Task Force

The Area Council voted to prepare a letter to King Country Executive Dow Constantine's School Siting Task Force voicing strong opposition to siting largely urban schools in the Rural Area. While the Area Council is empathetic to some of the School Districts' situations, many of the 18 sites under consideration, if developed with schools and maintenance facilities, will be devastating to the local rural character, rural-related infrastructure, and community plans.

The Area Council takes particular exception to the three sites proposed outside the City of Black Diamond's Urban Growth Area (UGA)--almost exclusively to serve the YarrowBay Master Planned Developments. Here is a clear case where over 1,500 acres of undeveloped land exists within the city's UGA and there is no need whatsoever to site these schools in the Rural Area.

Area Council Focal Points and Committees

The Area Council elected members as Focal Points for key areas:

Parks & Recreation — Gordon Moorman (community resident)
Public Safety — Warren Iverson
School Affairs — Warren Iverson
Social Services — Joe Cruikshank

The Area Council also elected members to chair Committees which address specific issues:

Council By-Laws — Rob Morris
Executive Committee — Steve Hiester
Elections & Surveys — Rob Morris
Flood Control Management — Warren Iverson
Growth Management — Peter Rimbos
Transportation — Susan Harvey