Local Subarea Plan

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, January 5, 2026, from 7 - 9:30 PM at the Maple Valley Fire Station at 22225 SE 231st St and via Zoom. Topics discussed were: (1) Local Subarea Plan; (2) Tahoma School District Levy; and (3) Requested Changes to King County Code.

Local Subarea Plan

The Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River (GMV/CR) Community Service Area (CSA) Subarea Plan is now being developed. The Area Council territory makes up most of the GMV/CR CSA, so this will be the Subarea Plan for our local area. The Subarea Plan focusses on locally specific policies that address long-range community vision over the next 20 years.

Long-Range Planning Manager, Lara Thomas, and Strategic Planning Manager, Susan Mclain, both from the King County Department of Local Services (KC DLS), summarized the local subarea planning work with the Area Council and the community over the last year.

Susan presented the current schedule (all 2026):

Preliminary Plan—1st qtr (Community Virtual Meeting and a 30-day Public Comment Period)
Draft Plan—Summer (there will be a 30-day Public Comment Period)
Plan Transmittal to KC Council—December (including Public Hearings).

The Subarea Plan will include a *Vision* and *Guiding Principles* and consist of the following Chapters: *Land Use & Zoning*; *Housing & Human Services*; *Environment*; *Parks, Open Space, & Cultural Resources*; *Transportation*; *Services & Utilities*; and *Economic Development*. Each Chapter will include: *Narrative*, *Community Priorities*, and *Policies*.

The Area Council asked many questions and expressed concern with the short times allotted to reviews and Public Comment. Once the Preliminary Plan is released to the Public the Area Council Committees will hold meetings to conduct line-by-line reviews of each Chapter as follows:

Growth Management Committee—*Land-Use & Zoning* and *Services & Utilities.*
Environment Committee—*Environment* and *Parks, Open Space, & Cultural Resources.*
Transportation Committee—*Transportation.*
Economic Committee—*Economic Development* and *Housing & Human Services.*

The Public is invited to participate in these meetings to be announced on the Area Council's Website.

Tahoma School District Levy

In February the Tahoma School District's (TSD) will be seeking direct replacements of the expiring *Educational Programs & Operations Levy* and the *Technology Levy*, not any *new* tax revenue. Current levies are 2 years in duration, while replacements will be for 4 years (2027 thru 2030). A longer

levy duration means: Less spending on elections; Increased stability for budgeting; and Ability to engage in long-term planning. Ballots will be mailed in late January; Election Day is February 10. In attendance were Maple Valley Mayor Sean Kelly and TSD Board members.

State funds do not cover *all* actual costs. Local funding makes up 21% of the TSD Operating Budget. The majority of local funding includes voter-approved levies, making up 16% of the budget, with the other 5% coming from grants and other local funding.

The *Educational Programs & Operations* Levy covers safety and security staff; arts and music; career and college readiness; operational support staff; academic enrichment; and athletics. The *Technology* Levy covers safety technology and cyber security; devices for students and staff; technology support staff; technology tools for accessibility.

The *Educational Programs & Operations* Levy has a $2.35 rate and the *Technology* level has a $0.39 rate—both per $1,000 assessed property value. Together the total levy rate is $2.74. For a $750,000 assessed property evaluation the annual tax would be: $2,055. These levy rates remain the same as for the existing levies for which TSD is seeking replacements.

If the levy replacements do not pass, TSD would be required to make some difficult decisions to balance its budget, while priorities will be preserved to some extent, this could include reductions in staff, programs, and services.

For more information please see: TSD Levies.

King County Code

King County uses an annual Docket Item (D.I.) process that allows citizens, groups, etc, to propose changes to Code and/or Policy. The Area Council, as part of a Joint Team of King County Unincorporated Urban and Rural Area Organizations, approved two D.I. Requests: (1) Local Agricultural and Forest Product Processing and (2) Consider Reclamation as part Mining 5-Yr Periodic Reviews. These were submitted on December 19 to the KC Executive's Office.

A third D.I. Request: Battery Energy Storage Systems, was approved by individuals from various Joint Team organizations, as there was insufficient time to seek Joint Team approval due to deadlines to submit by the end of the calendar year. It was submitted to KC on December 26.

Next Area Council Meeting

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, February 2, 2026, 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 and local *NextDoor* platforms. You can also find us on our FaceBook page. 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 in King County. 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: info@gmvuac.org *or* attend (either in-person or virtually) a monthly meeting and express your interest. To be eligible to join 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: *Economic, 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 *2026/2025 GMVUAC Monthly Meeting Articles* box (or by using the drop-down menu under *Correspondence*).