



## SCA Public Issues Committee MINUTES

November 12, 2014 – 7:00 PM  
Renton City Hall  
1055 S Grady Way, Renton WA 98057

### 1. Welcome and Roll Call

PIC Chair Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. 24 cities had representation ([Attachment A](#)). Guests present included Bob Keller, Sammamish City Council; Benson Wong, Mercer Island City Council; Tamie Deady, Black Diamond City Council; Stacy Goodman, Issaquah City Council; Mary Jane Goss, Lake Forest Park Mayor; Kingston Wall, Snoqualmie City Council; Martin Moore, Federal Way City Council; Rob Odle, City of Redmond; Maria Wood, Public Health – Seattle and King County; Rachel Bianchi, City of Tukwila.

### 2. Public Comment

Chair Talmas asked if any member of the public had any public comment. Seeing none, Chair Talmas closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

### 3. Approval of the October 8, 2014 Minutes

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, moved, seconded by Councilmember Dini Duclos, Federal Way, to approve the October 8, 2014 meeting minutes.

There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

### 4. Chair's Report

Chair Talmas reported that the SCA Leadership met with King County Executive Dow Constantine earlier in the day. Meeting topics included continued discussion on the new Regional Transit Task Force. Chair Talmas also reported that there was discussion regarding the County budget, including funding for public health clinics. Topics of discussion also included upcoming ballot measures.

### 5. Executive Director's Report

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, handed out a letter that was sent to the County Council regarding SCA budget priorities. [Attachment B](#). Dawson reported that the Council and Executive have been responsive to SCA feedback. On Metro Transit, the County will not be making any additional cuts to service in the next biennium, and will be restoring some of the service cut in 2014 to SCA member cities through alternative service. Dawson reported that a great deal of work has gone on already with the two cities, Mercer Island and Snoqualmie, hit hardest by the 2014 cuts and other routes are being looked at as well. The Executive's proposed budget contained \$6 million in the biennium to restore cuts through alternative service; it appears that the Council is likely to double that amount.

Dawson reported that the County has been working hard to ensure that public health clinics will not be closed. Dawson stated that it is all but certain that the Auburn clinic will now not be closed. Dawson credited the diligence of Auburn Mayor Nancy Backus and the Auburn Council, City of Auburn staff, as well as contributions from cities like Algona, Pacific, and Enumclaw. Dawson stated that similar efforts are underway to look at keeping the Northshore clinic open, and the Federal Way clinic is off the chopping block due to good work from Mayor Ferrell and the Federal Way Council.

Dawson reported that the County has been listening to SCA member concerns relating to fees for farmers markets. The Council has put forward a budget proviso that would require Executive Constantine to transmit an action plan for changes to the food program permit fee structure, including, but not limited to, temporary and farmers market permits, that result in lower permit costs and encourage vendor participation while maintaining food safety.

Dawson reported that the Council has unanimously approved Councilmember Dembowki's ordinance to create a full-time, ongoing and independent auditor of Metro Transit. Dawson stated that the new independent auditor will make recommendations for continued improvement and identification of potential savings and efficiencies. Dawson continued that the auditor will function within the independent King County Auditor's office and be required to file a report to the Council and the public by July 1 of every even-numbered year, which would summarize the results of the work done in the previous twenty-four months, and detail what actions the county took in response to any findings in transit audits and assessments completed in the previous three years.

In other transportation news, Dawson reported that SCA held a meeting to review cities' transportation priorities on October 31, 2014. The meeting was well attended, with representatives from 24 cities. Dawson stated that a full report of the meeting is forthcoming and gave a summary of the discussion:

- When we talk about a statewide transportation package, we often focus on state highway projects. And all our cities do have priorities that relate to state highways. But a statewide transportation package contains more elements than just that- and our cities' priorities go well beyond state highway projects;
- All cities are also struggling with local transportation needs. And these needs are not limited to roads. They include roads, but they also include transit, bike lanes, sidewalks, trails, and park & ride facilities;
- Many cities expressed support for funding not just city roads, but also county roads;
- We need funding that is stable and flexible (this is perhaps the most common sentiment expressed at the meeting);
- We need to protect (or better yet, enhance) grant programs that fund infrastructure, including the public works trust fund, TIB, etc.;
- Our transportation challenges are exacerbated by other fiscal challenges in our cities, including but not limited to the loss of state shared revenues and caps on local taxing authority;
- If the state isn't going to step up and do its job to pass a comprehensive transportation package, then it should give us the authority to raise revenue to solve our transportation challenges; and

- Transportation is critical to our local economy.

Dawson reported that the highway projects most commonly mentioned at the October 31 meeting were:

- Highway 18 (Including I-90 interchange)
- SR 167 (Including I-405/167 interchange)
- SR 169
- SR 202
- I-405
- SR 509
- SR 518
- Completion of 520
- SR 522

Dawson reported that the transportation leaders from the House and Senate spoke to the Washington Highway Users Federation group earlier in the day about the likelihood of a transportation package in the 2015 Legislative session. Legislative members were in agreement that a package could pass but would require work and compromise from both chambers. Members are open to reviewing and considering local options; there is some concern over Sound Transit 3 and how it will impact other transit agencies. Members at the meeting indicated that they are concerned about the Governor's climate change initiative but no one has seen a proposal and therefore could not offer more insight on how this might impact a transportation package. Dawson stated that Legislative members advised those present to reach out and speak to members of the Legislature that do not sit on the transportation committees and explain the need and why a transportation package is so important.

Dawson reported that Executive Constantine will be convening a new regional transit task force to take a look at service guidelines. Dawson passed around a letter from the Executive to King County Council Chair Phillips regarding the Regional Transit Task Force ([Attachment C](#)). Dawson reported that SCA will be working with the County on scope of the task force as well as members representing cities and the group will start meeting in January 2015, and will wrap up work by June 2015.

