



TSD Superintendent; CHRLF Draft EIS Comments

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

The Area Council held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, November 2. Our Guest Speaker was Mike Hanson, Tahoma School District Superintendent. Also discussed was the Area Council's Comments on the *Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Draft EIS*.

Tahoma School District Superintendent

TSD Superintendent Mike Hanson discussed how the district is handling the pandemic and continuing to provide educational opportunities for K-12 students. Also in attendance was TSD High School Junior, Olivia Tamer, to provide a student's perspective and to better understand what the Area Council does in the community. As always, TSD Board member and Area Council TSD focal, Val Paganelli, was in attendance and also provided answers to questions.

Mike is a "home town boy" who attended TSD schools. He taught in Port Angeles and Kirkland. He moved back to Maple Valley and lives near the Cedar River in the Lake Francis area of unincorporated King County—an area covered by the Area Council. He taught Science at the TSD High School. He was instrumental in developing the "Outdoor Academy" curriculum, which integrates Physical Education with Science & Literature in the great outdoors. All his children attended TSD schools. He also served as a Science Coordinator for TSD.

Mike then sought, studied, and received his Administrative credentials. He served as Principal at Glacier Park Elementary School. He worked with former TSD Superintendent Mike Marianski. He started as TSD Superintendent earlier this year—great timing, as the pandemic shut down schools on March 13. Almost immediately, by the 3rd week of March, TSD started providing support for students. TSD provided ~1,200 laptops by the end of March—now up to 5,000 have been provided. TSD provided Staff needed training to support the students.

The State provided a "Decision Tree" regarding the pandemic and its impact with a more localized approach by County. It defines high, moderate, and low rates of cases. Recently, cases have been going up, so TSD is not able to have students come back. TSD nimbly is adjusting as guidelines are updated.

TSD also is addressing student mental health and wellness concerns related to coping with the Pandemic and its effects.

There are ~1,500-2,000 Zoom meetings held per day between teachers and students. TSD also has provided over 400 hot spots for families who have poor or no internet access.

There are impacts to the TSD Budget as there has been a reduction of 473 students (e.g., home schoolers, online schools, private schools, etc.), which amounts to ~\$5.5M shortfall.

The discussion was then opened to Questions:

Urbanization: As the district became more urban, from the 90's to the 00's, more commercially available curricula have been used. Also, TSD now has more diversity.

Homeschoolers: There are a set of procedures to follow so progress can be monitored.

Opening up: Will be decided by both the TSD Board with guidance from the King County Public Health authorities. It is hoped that younger students in the early grades may be able to come back sooner based on recent data.

Impacts on Scholarships: Working fairly well for academic scholarships; much harder for athletic scholarships and continues to be worked.

Impacts on Teachers: Large stress levels on teachers, as this is a massive change in teaching, plus the fear of exposure. Teachers have adapted very well (as have the students).

McCleary Decision: State Supreme Court ruled the State is required to fully fund basic education. The State Legislature, in response to the ruling, provided a specific amount of funding to be spread out equally throughout the state. Due to this “*equalization*,” some district’s taxes went up, some went down. It also limited local levy rates.

Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Site Development Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement

On September 16 the Department of Natural Resources & Parks (DNRP) Solid Waste Division (SWD) released its draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF) Site Development Plan (see: https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/solid-waste/facilities/landfills/cedar-hills-development.aspx#project_documents).

Alternatives are being considered to increase the length of time the landfill would accept garbage beyond 2028, which is when the landfill currently is estimated to reach capacity: Three Action Alternatives, that would *extend* the life of the landfill to approximately 2037, 2038, or 2046, as well as a No Action Alternative (2028).

The draft EIS identified potential significant impacts; describes mitigation measures to avoid such impacts or reduce them below significant levels; and summarizes any significant unavoidable adverse impacts of the proposed alternatives mentioned above.

The Area Council’s Environment Committee took the lead on developing a comprehensive set of detailed Comments with help from members of the Growth Management and Transportation Committees. The Comments concentrated on what flaws or omissions were present in the draft EIS that must be rectified *before* the Final DEIS is released sometime next year.

The following draft EIS “*Environmental Elements*” were the focus of the Area Council’s Comments: Air and Odor; Surface Water; Ground Water; Plants and Animals; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Human Health; Noise and Vibration; Land and Shoreline Use; and Transportation.

On October 30 The Area Council’s Comments were submitted to the King County SWD. The Comments exposed the draft EIS to be significantly deficient; containing misstatements, misrepresentations and pertinent oversights. In order to build an authentic foundation upon which such enormous decisions regarding the future of the CHRLF are to be made, *herculean* steps need to be taken to move this EIS from “*Draft*” to “*Final*.”

To view or download the Comments, please see the Area Council website’s “*Current Issues*” box on the Home page: www.gmvuac.org or the *Correspondence/Letters* page under the 2020 block: <http://gmvuac.org/letters/>.

Upcoming Area Council Meetings

The next Area Council regular monthly meeting will be held on Monday, December 7, which will be another “*virtual*” meeting. Guests: King County Department of Local Services.

All regular monthly meetings are held on the first Monday of the month, from 7 - 9:30 PM. Meeting announcements are published in the *Voice of the Valley*, the Area Council’s website (www.gmvuac.org) and local NextDoor platforms. You can also find us on Facebook. All are welcome with each meeting beginning with an open Public Comment period. *[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.]

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 three 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, Public Relations Committee, and Train Show 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.