



SOUND CITIES ASSOCIATION

36 Cities. A Million People. One Voice.

King County's 2015-2016 Budget Addresses Priorities of Sound Cities Association's 36 Member Cities

By addressing transportation, public health and public safety, the Metropolitan King County Council 2015-2016, which was adopted today, addresses the top priorities of the 36 member cities of the Sound Cities Association (SCA).

"We applaud the Executive and the Council for listening to the needs of cities throughout King County and then working with us in open, transparent manner to address our top issues," said John Marchione, SCA President and Mayor, City of Redmond. SCA represents 36 cities in King County, and provides a regional voice for nearly one million people.

On transportation, SCA requested no further cuts to Metro Transit services, to work with cities hardest hit by last year's cuts and to add funds for alternative transportation services. "Transit service is critical to our city, and Metro had slashed routes in our city by 66%," said Snoqualmie Mayor Matt Larson and SCA Vice President. "Thanks to SCA efforts, we are on the road to finding solutions that could restore needed service, and provide a model for future right-sizing of the system."

The 2015-2016 Budget agreement does not further cut transit service and recommends doubling to \$12 million in the biennium funding for alternative service. This new fund will help restore service to communities hit hard by the 2014 cuts, like Snoqualmie and Mercer Island.

"Our cities commend the Council for your ongoing efforts to find efficiencies and cost savings to avoid cuts to transit," said Mayor Marchione, who noted that the SCA is supportive of the Council taking a hard look at its existing reserve policies and the revisions to policy proposed by Metro on the revenue stabilization reserve.

The Council and Executive also responded to SCA calls to not close health clinics in the County. Thanks to new key partnerships, the budget keeps all ten county public health clinics open into the biennium. "We know that the budget for the Health Department is at a crisis point and SCA member cities are committed to working closely with the

County to create long term, sustainable solutions for Public Health,” said Auburn Mayor Nancy Backus, also a SCA Board Member. “We thank the County for partnering with Auburn to find solutions to keep the Auburn clinic open, as well as partnering with cities to keep the Federal Way, Northshore, and White Center clinics open while we look for long-term, stable solutions to our funding crisis. We also thank neighboring cities like Enumclaw, Algona, and Pacific and community partners like Group Health, Orion Industries, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Valley Regional Fire Authority and Valley Professional Firefighters #1352 for stepping up to the plate and bringing funding to the table to keep the Auburn clinic open.” Federal Way and Seattle are also contributing financially to keeping the Federal Way and White Center clinics open, and other cities will be taking up consideration of a similar investment in the Northshore clinic during their city budget processes.

The Council’s adopted budget addresses SCA concerns about raising the costs of inspections for farmers markets and vendors at community festivals. “The previously proposed increase in fees would have been a real hardship to small vendors, and would stifle efforts to support local farms and create healthier communities through providing fresh, local, healthy food to our residents,” said Renton Mayor Denis Law, who is also a SCA Board Member. “We thank the Council for listening to our concerns, and rolling back these proposed fee increases. Farmers Markets benefit our communities by providing local, fresh, healthy foods and also act as small business incubators to increase or give a platform for startup Washington businesses. Keeping fees at a reasonable level supports these small businesses, and encourages new markets in “food deserts” throughout the county which will help combat obesity, and increase health in our communities.”

SCA, which was formerly known as the Suburban Cities Association, was established more than 40 years ago to help King County cities act locally and partner regionally to create vital and thriving communities through advocacy, education, leadership, mutual support and networking.

For more information, please visit www.SoundCities.org.

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