Dawson reported that the Executive has also proposed a new levy for 2015; the "Best Starts for Kids" levy ([Attachment D](#)). Dawson stated that SCA will be working closely with the County on what this might look like. Dawson noted that she serves on the Youth Action Plan Task Force, which will be tasked with helping to put the levy together. Dawson reported that the Executive is hosting a film screening next Thursday, to which everyone is invited ([Attachment E](#)).

Dawson reported that in discussions with the Executive, other levies may be coming up were reviewed, including the Radio Replacement Levy, which may be on either the April or August ballot in 2015. Dawson stated that it would be helpful to know the levies that your cities are contemplating and asked that the information be sent to [sca@soundcities.org](mailto:sca@soundcities.org).

Dawson reported that on Monday, November 17th, the Solid Waste Division will hold a workshop at the Mercer Island Community Center from 10:00am-2:30pm on transfer station

system planning. Dawson continued that the Solid Waste Division is currently working with a subcommittee of Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee (MSWAC) members on strategies to manage transfer station transactions and capacity, and will include looking at the impacts on the system of closing the Renton and Houghton transfer stations and the impact of not building a northeast transfer station on the overall transfer station system. Dawson stated that the workshop will review the methodology and assumptions being used to conduct the analysis and attendees will have the ability to weigh in on that methodology and the assumptions being used. Dawson continued that the analysis, however, is on-going and the results of the analysis will not be presented in November. City staff requested, and the division staff agreed, to hold a second workshop in January to present the results of the analysis. Dawson noted that SCA staff will be present at the workshops.

Dawson reported that she and Mayor Larson continue to tour the SCA member cities to learn more about each individual city's needs and challenges. Dawson reported that one item that has been repetitive is how many cities have noted that they are struggling with issues of mental health, drug dependency, and homelessness. Many cities have said this was their biggest challenge, and yet it isn't something we hear about here at PIC regularly. Dawson reported that SCA is looking at a pre-PIC workshop for January on the 10-year plan to end homelessness.

Dawson reported that the SCA Annual Meeting will be held on December 3, 2014, and will be both a networking meeting with entertainment from John Keister of "Almost Live" fame, as well as the annual business meeting where the annual budget will be approved. Dawson encouraged members to provide SCA of each city's voting delegate at that meeting. Dawson reported that contained within the budget is a proposal from the Board to return to 2009 dues levels, which would enable SCA to bring on a new policy analyst to help keep up with our growing work load, and to provide additional service to cities.

Dawson reported that SCA will also be holding its annual caucus meetings next month. On December 17 the South and South Valley Caucuses will meet and on December 18 the north and Snoqualmie Valley Caucuses will meet. This is where members give input on priorities as well as elect board members for next year. Dawson noted that there is one vacancy in the North. Dawson continued that there will be a few other board seats up, one in the North and two in the South, where returning board members are running for reelection. Dawson noted that these meetings are open to all, and encouraged members to attend.

Dawson reported that there will be another opportunity for members to share their views through an upcoming membership survey. In 2012, SCA had its intern conduct interviews with member cities. This year's survey will be an online survey. Dawson invited members to share your feedback with her and members of the SCA team at any time throughout the year.

Dawson reminded members that the deadline to submit applications for committee appointments is Thursday, November 20, 2014.

Dawson reported on some sad news that Renton Councilmember Terri Briere passed away earlier in the week. Briere was an active member of SCA and will be missed by Renton and the SCA community.

Councilmember Loudenback, North Bend, asked for clarification on the radio replacement levy and if that includes a levy for Public Service Answering Points (PSAP) consolidation. Dawson responded that there is no levy for PSAP, just the radio replacement which will be included in either April or August 2015. Loudenback asked whether costs had been determined on the radio replacement project, and Dawson noted that work on determining costs was ongoing.

Chair Talmas added that in the meeting with Executive Constantine earlier in the day, it was brought up that SCA member cities in south King County would like to be included on the Sound Transit (ST) Board. Dawson noted that cities in the South end were interested in representation, and the North end was also concerned regarding lack of representation on the Board.

#### **6. Appointments to Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County Advisory Council and Puget Sound Clean Air Agency Advisory Council**

Redmond Council President Hank Margeson, PIC Nominating Committee Chair, reported that the committee met on November 3, 2014 to review nominations for the open seats on the Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County Advisory Council and Puget Sound Clean Air Agency Advisory Council.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, to appoint Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, to the Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County Advisory Council for an appointment ending 12/31/2015.

There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, to appoint Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz, Mercer Island to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency Advisory Council for an appointment ending 6/30/2016.

There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Margeson reminded members that the deadline for the call for nominations for 2015 appointments to regional boards and committees is next week and encouraged members to talk with their councils about the opportunities. Chair Margeson also encouraged members to attend meetings of committees that they may be interested in to see what the committee is about.

Chair Talmas thanked the PIC Nominating Committee for their work on these appointments.

#### **7. Military Bases and Regional Centers**

Doreen Booth, SCA Policy Analyst, provided an overview of the proposal before the PSRC Growth Management Policy Board (GMPB) to designate military bases as regional centers. Booth noted that the proposal was one which the SCA GMPB Caucus felt needed more

thorough and deliberative review than it had been given. The GMPB caucus felt a more appropriate time to consider the proposal was in the 2018 update of Vision 2040.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, GMPB Caucus Chair, noted there had been limited stakeholder outreach and that there were other questions to consider, including determining if a regional centers designation had impacts on federal funding on military bases.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, to recommend to the SCA Board of Directors the following potential policy position:

*SCA supports deferring the consideration of designating military facilities as regional centers to the Vision 2040 update in 2018. This would allow the region the opportunity to consider the questions around designating military facilities within a larger planning context. SCA recognizes that military facilities are regional economic drivers and that the facilities have impacts on the communities adjacent to them, however, more work needs to be done prior to considering such regional center designations, including greater public outreach efforts and the implementation of PSRC's Regional Centers Report.*

There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **8. Arlington/Marysville Manufacturing Industrial Centers**

Doreen Booth, SCA Policy Analyst, provided an overview of the request by Arlington and Marysville for Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) consideration of a manufacturing industrial center (MIC) designation. Booth noted that the request had three parts; (1) that PSRC accept the application when it is submitted; (2) that PSRC quickly engage in a policy discussion to create a multiple tier centers framework; and (3) that the cities be included in the regional discussion. Booth handed out a revised position developed earlier in the day by Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond; Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville; and SCA staff, for PIC consideration.

