

***Unincorporated Area Council***  
***“Working to keep the Rural Area rural”***

## **New Marijuana Ordinance**

**by Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary**

On Monday, August 1, the Area Council held its regular monthly meeting. The major topics discussed were: (1) King County Marijuana Ordinance and (2) Area Council’s 19th Annual Model Train Show.

### **King County Marijuana Ordinance**

On July 25 the King County Council passed an Ordinance re-regulating Marijuana businesses in the Unincorporated Areas and at the same time lifting its 4-mo Moratorium on such businesses.

Over the past two years the Area Council has hosted several standing-room-only meetings which provided concerned members of the Public opportunities to talk with King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review (DPER) personnel regarding specific new Marijuana business permit applications. Public concerns dealt with a myriad of issues, such as Public safety, odor, noise, lighting, pesticides, etc. However, the overwhelming concern was that such businesses could be placed in what primarily are residential areas.

As a result of feedback from the Public at these and other meetings, the Area Council submitted a detailed letter to the King County Council on June 7 (see “Marijuana Business Zoning” letter at: <http://greatermaplevalleyareacouncil.org/gmvacorrespondence.html>). The Area Council’s letter proposed four potential avenues for the King County Council to pursue with regards to permitting Marijuana growing (producing) and processing (manufacturing): (1) A ban in the Rural Area; (2) Zoning which requires parcel size to be at least 20 ac (current Code was 4 1/2 ac); or (3) Site only in the Agricultural Production District or Commercial/Industrial areas. In addition, the Area Council requested: Citizens be able to provide Public Comment on all Marijuana Permit Applications; Citizens be able to Appeal all Marijuana Permit Applications; and All Marijuana Permit applications require a Conditional-Use Permit.

Although the King County Council did not make the ban permanent, it did take into account some of the other Area Council recommendations and those from many, many members of the Public who testified. These included: (1) Only allow in the RA-10 or the RA-20 zone, on lots of at least 10 ac (except on Vashon- Maury Island)--this excludes the vast majority of the Rural Area, which is predominated by RA-5 zoning, with some RA-2.5 zoning and (2) Identify 10 locations suitable for retail in Neighborhood Business (NB) zoned areas across unincorporated King County. Because of its complexity and various exceptions, it is recommended members of the Public review the actual Ordinance (see: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation.aspx> and type in “2016-0254”).

It should be noted the Ordinance does not have any effect on those permit applications already “vested” (i.e., King County DPER already has found them to be “complete”). However, should DPER deny those applications (note: for Conditional-Use Permits said denial could be overturned on appeal) or the applicants withdraw their applications, then the Ordinance’s provisions would apply.

## **Annual Operating Model Train Show**

The Area Council's 19th Operating Model Train Show will be held on Saturday, October 15, and Sunday, October 16, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Gracie Hansen Community Center, located at 27132 SE Ravensdale Way in Ravensdale.

The show provides a wonderful opportunity for local train enthusiasts of all ages. All gauges of model trains are available for viewing. There are many different train layouts, both large and small, displayed throughout both floors of the facility. There is also a train that children can ride on.

## **Next Area Council Meeting**

**Monday, September 12 (due to labor Day Holiday on the first Monday of the month), from 7:00 - 9:00 PM, at the Fire Station located at the SE corner of SE 231st St & SR-169 intersection.** All members of the Public are welcome.

There will be **two Guest Speakers**: (1) Christine Jensen, King County Council Staff Principal Legislative Analyst who will discuss King County Council's review and changes to the King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP) Update and (2) John Taylor, Assistant Director of the Water & Land Resources Division of the King County Department of Natural Resources & Parks who will discuss surface water management fees.

Meetings are held the first non-holiday Monday of each month. A Public Comment period at the beginning of each meeting provides an opportunity to voice issues of concern to Area Council members and government officials in attendance.

Your Area Council serves as an all-volunteer, locally elected advisory body to King County on behalf of all rural unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District. Please visit: [www.greatermaplevalleyareacouncil.org](http://www.greatermaplevalleyareacouncil.org).

***\*\*\* NOTE: Three positions are open on the 16-member Area Council. If you live in the Tahoma School District outside the City of Maple Valley (see Service Area Map on our web site), you are invited to apply to become a member by sending a letter of interest to GMVUAC, P. O. Box 111, Maple Valley, WA 98038 or attend our next monthly meeting. \*\*\****