



Conserve Our Futures

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, September 12, the Area Council held its regular monthly meeting at the King County Sheriff's Precinct #3 at 22300 SE 231st St in Maple Valley and online via Zoom. The Area Council now holds *hybrid meetings* that provide the opportunity for members of the Public to attend either in-person or virtually.

Topics discussed were: King County Conservation Futures Levy; 2024 King County Comprehensive Plan Major Update; and Public Relations/Recruiting new Members and Associate Members.

King County Conservation Futures Levy

Terry Lavender, a long-time community volunteer in NE King County, discussed the upcoming November Conservation Futures Levy—Proposition 1 ([Complete text of measure](#)). Proposition 1 would *restore* King County's conservation futures property tax levy authorized to a rate of \$0.0625 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation for collection in 2023. It is a single year levy lift. Without Proposition 1 the *existing* level rate is \$0.0284 for 2023 (due to I-747's 1% cap). So, the *increase* for 2023 would be \$17.05 (\$1.42 per month) for a \$500,000 assessed home/property.

King County has collected this tax since 1982 and has purchased farmland development rights, protected over 100,000 acres, and much more. Proposition 1 would pay, finance, and refinance costs of the acquisition and preservation of urban green spaces, natural areas, wildlife and salmon habitat, trails, river corridors, farmlands and forests.

Ms. Lavender stated that Proposition 1 would *restore* King County's full potential to protect the last, best open spaces. She summarized what it would do: Confront climate change by protecting mature forests; Add equitable access to greenspace in underserved areas; Preserve habitat for native salmon which provides more food for native orcas; Protect more homes, farms, and roads from flooding; Provide land for more recreational opportunity; and Strengthen our vibrant local food economy by protecting farmland from development.

After Ms. Lavender responded to many questions from Area Council members, she asked for the an endorsement of Proposition 1. The Area Council voted to provide its full endorsement to King County Proposition 1.

2024 KCCP Update

As part of King County's major update to the *King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP)*, the Area again is leading a Joint Team of ten Rural Area Unincorporated Area Councils (UACs) / Unincorporated Area Associations (UAAs) / Organizations to thoroughly participate on every aspect of the 2024 Major Update, including overall SCOPING, which was approved by the King County Council in June.

For the latter half of 2022 and the first quarter of 2023 King County Executive staff will be developing the Public Review Draft (PRD) to be released next summer. The Joint Team is conducting research and preparing proposed changes to both King County Code and KCCP Policies in key areas that it will request be considered as the PRD is prepared and finalized.

On September 3 the Joint Team of ten Rural Area Unincorporated Area Councils / Unincorporated Area Associations / Organizations formally submitted to KCCP Manager, Chris Jensen, its first set of proposed changes that deal with the *Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands*. These changes address: Rural Densities and Development, specifically, Nonresidential Uses; Rural Public Facilities & Services; and Rural Commercial Centers, specifically, Non-Resource Industrial Uses and Development Standards.

The Joint Team is working in several other areas and soon will propose and submit for consideration additional changes to King County Code and/or KCCP Policies.

As the multiyear process proceeds and culminates at the end of 2024, more information of can be found at the Area Council's 2024 KCCP Update webpage: <http://gmvuac.org/kccp-major-update/> and King County's 2024 KCCP Update webpage: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/executive/performance-strategy-budget/regional-planning/king-county-comprehensive-plan.aspx>.

Public Relations

The Area Council's Public Relations Committee discussed displayed two new large framed placards it created to be used at major events. Each provides information on the Area Council's Mission, what it does, and key Rural Area issues it addresses.

The Area Council had a booth at Black Diamond Days on the Labor Day weekend, September 4 and 5. This was a way for members of the public to be introduced to what the Area Council does and how it supports/represents the over 18,000 unincorporated area residents of the Tahoma School District.

Preparations for the very popular Area Council's Annual Train Show were discussed. The 2022 Train Show will be held the weekend of October 15 and 16 at the Gracie Hansen Mansion in Ravensdale. Please see <http://gmvuac.org/train-show/> for more information.

Next Area Council Meeting

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, October 3 from 7 - 9:30 PM at the King County Sheriff's Precinct #3 at 22300 SE 231st St in Maple Valley. As a *hybrid meeting*, people will be able to attend either in-person or virtually via Zoom. **Our Guest Speaker will be King County Assessor, John Wilson.**

All regular monthly meetings are held on the *first* Monday of the month (except for Holidays, when they are held on the *second* Monday), from 7 - 9:30 PM.

Meeting announcements, Agendas, and Zoom information 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 our FaceBook page: <https://www.facebook.com/GMVUAC/>. Each meeting begins with an open Public Comment period where anyone can voice concerns, comments, etc. to the Area Council.

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 has four open seats. If you have an interest in joining, please send an e-mail to: info@gmvuac.org or attend (either in-person or virtually) a monthly meeting and express your interest. To be eligible to join the Area Council as a member you need to live *within* the Tahoma School District.

Anyone—even those who do not live *within* the Tahoma School District—are eligible to become *Associate Members* who can serve on any Area Council Committee: Environment, Growth Management, Transportation, Public Relations, or Train Show. Each committee votes for its own Chair and Vice-Chair and Area Council *Associate Members* are eligible for those positions.

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*. Again, if you have an interest in joining any Area Council committees, please send an e-mail to: info@gmvuac.org. Thank you.