Council President Margeson noted that the earlier position from the GMPB caucus was not in support of an expedited process, namely due to PSRC staff statements related to their lack of ability to expedite the work. PSRC staff has now expressed willingness to consider a potential shift in work load to accommodate an expedited process for tier designation consideration. Council President Margeson noted that other communities in other states use a tiered system and tiers could encourage cities to develop manufacturing industrial centers.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, to recommend to the SCA Board of Directors the following potential policy position:

*SCA supports maintaining the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) current Manufacturing Industrial Center designation policy, including the existing employment threshold of 10,000 jobs. SCA also supports PSRC expediting the scheduled implementation of PSRC's Regional Centers Report to determine whether updates to existing policies should be made.*

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, spoke in support of Council President Margeson's motion supporting potential tiering of centers. Mayor Hill noted that such language could be especially beneficial to cities in the other three counties; King County cities can often meet minimum standards but cities in other counties cannot.

Councilmember Nancy Tosta, Burien, asked if the word "scheduled" was needed in the second sentence.

Councilmember Nancy Tosta, Burien, moved, seconded by Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, to remove the word "scheduled" from the policy.

The amendment passed unanimously.

Discussion on the main motion as amended continued.

Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, asked if we were moving away from a tiered approach. It was clarified that currently there was no tiered approach and that a manufacturing industrial center needed a minimum of 10,000 existing jobs but that we are asking PSRC to look at a tiered system sooner than scheduled.

Councilmember Bill Boyce, Kent, asked how this related to the Sumner-Pacific MIC and if there could be too many MICs. Council President Margeson noted that both Sumner-Pacific and the Nalley Valley MICs are working to get to the 10,000 jobs. If a tiered system was in place, they might qualify for a tier designation sooner. Council President Margeson and Doreen Booth explained how the federal funding for centers is split; half of the money goes to the county for their priorities and half goes into a pot for regional priorities. Only a specified number of projects from each county can be submitted for regional funding consideration. If there were more MICs, more would qualify but the same number of applications could be submitted. In response to a question, Booth noted that the PSRC Executive Board sets the number of projects each county can submit. Councilmember Odell noted that the Executive Board could potentially change the number of projects per county.

Mayor Hill reiterated his support of the policy and looking into the tier designations.

The amended motion read: *SCA supports maintaining the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) current Manufacturing Industrial Center designation policy, including the existing employment threshold of 10,000 jobs. SCA also supports PSRC expediting the scheduled implementation of PSRC's Regional Centers Report to determine whether updates to existing policies should be made.*

The motion as amended passed unanimously.

## **9. Youth and Community Athletic Facilities**

Lyset Cadena, SCA Senior Policy Analyst, provided an overview of the request by the Washington Recreation and Park Association to support re-establishing competitive grant

funding for “Youth Athletic Facilities” administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). Cadena noted that the Youth Athletic Facilities program provides funding to acquire, develop, and improve community athletic fields. The program was created by Washington voters as part of Referendum 48 and an initial \$10 million contribution from the Seattle Seahawks. Cadena stated that once the initial \$10 million donation was expended, the RCO received subsequent appropriations in the 2006 and 2013 Capital Budget’s. During the RCO budget process, the RCO asked communities to submit letters of interest for youth athletic facilities and received interest from 193 agencies and organizations asking for nearly \$40 million. Cadena mentioned that the RCO is requesting a capital budget appropriation of \$12 million to fund the Youth Athletic Facilities program and there was no scientific method as to how the number was reached. The RCO decided that \$12 million was more palatable than \$40 million especially when the RCO request competes with other Capital Budget requests.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, moved, seconded by Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, to recommend to the SCA Board of Directors the following potential policy position:

*SCA supports re-establishing competitive grant funding for the “Youth Athletic Facilities” program administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).*

Discussion on the motion ensued.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, mentioned that the City of Tukwila submitted a letter of support for the program.

Mayor Matt Larsen, Snoqualmie, stated that \$12 million was not enough to address the need and offered an amendment to add “and increasing” to the policy statement. The motion was seconded by Mayor Dave Hill, Algona.

Discussion on the amendment ensued.

Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, asked whether the policy should include a dollar amount as a minimum.

Chair Talmas asked whether there was support for the broader policy statement.

Mayor Larson reiterated the need to strengthen the policy.

Councilmember Odell supports adding a minimum dollar amount and recommended increasing the dollar amount above \$12 million.

Councilmember Nancy Tosta, Burien, agreed with Councilmember Odell to add a minimum dollar amount.

Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, mentioned she was unsure if \$12 million was the original amount.

Cadena mentioned that after the initial \$10 million, the RCO received \$2.5 million in 2006 and \$3.6 million in 2013 and the money was earmarked for specific projects.

Deanna Dawson, SCA executive Director, noted that the RCO was initially planning on asking for \$3.6 million but received so many letters of interest that they decided to ask for \$12 million.

Chair Talmas asked whether there was support for the broad policy and stated that the policy position does not need to state a specific number.

Deputy Mayor Stanford stated there is strong support for the program and would like to ensure the program continues.

Dawson mentioned that the letter of support could include broad support for the program as well as ask for increased funding. Many other letters have supported the \$12 million request.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, stated that \$12 million is not enough to deal with the statewide need.

The amended motion reads: *SCA supports re-establishing and increasing competitive grant funding for the "Youth Athletic Facilities" program administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).*

The amendment to the motion passed 21-3-0. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Black Diamond, Bothell, Carnation, Clyde Hill, Covington, Duvall, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Mercer Island, North Bend, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, Shoreline, Snoqualmie and Woodinville voted yes. The cities of Beaux Arts Village, Burien and Tukwila voted no.

