



State Representative Bill Ramos

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, July 6, the Area Council held its fourth “*virtual*” monthly meeting during the Coronavirus pandemic. Special Guest Speaker was District 5 State Representative Bill Ramos. Other topics discussed were: King County Clean Water Plan and the King County Comprehensive Plan 4-Year Mid-Point Update.

Tahoma School District (TSD)

TSD Board member, Val Paganelli, provided update. A number of Task Forces are working on how re-opening in the fall could be structured. To accommodate social distancing, there will be a type of hybrid schedule with alternating classes. etc. TSD is trying to meet State guidelines on how to do this. Also looking at the upcoming Budget, but fiscal position looks good for now, but there are many unknowns.

State Representative Ramos

District 5 State Representative Bill Ramos was welcomed to the meeting. He had received a set of Area Council questions ahead of time.

Q. What were the major actions from the last session? \$250M from Rainy Day Fund to be used to start addressing issues from the Virus, but it obviously is not enough. Major budget impacts over the two-year cycle. Looking to see what further support could come from the Federal Government.

Q. Climate Change? Carbon sequestration using our forests, working with foresters, timber companies, etc.

Q. Landfill and Composting? Trying to educate everyone that all of the County’s garbage is sent to the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill. He wants to close the Landfill and find alternatives. He blocked Cedar Grove Compost from being exempted from nuisance lawsuits. Senator Mullet and Representative Calan both supported these efforts.

Q. Gas Tax Allocation? Nothing is specific currently being contemplated. Allocation is based on population. Since King County has a relatively small percentage (~11%) of residents who live in unincorporated areas as compared to most counties in the State, its allocation is small even though it has many, many miles of roads to maintain with many used by urban-based commuters. He is trying to encourage the cities and County to discuss how best to maintain their transportation infrastructure.

Q. SR-18 / I-90 Interchange? Expect construction to start next Spring. Completion would be in about 2 - 4 years. Design has started to expand the SR-18 segment over Tiger Mountain to 4 lanes. Completion could be in about 6 years.

Q. SR-169 Improvements? Expanding to four lanes between Maple Valley and Jones Rd will be very tough to get through the Legislature, but improvements can be proposed, such as facilitating better intersection design along the way, e.g., roundabout at Cedar Grove Rd.

Additional questions were asked:

Q. City-to-City Travel on County Roads through the Rural Area? People can drive wherever they want, so he intends to concentrate on County road maintenance.

- Q. State Funding for School Districts? State funding should stay consistent as in recent years.
- Q. Waste-to-Energy Plant in the Cedar River Valley? There are no specific alternatives yet to replace the Landfill.
- Q. Tolling County Roads to Help Solve Road Funding Shortfall Issues? That could start a race to the bottom where cities and counties start levying tolls on their own roads.
- Q. Cedar River Canyon Issues? No easy answers, but he continues to protect our rural environment.
- Q. SB-6306 Clean Soils Act Including “Loop”? Will get back to the Area Council on this.

Representative Ramos serves on the Natural Resources and Rural Development Committee. He urged the Area Council to prepare a set of priorities for the next Legislative Session and send it to him by the end of the year.

King County Clean Water Plan

The King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP), Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) has issued a Determination of Significance (DS) under the State’s State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). It is inviting Public comment on the scope of a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared on King County’s *Clean Water Plan*.

WTD is preparing the *Clean Water Plan* to guide its water quality investments through the year 2060. The *Clean Water Plan* will amend King County’s *Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP)* which has been guiding the operation and development of WTD’s wastewater infrastructure and related activities since adoption in 1999.

The Area Council’s Environment Committee presented a set of draft comments on the Scoping. Following discussion the Area Council approved moving forward with preparing a set of final comments to be submitted to King County before the July 19 deadline.

More information can be found at: <https://publicinput.com/CleanWaterPlan>.

King County Comprehensive Plan Update

The 2020 Mid-Point Update (4-yr mid-point between 8-yr Major Updates)—drafts of which all King County Rural Area Unincorporated Area Councils (UACs) and Unincorporated Area Associations (UAAs) reviewed and submitted detailed comments on last year—is in the final stages of approval by the King County Council.

The King County Council has proposed multiple “*Striker*” Amendments to the King County Executive’s Recommend Update that include changes to the following items of interest to the Rural Area: 4:1 Program; Transfer of Development Rights; Non-Resource Industrial Uses; Agricultural Production Districts; Accessory Dwelling Units; Mineral Resources; Pathways/Sidewalks; and Transportation. Striker 3 was released by the King County Council on July 2. A Revision to the SEPA Addendum will be released on July 6. All documents can be found at: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/CompPlan/2020compplan/amendments.aspx>.

The Area Council has been leading an effort with other King County Rural Area UACs and UAAs to review, prepare, and submit comments on any of the above items deemed necessary. Submittals were made on June 3, June 8, and June 26, as the King County Council continued to release Amendments to the Update.

The Area Council voted to approve moving forward with a fourth joint set of comments to be submitted to the King County Council by July 13. Current deadline for King County Council approval is on July 21.

Upcoming Area Council Meetings

The next Area Council regular monthly meeting will be held on Monday, August 3, which is expected to be another “*virtual*” meeting.

All regular monthly meetings are held on the first Monday of the month, from 7 - 9:30 PM. When State restrictions are lifted, the Area Council will again meet face-to-face with members of the Public

invited to attend and continue to invite Guest Speakers on topics of key local and regional interest. Meetings will be held at the Maple Valley Fire Station (SE corner of SE 231st St & SR-169 intersection directly across from the Police Precinct). All are welcome with each meeting beginning with an open Public Comment period.

Area Council Membership

Your Area Council serves as an all-volunteer, locally recognized advisory body to King County on behalf of all rural unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District. The Area Council's *Vision Statement* is:

“Our community’s Rural Character will be supported by facilitating strong local ties and communication between the public, organizations, and government; promoting locally owned businesses and supporting quality education; protecting the environment, and maintaining landowners’ rights and responsibilities; promoting controlled and well-planned growth with appropriate infrastructure; ensuring proper representation for rural interests and needs; and supporting the health and safety and the privacy of our vibrant community.”

The twelve-seat Area Council currently has open seats. If you have an interest in joining please send an e-mail to: info@gmvuac.org or attend a monthly meeting and express your interest.

Citizens who are not members of the Area Council or do not live within the Tahoma School District still are eligible to join and serve on any of the Area Council’s three major subject-matter Committees: Environment, Growth Management, or Transportation, as well as the Ad Hoc Economic Committee. The Area Council welcomes your participation. For information on each of these committees please see the Area Council’s web site: www.gmvuac.org and use the drop-down menu under *Committees*. Thank you.