

Council Summary Background Brief
Metropolitan King County Regional Committees

This briefing summarizes recent actions taken by the three regional committees formed as a result of the merger of King County and Metro. The three regional committees are the Regional Policy Committee, the Regional Water Quality Committee, and the Regional Transit Committee. We will also include updates on the King County Flood Control District in this section. This is intended as a summary briefing; staff can provide more details on any of the items below.

Regional Policy Committee (RPC) – April 9, 2014 Meeting

- **Approval of a 2014 Work Plan Resolution for RPC.** The RPC approved its work program for the year. Items on the work plan include solid waste, the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) system and radio system replacement, the veterans and human services levy, educational investments and strategies, siting of marijuana growing and processing operations and other updates and issues as deemed appropriate by the RPC.
- **Overview of Human Trafficking.** The Committee received a briefing and overview of human trafficking and the response in King County. Presenters included King County Superior Court Judge Barbara Mack, King County Prosecutor Dan Satterberg, and the Executive Directors of two local non-profit organizations, Robert Beiser (Seattle Against Slavery) and Melinda Giovengo (Youth Care). The roles of the federal, state, and local governments, working in partnership with the non-profit and private sectors, were clarified. While there is no consistent hard data on the number of individuals involved in human trafficking in King County, one previous study indicated that between 300-500 children are trafficked in the Seattle area on any given night. Washington state has some of the strongest anti-human trafficking laws among the 50 states and the King County Council has also addressed human trafficking by passing two pieces of legislation in 2012 and 2013 for an anti-trafficking information campaign and outreach to increase public awareness of the issue.
- **Solid Waste Transfer Plan Review Final Report.** The Solid Waste Transfer Plan Report responds to King County Council direction to review the solid waste transfer system that was established in the 2006 Solid Waste Transfer and Management Plan. The RPC was briefed on the County Executive's key conclusions from the report:
 - Factoria can proceed as designed and planned, and this does not preclude the option for the region to make a future decision to not build a new northeast station as originally planned in the 2006 Plan. The report identified strategies that could achieve the no-build option, including redirecting waste to the under capacity Shoreline transfer station and use of policy, operational and/or service changes to address transactional bottlenecks at Factoria if there were no northeast station after Kirkland's Houghton station is closed.
 - Alternatives that eliminate Factoria are infeasible, and it is impractical and infeasible to build additional capacity on the property located on Eastgate Way.
 - A new South County facility is needed.

The next RPC meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2014.

Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) – March 5, 2014 Meeting

- **Selection of a Vice-Chair for 2014.** John Wright, Councilmember from Lake Forest Park, was selected as Vice-Chair for the Committee.

- **Overview and Status Report on the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD).** Pam Elardo, Wastewater Treatment Division Director, provided a briefing on the County's treatment system, a status report on accomplishments in 2013 and priorities for 2014. Her overview included plant operations, energy and sustainability, capital improvements and project delivery, education and outreach, finance and administration, and workforce development.
- **Potential 2014 Regional Water Quality Committee Work Plan Priorities.** Based on last year's work plan and comments received from Committee members, RWQC staff presented potential work plan items in a staff report and invited additional feedback from Committee members. Potential items included the Regional Wastewater Services Plan review, which at this stage is primarily to evaluate assumptions on plan components; inflow and infiltration (I/I) project updates; resource recovery program; and the combined sewer overflow (CSO) program and water quality assessment. Feedback from Committee members highlighted a need to build on what has already been done; an interest in stormwater, non-point source pollution and water quality; debt; rising rates and long-term rate stability; and reclaimed water. RWQC staff will return in April with a work plan for Committee consideration.
- **Update on the Wastewater Treatment Division's Resource Recovery Program.** The Committee received a briefing on the work of the Division's Resource Recovery Program section, which manages King County biosolids, reclaimed water, biogas and efforts to improve energy efficiency at wastewater facilities.

Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) – April 2, 2014 Meeting

- **2014 Work Plan for RWQC.** The RWQC adopted its work plan for 2014. The work plan highlights three primary areas of focus for the Committee in 2014:
 - Review of the Regional Wastewater Services Plan. The purpose of the review is to evaluate plan components such as rate and location of growth, flow projections, policies regarding inflow and infiltration reduction, reclaimed water, biosolids, combined sewer overflow control, and water quality protection.
 - Conveyance System Improvement Program. This item will focus on a regional needs assessment currently being conducted with component agencies through the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC). When the assessment is completed it will provide the basis for the conveyance system improvement program update.
 - Capital Debt. This item will review WTD's current debt structure and future strategies as they relate to future rates, the capacity charge and overall debt capacity.

In addition to these areas of focus, the Committee will receive briefings on WTD capital projects, the CSO plan implementation, the CSO water quality assessment study, and other areas of interest to the Committee.
- **Overview of the Regional Wastewater Conveyance System, Inflow and Infiltration (I/I), and Preliminary Skyway I/I Reduction Results.** This briefing covered sources of inflow and infiltration (I/I) and impacts to the conveyance and treatment system. Also, it provided the preliminary results of the King County and Skyway Water and Sewer District project to reduce I/I by replacing side sewers serving 332 residential properties; repairing or replacing public sewer mains and manholes; and disconnecting improper storm drainage connections. The Skyway project was an initial I/I project to test planning assumptions and gain more information about costs. Although the project was successful in that it delayed the need for an expensive storage facility, the project did not achieve as much flow reduction as had been expected, leading to an inconclusive result in terms of future I/I projects.

- **Update on “Don’t Flush Trouble” Campaign.** The committee was briefed on public education campaigns to remind utility users of proper and improper disposal items. Particular attention is being paid to the hazards of wipes that are marketed as “flushable” but that in reality doesn’t break down in the wastewater system and block lines, clog equipment and increase maintenance and repair costs for wastewater treatment plants.

MWPAAC Wastewater Contract Negotiations Update

Staff provided a memorandum to Council on March 17, 2014 advising of regional discussions regarding the negotiation of a potential new wholesale wastewater contract. Since that date, MWPAAC has designated a small team to discuss potential contract changes. The team consists of staff from King County, Seattle, Bellevue, Redmond, Tukwila, Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District, Northshore Utility District, and Soos Creek Sewer District. The group has met once and discussed draft ground rules and guiding principles. Issues on the list to be discussed include governance, contract agency roles in decisions regarding rates, capital investments and programs, and new technologies. MWPAAC will be used to identify issues and share information as ideas emerge. Bellevue staff will brief Council in May and prepare a draft interest statement for Council consideration at that time.

The next meeting of the RWQC is scheduled for Wednesday, May 7, 2014.

Solid Waste Update since the April 9 RPC Meeting

The recommendation from the Executive provided flexibility for the system by proposing alternatives that do not completely foreclose the possibility of a new northeast station in the future if the system requires it to remain functional and efficient. However, some northeast cities and some County Councilmembers are leaning toward making a final decision now to remove the northeast station from the plan. Bellevue staff has been asking questions about the impacts of the alternatives on the City and on the plans for the rebuild of Factoria and the Conditional Use Permit issued by the City to King County for the project. The City Manager sent a letter on April 15 (sent to Council under separate cover) with a series of questions that should be answered before any final decisions are made. Staff has consistently reiterated concerns about making final decisions now that reduce flexibility to address potential system issues or efficiencies in the future.

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)

March 19 meeting summary:

The March 19 meeting of the RTC meeting was cancelled.

April 16 meeting summary:

The Committee received a number of briefings including:

- Report that articulated how law enforcement and transit professionals are working together to prevent and address human trafficking;
- Report on overcrowding on Metro buses -- a high priority area for monitoring as part of King County’s Strategic Plan that relates to system performance and measuring demand.
- Update on recent activities from the Transit Advisory Commission including its recent advocacy to the state legislature to assist in transit funding and advocacy for a low-income fare related to increase fare changes; and
- Briefing on the Growing Transit Communities Project.

The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for May 21.