Discussion on the main motion as amended continued.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, supports the Washington Recreation and Park Association asking the Governor to include \$12 million in the budget for this program. He noted that he will ask the City of Redmond's lobbyist to support this in Olympia. Council President Margeson mentioned that the youth athletic facilities program provides grants that are matched by local dollars and \$12 million will result in \$24 million being spent in communities.

Motion as amended passed unanimously.

## **10. School Siting**

Doreen Booth, SCA Policy Analyst, introduced Rob Odle, Redmond Planning Director and a primary author of the proposed position. Booth reviewed the proposed position, providing a brief history of the school siting policy and the School Siting Task Force. Booth reviewed the changes in the proposed policy compared to the version the PIC had seen in the summer. Rob Odle added that the IJT had heard clearly from planning directors that the relationship between school districts and cities has often been tenuous. This policy provides an opportunity for cities to consider school district needs and work with their school districts as cities put comprehensive plans together.

Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, asked about siting schools outside the UGA. Odle noted that issue had already been addressed; except in special circumstances noted in the School Siting Task Force Final Report, schools cannot be built in the rural area.

Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie, moved, seconded by Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, to bring the following policy position back to the next PIC meeting for action:

The Sound Cities Association supports the proposed Countywide Planning Policy PF-19A as follows:

*Plan, through a cooperative process between jurisdictions and school districts, that public school facilities are available to meet the needs of existing and projected residential development consistent with adopted comprehensive plan policies and growth forecasts.*

*Cooperatively work with each school district located within the jurisdiction's boundaries to evaluate the school district's ability to site school facilities necessary to meet the school district's identified student capacity needs. Use school district capacity and enrollment data and the growth forecasts and development data of each jurisdiction located within the school district's service boundaries. By January 2016 and every two years thereafter, determine if there is development capacity and the supporting infrastructure to site the needed school facilities. If not, cooperatively prepare a strategy to address the capacity shortfall. Potential strategies may include:*

- *Shared public facilities such as play fields, parking areas and access drives;*
- *School acquisition or lease of appropriate public lands;*
- *Regulatory changes such as allowing schools to locate in additional zones or revised development standards; and*
- *School design standards that reduce land requirements (such as multi-story structures or reduced footprint) while still meeting programmatic needs.*

*In 2017, and every two years thereafter, King County shall report to the GMPC on whether the goals of this policy are being met. The GMPC shall identify corrective actions as necessary to implement this policy.*

Mayor Larson asked if the policy would support an adjustment to a UGA. Odle replied that generally, it would not. Countywide planning policies 18 and 19 state that schools generally should be in the UGA and not in the rural area.

Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz, Mercer Island, expressed concerns with the workload associated with creating a new planning process and the required two year cycle, especially given longer planning cycles used by school districts. Rob Odle noted that the process could be a phone call between the planning director and the school superintendent discussing capacity needs. Only if there is a capacity issue would a planning process need to go forward.

Councilmember Marla Mhoon, Covington, asked about the origin of the item. Deanna Dawson noted that work on this topic had originated with the School Siting Task Force. The specific policy will be coming before the GMPC, which is why direction is needed from PIC at this time.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, asked for clarification of how a city with multiple school districts is impacted and how the unincorporated area is going to be addressed. Odle noted that King County has the same role as cities do in this process for unincorporated areas. Odle also noted that Lake Washington School District is in 4 cities and discussed how the cities will likely work together to have conversations with the district about their needs.

Councilmember Janie Edelman, Black Diamond, mentioned that Black Diamond is served by 4 school districts with many students coming from the rural area and noted that the rural area voters don't support schools.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, noted that the city has a good relationship with the Issaquah School District and the city knows that the district brings people to the city.

Councilmember Bill Peloza, Auburn, noted Auburn and the Auburn School District had an excellent working relationship and shared facilities.

Councilmember Bill Boyce, Kent, noted he has served on the Kent School Board for 17 years and the school district has a good relationship with its cities. Councilmember Boyce noted there are benefits to having a good relationship.

The motion passed 23-1-0. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Beaux Arts Village, Black Diamond, Bothell, Burien, Carnation, Clyde Hill, Covington, Duvall, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Mercer Island, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, Shoreline, Snoqualmie, Tukwila and Woodinville voted yes. The city of North Bend voted no.

## **11. Sustainable Public Health Funding**

Doreen Booth, SCA Policy Analyst, reviewed the staff report and noted current efforts underway at the state level to fund public health. Those efforts include e-cigarette / vaping legislation and a request in the Governor's budget to fund the gap in communicable disease funding across the state.

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, mentioned that the policy position is to support increased support from the state for funding public health. There is a need for long term, sustainable funding. This year cities are contributing to keep health clinics open and it has helped to keep the doors open in the short term, but a dedicated funding source is needed.

Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, moved, seconded by Councilmember Amy Ockerlander, Duvall, to bring back to the next meeting of the PIC, the following potential policy position:

*The Sound Cities Association (SCA) recognizes that public health services are needed to ensure the health and safety of all of our residents. SCA supports increased statewide funding for public*

*health through additional revenue streams dedicated to public health. These sources may include but are not limited to taxes on e-cigarettes / vaping devices with funding dedicated to public health.*

Discussion on the motion ensued.

Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, agreed with Dawson's statements. She was supportive of the position, but would need to take back to her Council.

Councilmember Dini Duclos, Federal Way, expressed her appreciation for bringing the issue to light and applauded public health staff on foregoing cost of living increases, which helped to keep the Federal Way clinic open. She stated that public health funding cannot continue to be funded on the back of cities.

Councilmember Dan Grausz, Mercer Island, noted that he would be abstaining from a vote because he needed direction from the city council. Councilmember Grausz mentioned that he believes e-cigarettes pose a lesser health risk than regular cigarettes and questioned whether we were creating a greater public health concern. He stated that when he used to work on cruise ships, e-cigarettes were handed out to heavy smokers and the health benefits of shifting to e-cigarettes were noticeable.

