



## King County Tax Assessor

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, October 3, 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. **Guest Speaker was John Wilson, King County Tax Assessor.** Other topics discussed were:

- King County Flood Management Plan Update
- Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Community Meeting
- Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission Airport Study
- Puget Sound Regional Council Board Membership
- Area Council's Annual Train Show

### King County Tax Assessments

King County Tax Assessor, John Wilson, provided an overview of the assessment process and assessments for 2023. Mr. Wilson stated some statistics: Each year ~720,000 properties are assessed. Every 6 years properties are physically inspected. There are ~600 levy codes from a ~155 taxing districts. In the Maple Valley area valuations went up ~18.6% between 2021 and 2022.

Mr. Wilson explained that taxing districts are limited to a 1% annual increase in *property tax revenue* regardless of changes in property values. That limit applies to the maximum increase in tax revenue that can be levied by King County, but does not apply to individual homes, which tend to increase in assessed valuations at varying rates depending on location and other factors relative to other properties in a district. The greatest impact one sees on his or her property tax bill is from voter-approved property tax measures with the bulk of property taxes going to schools (~57%).

The total amount of property taxes one pays depends on the cost of state and local government, including schools, roads, parks, libraries, hospitals, city and county government, as well as your local taxing districts such as port district, fire districts and sewer districts.

County tax collections can exceed the 1% limit due to revenues generated by new construction, property improvements, state-assessed utility value increases, and other facilities added to the tax rolls each year.

To find out about the Senior Exemption, members of the Public can call 206-296-3920 for help with the process or visit: [senior-exemption.kingcounty.gov](https://senior-exemption.kingcounty.gov). The income thresholds are adjusted every 5 years, not every year, so current inflation levels are not taken into account. Mr. Wilson lamented that and said he has been working to get that changed to every 3 years.

For more information, please see: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/assessor.aspx>.

### King County Flood Management Plan

Over the next two years King County will update its Flood Management Plan, which serves as the guide for managing flood risks along our rivers, creeks, and coastlines. To conduct the Update King

County is seeking to learn about the interests and goals of communities most vulnerable to flooding. For example, How does reducing flood risks impact rivers that support wildlife and farming? How to ensure safe roads and reliable infrastructure? How to address the likelihood of bigger floods with the resources available? The Update will shape King County programs, policies, and infrastructure for years to come.

The Update will set floodplain management policy for unincorporated King County and could inform flood management actions by cities, the King County Flood Control District, and other floodplain partners. King County last updated the flood plan in 2013. Since then, nearly 10 seasons of flooding have changed how our rivers look and function. Population has grown and more homes and businesses have been added to the landscape.

To create a flood-resilient future, the plan will strive to represent the diverse perspectives of our communities. Due to unjust historical practices, some communities are more at risk of flooding. Some people are less able to prepare or recover from flood disasters. Understanding what all communities need and their proposed solutions is King County's priority.

King County will work directly with communities on the Update through community partnerships, advisory groups, and online surveys. King County will also hold open houses, and virtual meetings. King County staff will be available to join community-hosted meetings and share information. For more information, contact Jason Wilkinson, Project Manager, at 206-477-4786 or [Jason.wilkinson@kingcounty.gov](mailto:Jason.wilkinson@kingcounty.gov) or visit [kingcounty.gov/FloodPlan](http://kingcounty.gov/FloodPlan).

The Area Council participated in the 2013 Update and will do so again during this cycle.

### **Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Community Meeting**

On September 28 King County held a Community Meeting on the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF). Area Council Members and Associate Members attended.

Issues discussed included: Collection of Landfill Gas; Odors; Property Acquisitions; Liners; Aquifer Impingement; Leachate Lagoon Covers; Groundwater Wells; Methane Flaring; PFAs; Buffer restoration; and Future Site Development.

