Hopelink Mobility

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, November 3, 2025, from 7 - 9:30 PM at the Maple Valley Fire Station at 22225 SE 231st St and via Zoom. Topics discussed were: (1) Hopelink Mobility; (2) Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River Subarea Plan; and (3) Critical Areas Ordinance Update.

Hopelink Mobility

Grace Georgitsis, South King County Mobility Coordinator, for HopeLink, a human-services agency, discussed facilitating access to the community through transportation to make it easier for all people to get around King County. Hopelink resources are offered through the *Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy*.

HopeLink provides travel education and resources to build awareness of existing transportation options; supports coordination of special needs transportation through cross-sector collaborations; and gathers data and needs to recommend and implement improved services. Hopelink provides one-on-one support with finding transportation options such as local shuttles, volunteer driver programs, medical transportation services, transit, and helps clients navigate public transportation routes and provide suggested trip plans.

Grace also described the *Rural Transportation Advocacy Project*, which provides tools and resources to help those living in the Rural Area effectively advocate for community transportation solutions.

Please contact Grace at: ggeorgitsis@hopelink.org.

Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River Subarea Plan

King County Department of Local Services (DLS) Subarea Planning Manager, Susan McLain, discussed progress on the Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River (GMV/CR) Community Service Area (CSA) Subarea Plan. This is a locally specific 20-year plan that covers: Land use and zoning; Housing and human services; Environment; Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Resources; Transportation; Services and Utilities; and Economic Development.

The Subarea Plan *schedule* is: Preliminary Plan—January-February 2026; Public Review Draft—June 2026; and Final Draft—December 2026.

The Area Council is working to ensure the GMV/CR CSA Subarea Plan work is completed to the community's satisfaction.

Critical Areas Ordinance Update

The King County Council is holding final hearings on the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Update. The Joint Team of King County Rural and Urban Unincorporated Area organizations, coordinated by the Area Council, has been reviewing prior drafts developed by the KC Executive's Office and KC Council Committees.

On October 16 the Joint Team submitted its final Written Comments to the KC Council. In general, the CAO Update is very good and offers a greater level of protection to critical areas.

There is extensive use of *non-regulatory measures* including new and improved mapping, the Land Conservation Initiative, Public Benefit Rating System, and the reduction from 10 ac to five ac for Rural Open Space eligibility, stormwater management, flood management planning, Farm and Forest Management Plans, restoration of damaged critical areas, and other proven strategies. All these measures have multiple benefits, yet provide some flexibility, while still ensuring compliance.

As part of the CAO Update, the *"Critical Areas Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program Plan"* includes the number of staff, dollars needed, and other things for implementation and do some reforms in the KC Department of Local Services, Permitting Division. To ensure successful implementation, efforts must include assistance to landowners to understand and follow the regulations.

The CAO Update will be finalized/approved by the KC Council at its final hearing on December 2.

Next Area Council Meeting

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, December 1, 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 (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.

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 wish to join, please send an e-mail to: GMVUAC (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 on any Area Council Committee: *Environment, Growth Management, Transportation, Public Relations, or Train Show*—please see the Area Council's Website and use the drop-down menu under *Committees*.

On our Home page recent *Monthly Meeting Summary Articles* can be in the *2025/2024 GMVUAC Monthly Meeting Articles* box (or by using the drop-down menu under *Correspondence*).