Mayor Amy Walen, Kirkland, agreed that public health is very important but would be abstaining from a vote because the policy needed to be discussed by the council.

Chair Talmas reminded PIC members that they were being asked to take a vote on bringing the policy position back to the next PIC meeting. He mentioned that members should be prepared to discuss the policy position in more detail at the next meeting.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, stated that the policy position needs to include "stable, dependable funding". Mayor Hill wants assurances that funding for public health will be around for years to come.

Staff will look at possible amendments to the position to ensure that the concept of long term stability is adequately conveyed.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, stated he would be voting in favor to bring the policy back for consideration but in general he is against sin taxes. He mentioned that second hand smoke adversely affects the cardiovascular system. Councilmember Marts questioned whether the tax would exist in perpetuity or whether it would go away as technology changes.

Dawson noted that it was likely that e-cigarettes/vaping devices are going to be taxed and members need to take part in the discussions on where that money is going to be allocated.

Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, concurred with Deanna Dawson. He stated he would be talking to his son who is a cardiovascular surgeon about e-cigarettes and impacts on smoking

rates, and the Sammamish City Council. Councilmember Odell personally supports the policy position but would be abstaining from a vote.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, supports the policy position. He noted that many of the taxes in Washington were subject to many fluctuations, and noted that Washington's lack of an income tax causes revenue instability.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, supports bringing the policy position back to the next meeting and looks forward to having a discussion with the Tukwila city council.

Councilmember Duclos noted that the policy language states "may include but not limited to" taxes on e-cigarettes. The important point is to have a policy in support of state public health funding.

Councilmember Marlla Mhoon echoed Margeson's statement, and noted that Washington has a very regressive taxation system.

The motion passed 19-0-5. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Black Diamond, Bothell, Burien, Carnation, Clyde Hill, Covington, Duvall, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kent, Lake Forest Park, Redmond, Renton, Shoreline, Snoqualmie, Tukwila and Woodinville voted yes. The cities of Beaux Arts Village, Kirkland, Mercer Island, North Bend, and Sammamish abstained.

## **12. Property Tax Cap**

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, gave a brief overview of the 1% property tax cap. Dawson noted that AWC will include lifting the 1% property tax on their legislative agenda. King County has not adopted their legislative agenda, but there appears to be strong support for lifting the property tax cap from both the Executive and Council. Some cities have not taken the 1% increase and support for this position would not require cities to raise property taxes. Rather, it would give an option to those cities that need additional revenue.

Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie, moved, seconded by Councilmember Chris Roberts, Shoreline, to bring back to the next meeting of the PIC, the following potential policy position:

*While cities understand and appreciate property owners' concerns about rising costs and increased property taxes, in some jurisdictions the current 1% property tax cap has created an ever widening structural gap between revenues, and the costs of providing needed services to residents and making prudent investments in infrastructure. SCA therefore supports legislation to lift the 1% property tax revenue limit.*

Discussion on the motion ensued.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, mentioned that due to growth and commercial development, Issaquah did not have to take the 1% property tax. In the last couple of years, Issaquah has had to take the 1% property tax and increase B&O taxes by 50% to deal with structural problems. Councilmember Marts noted that other state's taxes are around 10-12%

and a 1% property tax cap binds municipalities. He noted that he will take this position back to the council.

Councilmember Tom Stowe, Beaux Arts, noted that the policy is too broad and should be limited to cities.

Dawson and Talmas highlighted options listed in the staff report about language for consideration. Dawson stated that cities may want to talk to their council's about the various options as they discuss this matter.

Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, mentioned that Renton had to institute a B&O tax for the first time due to the property tax cap. He noted that the policy will be discussed with the Renton City Council.

Councilmember Chris Roberts, Shoreline, mentioned that the City of Shoreline adopted the broad policy language in their legislative agenda. He noted that in recent conversations with legislative members, Representative Ryu mentioned that the state is looking at making the state portion of the property tax retroactive as a way to support the school levy swap; all of this is tied to McCleary. Councilmember Roberts felt that cities need to be pushing for this at the local level in order to address structural gaps.

Mayor Amy Walen, Kirkland, mentioned that Kirkland's legislative agenda includes support for lifting the property tax cap and replacing it with population growth and inflation. She noted that in meeting with Representative Ross Hunter, he advised her not to tie the property tax cap to population and inflation and instead generally support lifting the property tax cap.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, stated that the City of Redmond has adopted the broad policy and are exploring ways to increase revenue. He noted that the city will lobby to lift the property tax cap if bills are introduced by the legislature.

Deputy Mayor Catherine Stanford, Lake Forest Park, supports moving the policy forward and looks forward to having a conversation with her city council. She mentioned that Lake Forest Park primarily relies on the property tax for revenue since they do not have many businesses to impose a B&O tax.

Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, stated that Sammamish is entirely dependent on the property tax. The city has not had to take the 1% property tax cap in 5 years, but discussion are taking place on when the city might have to take the 1% cap. He noted that many cities need the flexibility to address their needs and will encourage the Sammamish Council to support the policy. Councilmember Odell personally supports the elimination of the 1% cap.

Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie, stated that Snoqualmie has taken the 1% property tax cap and is unsure how other cities are conducting business without taking the property tax. Mayor Larson felt cities cannot keep doing business when contracts are continually driving up the cost of business.

Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, noted that he would be abstaining from the vote. Woodinville has not taken the 1% in 8 years but staff is recommending taking the 1%. He mentioned that the position will be discussed with the city council.

Councilmember Dini Duclos, Federal Way, noted that Federal Way has taken the 1% every year and will discuss the policy with the city council.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, stated that the property tax cap options should be broad. He mentioned that Algona has not taken the 1%, but will need too in the future in order to keep up with needs. Mayor Hill supports tying the property tax cap to inflation but will support anything that is passed. He supported SCA adopting a broad position at this time, as it was unclear how things may progress throughout the legislative session.