The online meeting held via Zoom was not conducive to public participation and, thus, not as productive as an in-person meeting. Questions could only be submitted in writing. It was unclear if all the questions were answered. There was an audio "comment" period at the end where you could actually say something—no questions, only comments allowed, which was not very useful. There was no idea how many people attended. Everyone's questions could not be seen.

A transcript of the meeting, with questions and answers, will be posted on the website sometime soon at: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/dnpr/solid-waste/facilities/landfills/cedar-hills-meetings.aspx>.

### **Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission Airport Study**

Under the auspices of the WA Department of Transportation (WSDOT) the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission (CACC) has been leading a study to site major international airport in the Puget Sound region to supplement Sea-Tac International Airport. One of the greenfield sites under consideration is on the Enumclaw plateau. The King County Council, five SE King County cities, and many local community groups oppose this site and have stated same in writing to CACC.

On September 23 the [CACC | WSDOT](#) held a virtual meeting, where it voted to narrow down the options to 2-runway configurations at 3 greenfield sites: Pierce County East, Pierce County Central and Thurston County Central, as well as expansion to add capacity at Paine Field. CACC appears to be on track to narrow down its recommendations to 2 sites by October 15 and later to present same to the WA State Legislature.

Meeting details can be found here: [Agenda \(PDF 130KB\)](#) and [Watch the recording of the meeting](#). The WA Aviation System Plan (WASP) *Final Report* will be presented to the State Legislature for de-

liberations. Unfortunately, at the CACC virtual meeting, it appeared the SE King County site on the Enumclaw plateau still is highly favored due to proximity to the region's population.

The Area Council (and other organizations in SE King County) will continue to monitor this issue.

### **Puget Sound Regional Council (PRSC) Board Membership**

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PRSC), which covers the four-county region (King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap), includes several Boards, which include representatives of PSRC's member jurisdictions, regional business, labor, civic and environmental groups. Boards typically meet monthly to advise the PSRC Executive Board on key issues.

PSRC is soliciting non-voting positions on two of its Boards:

- Growth Management Policy Board—Primary focus is on guiding implementation of *VISION 2050*, the regional growth management strategy. Meetings are on the first Thursday of the month from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.
- Transportation Policy Board—Advises PSRC's Executive Board on coordination of long-range regional transportation planning and makes recommendations on priorities for federal funding available through PSRC. It also advises the Executive Board on implementation of the region's plan through the *Regional Transportation Improvement Program*. Meetings are on the second Thursday of each month from 9:30 to 11:30 AM.

All Board meetings are hybrid.

Interested groups must apply by 5 PM on Friday, November 18. Area Council members discussed whether or not to apply for such positions. A decision will be made at its November Monthly Meeting.

### **Area Council's 24th Annual Train Show**

The Area Council again will be holding its popular Train Show at the Gracie Hansen Mansion in Ravensdale on Saturday, October 15, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Sunday, October 16, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Suggested Donation (sorry, no credit cards) is: Adults—\$5.00 and Children (ages 3-11)—\$2.00.

There will be operating model trains, trains and more trains featuring creative operating layouts in most gauges! Attendees can bring their own trains (*Lionel/HO/other*) to run on our tracks (with approval of participating Clubs).

The show is held in a full-sized gymnasium filled with all kinds of operating model trains and train related items. Model Train Clubs from the Pacific Northwest make this a family-fun and very memorable event for all. Attendees can enjoy trains of most scales, including an entire village, and trains made entirely of *Legos*.

The creativity and ingenuity of the Club Members is truly amazing and a sight to behold by all ages. It is in a very relaxed atmosphere where people can wander about and enjoy the trains at their own pace. There also will be trains with live steam engines (based on availability). There will be displays from the Black Diamond Museum depicting various aspects of our regional history.

### **Next Area Council Meeting**

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, November 7 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 the King Executive's Budget Director, Dwight Dively.**

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](http://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](mailto: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. *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](http://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](mailto:info@gmvuac.org). Thank you.