



**King County**

**Government Accountability, Oversight & Financial  
Performance Committee**

**REVISED STAFF REPORT**

<b>Agenda Items:</b>	8, 9, 10	<b>Name:</b>	Amy Tsai
<b>Proposed No.:</b>	PO 2012-0267 PO 2012-0268 PM 2012-0374	<b>Date:</b>	September 11, 2012
<b>Invited:</b>	Alan Painter, Manager, Unincorporated Community Service Area Program, DNRP		

**SUBJECT**

**Proposed Ordinance 2012-0267** – This proposed ordinance would create the boundaries for seven Unincorporated Community Service Areas that encompass all of unincorporated King County.

**Proposed Ordinance 2012-0268** – This proposed ordinance would remove all references to Unincorporated Area Councils from county code.

**Proposed Motion 2012-0374** – This proposed motion would rescind motions establishing and approving the Unincorporated Area Councils.

**SUMMARY**

In 2011, the Council in Ordinance 17139 adopted a new framework for public engagement in unincorporated areas that replaced the previous model of using officially recognized Unincorporated Area Councils. It called for the establishment of unincorporated community service areas, identification of a government staff contact for each area, creation of annual work programs, and regular public outreach for each service area.

This staff report covers three pieces of legislation that effectuate the framework called for in Ordinance 17139. First, Proposed Ordinance 2012-0267 identifies the boundaries of seven Unincorporated Community Service Areas (CSAs). Second, Proposed Ordinance 2012-0268 removes references to Unincorporated Area Councils from county code. Finally, Proposed Motion 2012-0374 rescinds the motions that established and approved the Unincorporated Area Councils as well as the motion that created the original governance strategies committees.

## **UPDATE:**

On September 11, 2012, the committee passed Proposed Ordinance 2012-0267 and Proposed Motion 2012-0374 with a Do Pass recommendation for the Council.

The committee passed an amendment to Proposed Ordinance 2012-0268 that asks Solid Waste Division to provide community groups with copies of the preliminary draft Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan and requires posting to the web, removes code references to undefined community groups, and removes a UAC reference in KCC 21A.20.190 regarding community signs that was inadvertently omitted.

The substitute Proposed Ordinance 2012-0268 received a Do Pass recommendation for the Council.

## **BACKGROUND**

Approximately 250,200 of King County's 1,957,000 residents live in unincorporated King County, or slightly under 13 percent. The unincorporated area population is about half urban and half rural.

The unincorporated area councils (UACs) were initially created through a 1994 Executive Order that established a Citizen Participation Initiative, which was intended to improve access to information and county services and improve opportunities for participation by unincorporated area residents. The UACs were created to provide a venue for ongoing communication between unincorporated area residents and the county. In 1995, the Council adopted Motion 9643 establishing additional policy direction related to implementation of the Citizen Participation Initiative. The motion called for UACs to be formally recognized through legislation adopted by the Council and set forth other guidelines for Council interaction with UACs.

A report responding to a 2011 Council budget proviso related to Unincorporated Area Councils noted that UACs provide many benefits such as providing a local forum for residents, encouraging community action, leveraging volunteer hours, facilitating relationships between residents and King County government, and having a single point of contact. However, the report noted weaknesses with UACs as well, including that only about a third of unincorporated residents in King County are represented by UACs, UACs have varying levels of participation and representation, the model engages primarily the Executive branch, administrative requirements such as adhering to the Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act are burdensome, and technical support can consume intensive county staff resources.

In 2011, the Council in Ordinance 17139 adopted a new framework to guide county branches, departments, agencies and offices in their interactions with unincorporated area residents. Specifically, the ordinance called for the county to:

- Establish unincorporated community service areas that together cover all of unincorporated King County;
- Identify a single government staff contact for residents in each community service area;
- Host public meetings in each community service area at least annually;
- Annually develop, in collaboration with each community, an interbranch work program for each community service area for transmittal to the council;
- Create interbranch teams to better coordinate public outreach and service delivery across King County government;
- Within each service area, identify and engage with community based organizations such as UACs, community councils, community development associations and other groups;
- Provide regular opportunities for community based organizations and residents to meet with King County elected officials and senior management;
- Develop mechanisms to involve cities in public engagement and work programs for unincorporated community service areas that are within cities' potential annexation areas;
- Identify a county department to co-lead the effort with the Executive; and
- Create a website.

Ordinance 17139 directed the Executive to transmit a status report and any necessary legislation with the 2012 proposed budget.<sup>1</sup> The legislation which is the subject of this staff report was transmitted in July of 2012. Working CSA boundaries were identified with community participation. A community service areas manager and three other staff serve as points of contact to the CSAs. They are in the process of working with departments to identify work programs that capture service activities occurring in each of the CSAs. The program also has a functioning web site, and is currently soliciting applications for \$60,000 in grant money to be awarded to fund community projects that offer unincorporated area residents in the Community Service Areas an opportunity to participate and be more connected in their communities.