Councilmember Marlla Mhoon, Covington, noted that they do not have a street overlay program and police officers are on duty one at a time due to budget challenges.

Councilmember Amy Ockerlander, Duvall, supports moving the policy forward and will talk to the city council. She noted that Duvall has had to raise property taxes, utility taxes, and cable taxes and are using money from REET to finance operations. Duvall is unable to keep up with costs especially when union contracts include a 5% step increase plus COLA.

The motion passed 21-3-0. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Black Diamond, Bothell, Burien, Carnation, Clyde Hill, Covington, Duvall, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Mercer Island, North Bend, Redmond, Renton, Shoreline, Snoqualmie, Tukwila voted yes. The cities of Beaux Arts Village, Sammamish and Woodinville abstained.

### **13. Recreational Immunity**

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, provided an overview of a Washington State Supreme Court opinion that has liability implications for cities across King County and the State. In 2006, a bicyclist was injured in an accident on the I-90 trail. She sued the construction company who had installed the fencing she collided with, and the City of Mercer Island. The trail court granted summary judgment to the City. The Court of Appeals reversed, holding that material issues of fact precluded summary judgment. Evidence in the record suggested that WSDOT had viewed the trail as a "transportation facility." Because the "public purpose" of the trail was disputed, the Court held that summary judgment was granted improperly. The City appealed. Dawson mentioned that the Washington State Association of Municipal Attorneys (WSAMA) filed an amicus brief, arguing that making immunity a "'question of fact' is tantamount to no immunity at all." Br. of Amicus Curiae, WSAMA at 5. The Supreme Court granted review and affirmed the Court of Appeals, holding that recreational use immunity could not be determined as a matter of law because there were disputed issues of fact as to whether the trail served a recreational purpose as opposed to a transportation purpose. Representative Senn has proposed legislation that would clarify that potential dual purposes of land would not reduce the scope of immunity.

Councilmember Dan Grausz, Mercer Island, mentioned that Senator Litzow will sponsor a companion bill in the Senate.

Dawson mentioned that the prosecuting attorneys association may join in support for the legislation.

Mayor Amy Walen, Kirkland, moved, seconded by Councilmember Dan Grausz, Mercer Island, to bring back to the next meeting of the PIC, the following potential policy position:

*SCA supports legislation to clarify the scope of recreational immunity in Washington State, and clarify that potential dual purposes of land does not reduce the scope of immunity provided by RCW 4.24.210*

*The Washington State Supreme Court has created a disincentive for recreational facility investments in its recent interpretation of RCW 4.24.210, the state's recreational immunity statute. The Court's interpretation of the nature and role of bicycling and bicycle paths, as applied to RCW 4.24.210, creates the type of potential liability for local government, policymakers, and private landowners that discourages any investments in bicycling or other recreational trails and facilities and encourages decisions to revoke existing access privileges. This outcome is counter to the recreational, economic, and health policies and objectives of the state that underlie RCW 4.24.210.*

There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **14. "TIGER CUBS" Grants**

Lyset Cadena, SCA Senior Policy Analyst, provided an overview of Congressman Larsen's "TIGER CUBS" legislation. The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER Discretionary grant program, provides an opportunity for the USDOT to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects. It was created as a supplementary grant program under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Since 2009, Congress has dedicated more than \$4.1 billion for six rounds to fund projects. About a quarter of TIGER funding has been set aside for rural communities, with the bulk of the remainder going to large cities and statewide projects.

Cadena noted that many smaller jurisdictions do not have the resources to compete for TIGER grants with cities such as New York and San Francisco even though they face many of the same transportation challenges. To deal with this issue, Congressman Larsen introduced legislation, Transportation Improvement Generating Economic Recovery for Cities Underfunded Because of Size Act of 2013. The legislation makes supplemental appropriations of \$500 million for TIGER competitive grant program and earmarks \$100 million of the \$500 million for projects in cities with population between 10,000 and 50,000. Cadena mentioned that several cities have submitted letters of support and they are included in the PIC packet.

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, noted that the proposed policy position would support the legislation, with the amendment that the population threshold be modified to include "cities under 60,000" and that the funding be in addition to (not taking funds away from) the existing TIGER grant program.

Councilmember Nancy Tosta, Burien, moved, seconded by Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, to bring back to the next meeting of the PIC, the following potential policy position:

*SCA supports reauthorization of the TIGER grant program and Congressman Rick Larsen's "TIGER CUBS" legislation that would allow cities between 10,000 and 50,000 population to apply for federal competitive transportation grants with the following amendments:*

- *The population threshold should be modified to include cities under 60,000; and*
- *Funding for "TIGER CUBS" be in addition to "TIGER" grants funding.*

Discussion on the motion ensued.

Councilmember Amy Ockerlander, Duvall, supports Congressman Larsen's legislation but is concerned with the 10,000 population threshold. She noted that Duvall's population is around 7,000 and they would not be able to apply for funding. The city is unable to compete with less state dollars even though more money is needed to deal with their transportation issues.

Dawson mentioned she was unsure why the minimum population threshold in the legislation was set at 10,000. Cadena noted that when she spoke to Congressman Larsen's staff they mentioned there was no scientific method but reviewed applications that were not awarded and found that those projects fit into the population thresholds in the legislation.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, stated he was concerned with the population threshold and advocated for a lower minimum population threshold.

Councilmember Ockerlander made a motion to amend the policy to include "cities up to 60,000". The motion was seconded by Mayor Dave Hill, Algona.

Discussion on the amendment ensued.

Mayor Jim Berger, Carnation, supports the amended language and would not have been able to support the initial policy language.

Councilmember Tom Odell, Sammamish, stated he was sympathetic to Duvall's concerns but a floor was needed. If a floor was not instituted, all jurisdictions would apply and it would create tons of paperwork. He mentioned that a population threshold of 5,000 might be the right number.

