



Glamping / Recreational Vehicle Park Permit Application **by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary**

On Monday, August 7, the Area Council held its monthly meeting at the Maple Valley Fire Station at 22225 SE 231st St and online via Zoom. There were three major topics of discussion: (1) King County Community Needs List Program; (2) City of Maple Valley's Upcoming Iron Man Event; and (3) Glamping / Recreational Vehicle Park Permit Application.

King County Community Needs List Program

Sara Estiri, Program Manager in the King County Department of Local Services (DLS), introduced the Community Needs List (CNL) effort. DLS is asking people who live in unincorporated areas (areas that lie outside of city limits) what would make their communities better places to live. The CNLs are one of the best ways for unincorporated communities to influence King County's budget. They are lists of the potential services, programs, facilities, and capital improvements that communities would like King County to prioritize.

Sara requested the Area Council's help in encouraging our community members to let their voices be heard and ask them to take a *Survey*—open until August 30—at: <https://publicinput.com/CommunityNeeds> or by phone at 206-477-3800. Sara can be contacted at: 206-477-5334.

City of Maple Valley Iron Man Event

Mayor Sean Kelly discussed this year's September 17 Iron Man event and how the city has tried to make improvements based on past event concerns related to parking, routes, road closures, police presence, etc. Mayor Kelly mentioned he has personally spoken to various merchants, etc. about the details of the event.

Shaunna Lee, Administrative Services Director—Emergency Management, discussed the Operations side of the event: traffic, road closure times, signage, etc. Local traffic will be able to access their homes by showing identification (including address) to Traffic Officers at various checkpoints. About 5,000 Mailers will be sent to residents six local zip codes who could be affected. Signs will go up about 3 weeks before the event.

Trash cleanup concerns were expressed by several local residents. Shaunna said there are crews set up to handle this, but, if there are gaps, they will work with the organizers. Cleanup is supposed to be complete within 48 hours of event completion.

Glamping / Recreational Vehicle Park Permit Application

The Area Council discussed comprehensive Comments on CDUP23-0002 Permit Application to site a Glamping / Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park in Ravensdale. The proposal is for proposal for construction, in three phases, of a recreational campsite in Ravensdale in the Rural Area consisting of 49 units (25 RV, 12 cabin, 8 tent, 3 tipi, 1 camp host cabin), together with all the supporting facilities, such as parking, toilet/shower, kitchen, office/host and an onsite store for campers.

The proposed *commercial facility* in the Rural Area calls for a “wildlife” “glamping” and “recreational vehicle park.” Yet it is *none* of these—it is proposed to: (1) Be located in an existing clearcut with limited opportunities for wildlife interaction or viewing; (2) Be for high-end camping, i.e., *glamping*. Yet it is located along a busy state highway ~2 mi from the Maple Valley city limits and its extensive urban amenities located at Four Corners—the intersection of two State Highways in southeast King County: SR-169 and SR-516; and (3) Include 25 RV spots in an “RV Park” most likely to *devolve* into a place to park RVs. To be clear, “Glamping” (i.e., *glamorous camping*) is typically characterized by amenities not typically available at a regular campground, such as remote location with exceptional views, that offers special adventure activities, events, and high-end food, usually supported by a large commercial kitchen. The proposal fails in every one of these areas.

The proposed project is located within King County’s *Cedar River / Ravensdale Rural Forest Focus Area (RFFA)* and calls for a large *commercial* operation with *high-density housing* that, based on experiences at other operations of its kind in the County, could and, probably, will, expand to even higher density housing. Coupled with an overworked and understaffed DLS Permitting Division’s Code Enforcement Group, it could prove extremely difficult to enforce King County Code **Title 21A ZONING, 21A.08.040 Recreational/cultural land uses, A. Recreational/cultural land uses.**

The proposed project falls totally within the Class 1 **Critical Aquifer Recharge Area** that impacts the City of Kent’s watershed, and the Kent and Covington well fields. The parcel also lies just outside the (shortest) 1-yr travel time zone of the City of Kent’s **Wellhead Protection Area**. Rock Creek, located just 800 ft south of, and down-gradient of the proposed project, provides the majority of the City of Kent’s water supply through its Clark Springs facility just west of Ravensdale. The primary concern is the porous soil of the proposed project’s septic drain-field could easily contaminate its down-gradient City water supply. The City of Kent is aware of and very concerned about the proposed project and its potential impact on its water supply—especially from a contamination standpoint—and has submitted its concerns in a *Comment Letter* to the County.

The proposed project is directly contrary to the goals and multiple policies found in our bedrock planning documents: the State’s Growth Management Act, Puget Sound Regional Council’s *VISION 2050*, the Countywide Planning Policies, and the King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP). All clearly state that such large commercial developments *not* be sited in the Rural Area. Besides the obvious local concerns, the Area Council also is concerned with the general degradation of the protections for the Rural Area, and potential threat to its groundwater and, potentially, surface waters. We, along with ten other Rural Area Organizations, that comprise the *Joint Team* (which the Area Council coordinates), have repeatedly expressed such concerns in detailed Comments to the County Executive’s Office during the ongoing *2024 KCCP Major (10-yr) Update* process, as well as other previous major planning efforts.

Following detailed discussion, the Area Council voted to approve submittal of Comments to King County. Those Comments recommend the proposed project permit application be *denied* outright. Should the proposed project permit application *not* be denied outright, we recommend an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be conducted under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) to address the serious *local* environmental concerns cited herein, as well as the *regional* concerns including those associated with the City of Kent water supply. Should the proposed project permit application be approved, we cite many specific Conditions to be imposed and enforced! We would emphasize that one of the criteria given in KC Code **Title 21A.44.040 Conditional use permit. G.** is that: *“The conditional use will be supported by adequate public facilities or services and will not adversely affect public services to the surrounding area or conditions can be established to mitigate adverse*

impacts on such facilities; ...” The Area Council Comments detail its concerns regarding such impacts. To view the Area Council’s detailed Comments please visit our website and go to our **Letters** page: <http://gmvuac.org/letters/> or our **Home** page: <http://gmvuac.org/> in the *Major Issues* box under “*Local.*”

Next Area Council Meeting

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, September 11, from 7 - 9:30 PM at the Maple Valley Fire Station at 22225 SE 231st St (across from the KC Sheriff’s Precinct). This is one week later than our usual first Monday due to the *Labor Day Holiday*. **As a hybrid meeting, members of the public will be able to attend either in-person or virtually via Zoom.**

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 *works to keep the Rural Area rural*. The Area Council also works *regionally* with other King County Rural Area organizations through both *Joint Planning* and its *Joint Transportation Initiative*.

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. Residents, 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-Chairs and *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*. All Monthly Meeting Summary Articles, such as this, can be found on the website—use the drop-down menu under *Correspondence*.