The introduced pieces of legislation that are the subject of this staff report would formalize the new public engagement framework that the Executive is currently implementing in accordance with Ordinance 17139. These pieces of legislation officially

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<sup>1</sup> Ordinance 17139 also directed the Executive to incorporate the above framework into the implementation plan developed by the public engagement goal team for the countywide strategic plan with input from unincorporated area council members, including identifying potential funding sources and recommending strategies to the community service areas for pursuing funds. A UAC member was brought onto the public engagement goal team as a result of Ordinance 17139. There are some aspects of the new community service area framework that are specific to the CSAs and are not applicable to the county's internal strategic plan work product (e.g., creation of a web site for CSAs, CSA work programs, and providing funding strategies to CSAs). Therefore, some aspects of the CSA public engagement framework will not be incorporated into the public engagement goal team's implementation plan.

establish the CSA boundaries, remove all references to the UACs in county code, and rescind the motions that approved the original UACs.

## **ANALYSIS**

### *Proposed Ordinance 2012-0267*

Proposed Ordinance 2012-0267 would create the boundaries for seven Unincorporated Community Service Areas. Ordinance 17139 requires that these areas take into account demographics, natural features, existing political, administrative and community boundaries, and have logical boundaries that cover all of unincorporated King County.

As noted in the proposed ordinance, staff worked with the communities to identify boundaries which met those criteria. The boundaries are established by the map attached to Proposed Ordinance 2012-0267.

The CSAs established by the map are described by the CSA program as follows:

**Bear Creek/Sammamish Area** – This unincorporated rural area east of Woodinville, Redmond and Sammamish, includes the Redmond Ridge Urban Planned Development and the Sammamish Valley Agriculture Production District (APD). This forested area is characterized by several lakes, including Cottage Lake; the Sammamish River Valley which contains both the APD and the Sammamish River Trail, along with hills to the south and east.

**Snoqualmie Valley/Northeast King County Area** – This unincorporated rural area surrounds the rural cities of Duvall, Carnation, Snoqualmie, North Bend and Skykomish, along with the rural towns of Fall City and Snoqualmie Pass. The eastern portion of this CSA is the Snoqualmie Valley which contains the Snoqualmie Valley Agriculture Production District and several rural cities and towns. The majority of the land area in this CSA is made up of the forested Cascade Range which contains portions of the Mount Baker – Snoqualmie National Forest, and the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area.

**Four Creeks/Tiger Mountain Area** – This unincorporated rural area lies east of the cities Renton and Newcastle and east and south of Issaquah and contains the May Valley Basin and the foothills of the Cascade Range, including Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, Squak Mountain State Park and Tiger Mountain State Forest.

**Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River Area** – This unincorporated rural area lies east of the cities of Renton and Kent and north of Covington, Maple Valley and Black Diamond and extends east to the border with Kittitas County. The western portion of this CSA has low rolling hills with several lakes, while the eastern portion moves into the Cascade Range, including portions of the Forest Production District and part of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

**Southeast King County Area** – This unincorporated rural area lies south of Maple Valley, Covington and Black Diamond, east of Auburn, surrounds the City of Enumclaw. The northeastern portion of this CSA contains the lower and middle Green River basins, and includes the Middle Green River Valley Agriculture Production Districts along with Hanging Gardens State Park, Kanaskat-Palmer State Park, Nolte State Park and Flaming Geyser State Park. To the south and slightly east of the river basins is the Enumclaw Plateau. The land further to the east is forested and contains a portion of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

**West King County Area** – This Community Service Area includes urban unincorporated areas of King County including East Federal Way, North Highline, West Hill, Klahanie, Fairwood and East Renton. These communities represent potential annexation areas to neighboring cities.

**Vashon/Maury Island Area** – This unincorporated rural area encompasses the entirety of Vashon-Maury Island. Accessible only by ferry or boat, the island is home to a rich mix of parks, beaches and local craft and agricultural production.

The communities were largely supportive of the proposed CSA boundaries.

*Proposed Ordinance 2012-0268*

Proposed Ordinance 2012-0268 would remove all references to Unincorporated Area Councils from county code, but preserves the code's encouragement of public engagement. The proposed changes place UACs on the same footing as other community organizations. In places where mention of UACs is deleted without adding a new replacement body for notification, the code provides other mechanisms for public notice and engagement.

*Proposed Motion 2012-0374*

Proposed Motion 2012-0374 would rescind motions establishing and approving the Unincorporated Area Councils, and also rescind one motion that created governance strategies committees. This is a technical motion to make it clear that UACs do not have an official county status. This motion has two benefits. First, it helps clarify the status of the UACs in light of the new CSAs. Second, it makes it clear that UACs are not government entities subject to the Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act.

**REASONABLENESS**

The proposed ordinances and motion, including the proposed amendment to PO 2012-0268, officially implement the requirements of Ordinance 17139 and therefore appear to be a reasonable and prudent business and policy decision.