Dawson noted that the current policy position states cities "under 60,000." The policy as drafted does not necessarily have a population minimum. The language may need to be clarified. The motion would be to clarify the language further

Councilmember Tom Stowe, Beaux Arts, stated that the paperwork alone would keep Beaux Arts from applying for TIGER grants and would not be competing for "TIGER CUBS" funding.

Dawson clarified for members that the proposed policy would include cities under 60,000 in population and funding for TIGER CUBS to be in addition to TIGER grants. Based on the motion on the floor, staff will amend the proposed language to further clarify the intention.

The amendment to the motion passed 21-3-0. The cities of Algona, Auburn, Black Diamond, Bothell, Burien, Carnation, Clyde Hill, Covington, Duvall, Federal Way, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Mercer Island, North Bend, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, Shoreline, Snoqualmie and Woodinville voted yes. The cities of Beaux Arts Village, Issaquah and Tukwila voted no.

There was no further discussion.

The motion as amended passed unanimously.

### **15. Upcoming Events**

The next SCA Annual Meeting and Networking Dinner will be held on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 5:30 PM at the Renton Pavilion Event Center. (The original agenda contained a typo on the date.)

The next Public Issues Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 10, 2014 at 7:00 PM at Renton City Hall.

The South and South Valley Caucus Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 17, 2014 at 6:30 PM at the Kent Senior Center.

The North and Snoqualmie Valley Caucus Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 18, 2014 at 6:30 PM at the Redmond Senior Center.

### **16. For the Good of the Order**

Chair Talmas asked if any member had comments for the good of the order. Seeing none, Chair Talmas closed this portion of the meeting.

### **17. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

**2014 Roll Call – Public Issues Committee Meeting  
November 12, 2014**

<b>City</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Alternate</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Staff</b>
<b>Algona</b>	Dave Hill	Dawn Dofelmire		
<b>Auburn</b>	Nancy Backus	Bill Pelosa		
<b>Beaux Arts</b>	Tom Stowe	Richard Leider		
<b>Black Diamond</b>	Janie Edelman	Tamie Deady		
<b>Bothell</b>	Andy Rheaume	Tom Agnew		
<b>Burien</b>	Nancy Tosta	Stephen Armstrong		
<b>Carnation</b>	Jim Berger	Lee Grumman		
<b>Clyde Hill</b>	Barre Seibert	George Martin		
<b>Covington</b>	Marlla Mhoon	Margaret Harto/Jeff Wagner		
Des Moines	Melissa Musser	Jeanette Burrage		
<b>Duvall</b>	Amy Ockerlander	Scott Thomas		
Enumclaw	Mike Sando	Liz Reynolds		
<b>Federal Way</b>	Dini Duclos	Jeanne Burbidge	Martin Moore	
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey			
<b>Issaquah</b>	Tola Marts	Stacy Goodman		
Kenmore	David Baker			
<b>Kent</b>	Bill Boyce	Dennis Higgins		
<b>Kirkland</b>	Toby Nixon	Shelley Kloba	Amy Walen	
<b>Lake Forest Park</b>	Catherine Stanford	Tom French	Mary Jane Goss	
Maple Valley	Erin Weaver	Layne Barnes		
Medina	Michael Luis			
<b>Mercer Island</b>	Dan Grausz	Benson Wong		
Milton	Jim Manley	Debra Perry		
Newcastle	Lisa Jensen	John Drescher		
Normandy Park	Shawn McEvoy	Susan West		
<b>North Bend</b>	Ross Loudenback	Ken Hearing		
Pacific	Leanne Guier	Vic Kave		
<b>Redmond</b>	Hank Margeson	John Stilin		Rob Odle
<b>Renton</b>	Ed Prince	Denis Law		
<b>Sammamish</b>	Tom Odell	Bob Keller		
SeaTac	Barry Ladenburg	Mia Gregerson		
<b>Shoreline</b>	Chris Roberts	Chris Eggen		
Skykomish	Henry Sladek			
<b>Snoqualmie</b>	Kingston Wall	Matt Larson		
<b>Tukwila</b>	Kate Kruller	Verna Seal		Rachel Bianchi
<b>Woodinville</b>	Bernie Talmas	Susan Boundy-Sanders		
SCA				Deanna Dawson Kristy Burwell Lyset Cadena Doreen Booth

Electeds present are highlighted in gray. Cities represented are **bolded**.



SOUND CITIES ASSOCIATION

36 Cities. A Million People. One Voice.

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John Marchione  
Mayor  
City of Redmond

**Vice President**

Matt Larson  
Mayor  
City of Snoqualmie

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**Members**

Bill Allison  
Mayor  
City of Maple Valley

Nancy Backus  
Mayor  
City of Auburn

David Baker  
Mayor  
City of Kenmore

Chris Eggen  
Deputy Mayor  
City of Shoreline

Jim Haggerton  
Mayor  
City of Tukwila

Dennis Higgins  
Councilmember  
City of Kent

Bob Harrison  
City Administrator  
City of Issaquah

Bernie Talmas  
Mayor  
City of Woodinville

**Executive Director**

Deanna Dawson

October 28, 2014

The Honorable Larry Phillips  
Chair, King County Council  
516 Third Ave, Rm. 1200  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Chair Phillips and Members of the County Council:

On behalf of the Board and the 36 member cities of the Sound Cities Association (SCA), I am writing to share our cities' priorities as the Council prepares to adopt the 2015/2016 biennial budget. We applaud the Council for your openness and transparency in the budget process, and appreciate the opportunity to provide comment. As our members have reviewed the Executive's proposed budget and discussed areas of potential impact on cities, three priorities have emerged for our cities: transportation, public health, and public safety.

We are very pleased to see that the Council is taking another look at the budget for Metro Transit, and has signaled that it will not be making the cuts to service proposed for 2015. Our cities commend the Council for your ongoing efforts to find efficiencies and cost savings to avoid cuts to transit. As you are well aware, King County is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation and residents throughout the County rely on transit to get to their jobs, school, and medical appointments. Transit service is important to the quality of life for our residents, and our local economy. We are 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. Having appropriate levels of reserves is fiscally responsible. But we encourage the Council to not build overly conservative reserves at the expense of existing, needed service.

