



Joint Team / King County Forum

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, May 5, 2025, the Area Council held its Regular Monthly Meeting at the Maple Valley Fire Station and via Zoom. Major topics discussed were: (1) Local Subarea Plan and (2) King County (KC) Department of Local Services (DLS) — Joint Team (JRT+) Forum.

Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River CSA Subarea Plan

Planning Manager, Susan McLain, and Subarea Planner, Kaitlin Harris, from the King County Department of Local Services (DLS) discussed the ongoing Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River (GMV/CR) Community Service Area (CSA) Subarea Plan.

A *Preliminary Plan* is being drafted based on input collected from the five Community Conversation meetings held at the Hobart Church (2/19, 3/5, 3/19, 4/2, & 4/16), as well as comments received [online](https://publicinput.com/greatermaplevalley) (<https://publicinput.com/greatermaplevalley>). It is expected to be ready for Public Review in the Fall. A *Public Review Draft* representing a full plan will be developed and available for Public Comment in the Winter of next year. There also will be an in-person event to discuss the PRD—location TBD. A *Final Draft* will be transmitted to the KC Council will be in June 2026, after which the Public will continue to have opportunities to provide Written and Oral Comments.

A *Community Vision Statement* has been drafted based on public input:

“The Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River community cherishes its rural character and open spaces; protects its forests, rivers, and wildlife; and fosters a welcoming environment for everyone to thrive.”

Also, a set of Guiding Principles have been drafted based on public input:

- a. Preserve the unique character and integrity of the rural landscape and residential community.*
- b. Ensure all residents have access to opportunities and needed services in nearby cities.*
- c. Safeguard rivers, lakes, forests, and wildlife habitats to maintain the area’s natural beauty and environmental health for future generations*
- d. Support access to parks, trails, and outdoor spaces including places for equestrians, cyclists, and other trail users, fostering a connected community and quality of life.*
- e. Encourage resilience by preparing for climate change and natural hazards and promoting sustainability.*
- f. Protect existing housing options that meet the needs of all residents while respecting the area’s rural character.*
- g. Protect the area’s cultural, tribal, historical, and archaeological landmarks as integral parts of its identity.”*

Next Steps include consultation with the KC Inter-Departmental Team (ITD) and Subject-Matter Experts to review draft chapters and policies with an internal review by the KC DLS leadership and the KC Executive's Office.

The Area Council has been involved with every aspect of the Subarea Plan starting early last year. Area Council Committees—Economic, Environment, Growth Management, and Transportation—will review and prepare comments of both the *Preliminary Plan* and the *Public Review Draft*. Future Area Council meetings will continue discussion of the Subarea Plan.

King County Department of Local Services — Joint Rural Team + Forum

For many years the Area Council has coordinated a *Joint Rural Team (JRT)* of ten Rural Area organizations—councils, associations, groups—spread throughout King County. Recently, it has started working with three Urban Unincorporated Area organizations (e.g., Fairwood, West Hill, and Skyway), so as to cover all King County unincorporated areas, thus all areas that are not part of incorporated cities, like Maple Valley, Covington, etc., a *Joint Rural Team Plus (JRT+)*. The King County Department of Local Services (DLS), discussed earlier, provides services—Permits, Code Enforcement, Road Maintenance, etc.—to all these unincorporated areas, so we are all their customers.

On May 1, the JRT+ organized a Forum with KC DLS in Issaquah. The Forum concentrated on the KC DLS Permitting Division, which issues Permits and conducts Code Enforcement. The purpose of the Forum was to discuss the Permitting Division's Budget Allocations, Priorities, and Trade-offs in a budget-constrained environment.

Over 20 people attended the 1 hr plus Forum including people from KC DLS: Director, Leon Richardson; Permitting Division Director, Jim Chan, and Chief Financial Officer, Jillian Scheibeck.

A set of detailed Minutes are being prepared. Once reviewed and approved by all JRT+ organizations, they will be sent to KC DLS seeking any clarification on what was discussed to ensure accuracy. At that time they will be posted on the Area Council's website.

In the near future the Joint Transportation initiative (JTI), also coordinated by the Area Council plans to hold a similar Forum devoted to the KC DLS Road Services Division.

Next Area Council Meeting

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, June 2, 2025 from 7 - 9:30 PM at the Maple Valley Fire Station at 22225 SE 231st St (across from the KC Sheriff's Precinct).

Meetings are held on the *first* Monday of the month (except for Holidays, when they are held on the *second* Monday). All meeting announcements, agendas, and Zoom information are posted on the Area Council's [Website](http://www.gmvuac.org) (www.gmvuac.org) and local *NextDoor* platforms. You can also find us on our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/GMVUAC/) (<https://www.facebook.com/GMVUAC/>). Each meeting begins with an open Public Comment period where anyone can voice concerns, comments, etc.

Area Council Membership

Your Area Council, founded in 1978, is one of the longest continuously active local councils. It 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 (TSD). The Area Council, in "*working to keep the Rural Area rural*," collaborates *regionally* with other King County Rural Area organizations through both the *Joint Rural Team* 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: [GMVUAC](mailto:info@gmvuac.org) (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 TSD.

Residents, even those not living *within* the TSD, are eligible to become *Associate Members* who can serve (including as Chair or Vice-Chair) on any Area Council Committee: *Environment, Growth Management, Transportation, Public Relations, or Train Show*. For information on each of these committees please see the Area Council's website and use the drop-down menu under *Committees*.

All Monthly Meeting Summary Articles can be found on our Home page in the *2025/2024 GMVUAC Monthly Meeting Articles* box or by using the drop-down menu under *Correspondence*.