



Regional and Local Priorities

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, June 3, the Area Council held its monthly meeting and discussed: (1) Key work conducted by its four major committees: Economic Development, Environment, Growth Management, and Transportation; (2) King County's proposed Adult Beverage Ordinance; (3) the ongoing Citizens' Survey (see: www.gmvuac.org/citizen-surveys to participate); and (4) Safety issues with the Landsburg Rd / Kent-Kangley Rd intersection in Ravensdale.

Major Committees

Although the full Area Council meets monthly, it conducts all its work through its various committees. Area Council members, as well as members of the Public, serve on these committees.

Four major committees: Economic Development (<http://gmvuac.org/economic/>), Environment (<http://gmvuac.org/environment/>), Growth Management (<http://gmvuac.org/growth-mgmt/>), and Transportation (<http://gmvuac.org/transportation/>) conduct research on and discuss key Rural Area topics such as permitting, ordinances, environmental studies, and technical reports. Many times these committees will draft comments for full Area Council review, prior to official submittal to various government agencies.

In addition, the Transportation Committee jointly leads a regional effort with other Rural Area Unincorporated Area Councils and Associations (UACs and UAAs) called the Joint Transportation Initiative (JTI). Periodically, the four committees all work together to address major regional and county planning exercises, such as the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC's) VISION planning and the King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP).

The Area Council readjusted membership on several of its committees to better utilize member talents and experience. The results of those changes can be reviewed at: <http://gmvuac.org/officers-focals-committees/>.

Adult Beverage Ordinance

The King County Council is currently proposing to adopt an Adult Beverage Ordinance that would affect all wineries, breweries, distilleries, and cideries in the unincorporated area.

The Area Council has followed this topic for several years. In June 2017 it submitted to the Executive a set of detailed comments on the *King County Sammamish Valley Wine & Beverage Study*. This primarily discussed the Area Council's major concerns over proposed Demonstration Projects, which it categorically opposes. In November 2018 the Area Council, along with the Hollywood Hill Association (HHA) and the Upper Bear Creek Unincorporated Area Council (UBCUAC), submitted to the advising King County Council committee a set of detailed comments on the proposed Ordinance, which supported the Friends of Sammamish Valley's (FOSV's) proposed Amendment, which dealt with several key issues: Need for better Definitions; Use of Demonstration Projects; Overlays; Penalties; and Land-Use Tables.

Early last month the Area Council created a Task Force to review the proposed Ordinance and to draft a set of comments for a June 12 Public Hearing before the King County Council. The Task Force has been working with several other Rural Area Unincorporated Area Councils (UACs) and Unincorporated Area Associations (UAAs)—north and south—to develop a Written Testimony.

The Task Force concluded the proposed Ordinance will not protect the Rural Area and Agricultural Production District (APD) lands from retail and industrial uses—its original intent. In turn, this will result in increased traffic on insufficient, poorly maintained roads; creation of virtual parking lots on rural and agricultural lands; pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist safety issues; damaging water runoff; and unwarranted lighting and noise pollution.

In fact, the Task Force concluded the proposed Ordinance is worse than *existing* King County Code. While it claims it will add “*additional protection for the Agricultural zone*” and it will enhance “*economic activity in the Rural Area zones while honoring and protecting rural character*,” the Task Force found these assertions not to be the case. For these and many other reasons the Task Force recommended the proposed Ordinance be rejected and the King County Council should send it to the King County Executive to rework it.

The Task Force presented its draft Written Testimony to the full Area Council for discussion, modification, and vote. Following Area Council review and changes, a final Written Testimony was approved and will be submitted to the King County Council prior to its planned June 12 Public Hearing. Several Rural Area UACs and UAAs—north and south—have agreed to sign on to the Written Testimony. Please see: <http://gmvuac.org/adult-beverage-ordinance/>

Citizens’ Survey

Available online now at: www.gmvuac.org/citizen-surveys is the Area Council Biennial Citizens’ Survey. If you live in unincorporated King County (i.e., outside of any City limits) *within* the Tahoma School District you are invited to participate.

The survey addresses issues that affect everyone including zoning, development, traffic, environment, economics, water, and sewage. The Area Council welcomes your valuable input which directly helps to inform on issues of importance. Confidentiality is strictly maintained and only *overall* responses will be collectively summarized for review and analysis.

Also, as part of the Survey, you also may express an interest in becoming either an Area Council member or, if you only have interests in specific issues, a member on any Area Council Committee.

WA DOE Grant

The Area Council recently applied for a Public Participation Grant through the State Department of Ecology (DOE). Its purpose is to retain professional services and conduct public outreach to provide a better understanding and more meaningful input to the DOE in its Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) Cleanup Projects for the Reserve Silica and Landsburg Mine Sites in Ravensdale, including any Agreed Orders and Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) Reports. Immediate assistance includes review of the Reserve Silica work plan before it is finalized. The Grant, to be managed by the Area Council’s Environment Committee, will run through December 2024 is up to \$35,000.

Ravensdale Intersection

On May 10 the Area Council’s Transportation Committee, along with concerned members for the Ravensdale community, met with King County Roads Division people to discuss its plans for the relatively high-accident-occurrence Landsburg Rd / Kent-Kangley Rd intersection.

It was agreed a letter be sent to the King County Roads Division with the following recommendations: (1) Address immediate safety issues; (2) Initiate a regional traffic study; (3) Use a holistic approach to local transportation planning; and (4) Conduct periodic meetings to update the community. The letter will be posted at: (<http://gmvuac.org/transportation/>).

Upcoming Meetings

Annual King County Community Service Area Meeting: Tuesday, June 18, 7 - 9:30 PM, at the Hobart Church, located at the 27524 SE 200th St. King County officials including Division Directors will be on hand to discuss local issues of importance followed by a question/answer period. All members of the Public are welcome to attend, participate, and talk with a variety of King County officials.

Area Council Monthly Meeting: Monday, July 1, 7 - 9:30 PM, at the Maple Valley Fire Station located at the SE corner of SE 231st St & SR-169 intersection across from the Police Precinct. All members of the Public are welcome. Each meeting begins with an open Public Comment period.

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 see the Area Council's web site: www.gmvuac.org.

The Area Council has three open positions. If you have an interest in joining, please indicate same through our Citizens' Survey or attend one of our meetings and express such interest for consideration by the Area Council.