

August 2014

Transportation

by Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, August 4, the Area Council held its regular monthly meeting. The majority of the meeting was devoted to Transportation Issues.

Transportation Issues and Solutions The Area Council's Transportation Committee reviewed its year-long efforts, in conjunction with members of the Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council, to research key issues, related to King County roads. The Upper Bear Creek Unincorporated Area Council also supports this effort. Several Issue/Solution Papers (ISPs), prepared through this effort, were detailed:

Concurrency Adequacy: The State GMA requires transportation concurrency, to insure Level of Service (LOS) commitments are met or financial commitments for improvements are in place within a reasonable time (6 yr) to respond to transportation service impacts from approved development. There are concerns this amount of time is too long before improvements are in place to meet needs. Also, all too often, "financial commitments" are based on not-as-yet-secured Grant monies. Finally, and possibly most importantly, there appears to be no Concurrency enforcement mechanism.

Usage/Funding Imbalance: In general, a combination of revenue sources, primarily from unincorporated area residents, is used to fund/maintain King County road infrastructure. King County primarily relies on property taxes (over one-third of the revenues dedicated to County roads) and, to a lesser extent, on gas taxes (state motor vehicle fuel tax is shared among cities, counties and WSDOT). To compound the problem, Rural Area taxpayers tend to subsidize (through property taxes) Urban drivers who use King County roads and comprise the majority of vehicle miles driven on major King County roads connecting urban areas (e.g., Issaquah-Hobart Rd.). By not focussing on the actual "users," a funding/usage imbalance is created and perpetuated.

The Area Council voted to approve these two ISPs, but called for further research to be done on two other ISPs: Annexation Debt Transfer and Forecasting/Planning/Needs. Once the latter two ISPs are finalized and approved by the Area Council, all four will be released to local State Legislators, as well as County officials.

A meeting with State officials to discuss potential solutions that could necessitate changes in State law will be held on Tuesday, September 16, from 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the the King County Library Administration Building at 960 Newport Way NW in Issaquah. The Public is encouraged to attend. A formal meeting announcement will be posted on the Area Council's web site and in local newspapers.

Next Area Council Meeting

The Area Council's next monthly meeting will held Monday, September 8, from 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Fire Station at SE corner of 231st St & SR-169. Meetings are held the first non-holiday 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 government officials in attendance.