To that end, we would also urge the Council to take a look at the cuts to Metro service made in 2014. Our cities have already begun discussions with Metro and the Executive's office to find alternative services that could provide cost effective ways to restore service on routes that may not be viewed as productive on existing measures (including the route in Burien serving Highline Medical Center, and routes in Auburn serving the Muckleshoot Reservation and Orion Industries), and those cities hit hardest by the cuts (including Mercer Island, whose routes were cut by 75%, and Snoqualmie, whose routes were cut by 66%). We are very encouraged by these conversations and believe that we may be on the road to finding solutions that could restore needed service, and provide a model for future right-sizing of the system. The budget proposed by the Executive contains a placeholder of \$6 million for the biennium for alternative transit service. We would encourage the Council to look at that as a starting point, and to provide sufficient funding to restore service to those communities and routes hit hardest by the 2014 cuts.

We are also pleased that the County is looking for ways to avoid the proposed closure of health clinics in the County. We know that the budget for the Health Department is at a crisis point, and our cities are committed to working with the County to find sustainable funding for public health. In the meantime, we encourage the Council to do all that it can to avoid closing clinics. This is especially critical for the Auburn clinic. Closure of this clinic would appear to conflict with other initiatives at the County such as the Health and Human Services Transformation Plan and Communities of Opportunity, where the County is focusing resources in areas with inequities in income, race, and health, and where services are most needed. The County has articulated the need to focus in on prevention in order to address these inequities and to create healthy communities. Closing health clinics would be a step in the wrong direction. Ensuring that these clinics remain open as we work together toward long-term solutions on funding for public health is a top priority not just for Auburn and neighboring communities, but for all our cities.

Our cities were also very concerned about the proposal to raise the costs of inspections for farmers markets and vendors at community festivals. This proposal would be a 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. It would also place an undue burden on local community festivals and events throughout the County. We are pleased to hear that this proposal is going back to the drawing board and is off the table for consideration in the budget. We look forward to working through this issue with the Board of Health to ensure that fees do not hamper the success and sustainability of farmers markets.

Finally, our cities are concerned about the potential of rising costs in the area of public safety. Many of our cities contract with the County for police service, which has benefits for cities and the County. We know that the County has been struggling to get a handle on the costs of providing those services, and we encourage you and Sheriff Urquhart to continue to do so, so that these services continue to be a cost-effective option for cities and taxpayers throughout the County. In addition, the Executive's proposed budget notes that the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention has requested an additional \$5.2 million in the biennium to address growth. The budget does not contain that additional funding, but rather proposed to convene a task force to manage the jail population. We are concerned that cities were not invited to join that task force, and would welcome the opportunity to work with the County on this important issue. We would encourage the Council to ensure that any proposals that come forward from this task force are carefully evaluated to ensure that they do not shift burdens from the County onto cities, as well as to ensure that they do not unnecessarily jeopardize community safety.

We are extremely impressed by the level of responsiveness we have had from the County Executive and staff from the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget (PSB) in sharing information and answering questions for our cities. Dwight Dively met with SCA's Finance Committee, and also shared written responses to our cities' questions. I've attached those questions and Mr. Dively's responses, as they may be helpful to the Council in their budget deliberations.

We thank you for taking the time to listen to our cities' priorities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Executive Director Deanna Dawson at (206) 433-7170, or at [Deanna@SoundCities.org](mailto:Deanna@SoundCities.org).

Sincerely,



John Marchione  
President, Sound Cities Association  
Mayor, City of Redmond

Cc: King County Council  
Dow Constantine, King County Executive  
Dwight Dively, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget  
Sound Cities Association Board of Directors  
Sound Cities Association Member Cities



## King County

### **Dow Constantine**

King County Executive  
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**206-263-9600** Fax 206-296-0194

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[www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov)

November 4, 2014

The Honorable Larry Phillips  
Chair, King County Council  
Room 1200  
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Chair Phillips:

In 2009, in response to our ongoing transit financial challenges and the increasing regional interest in improving efficiency of the system, we worked together to convene the Regional Transit Task Force (RTTF). The work of the award-winning task force was the foundation for the adopted King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation and Service Guidelines that are in place today. These guidelines are helping Metro deliver better, more productive service. However, the Guidelines were also meant as a living document, with regular opportunities for refinement to help develop a transit system that addresses the complex mobility needs of King County.

In the three years since our Strategic Plan was adopted, Metro has completed four Service Guidelines Reports and adjusted service ten times. Building on the lessons learned from the past three years, I believe further refinements to the guidelines could be beneficial to help ensure that the intent of the policy guidance developed by the RTTF is realized in our future transit investment.

In order to further develop the work of the RTTF, I would like to work with the King County Council and our city partners to develop a Service Guidelines Task Force in 2015. My intent is that the Service Guidelines Task Force will use the solid foundation developed in the 2009 effort to further analyze how our transit service is allocated and measured across the region. The success of the RTTF was, in part, due to the tremendous collaboration and investment of the County Council, partner cities, regional decision makers, and diverse stakeholders. This same approach will help us continue to develop recommendations that better our regional transit system.

As with the previous task force, the membership and scope of this group will be developed in collaboration with the Council and city partners throughout the end of year, with the goal to

The Honorable Larry Phillips

November 4, 2014

Page 2

begin the task force in January 2015. The task force will also help provide guidance to Metro's long-range plan development process that will also begin in early 2015.

I am committed to continuing to work with the King County Council and our regional leaders to find ways to deliver a quality transit system that is responsive to the diverse needs of the County. If you have any questions please have your staff contact Kevin Desmond, General Manager, Metro Transit Division, Department of Transportation, at 206-477-5910 or at [kevin.desmond@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kevin.desmond@kingcounty.gov).

Sincerely,



Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

cc: King County Councilmembers  
ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff  
Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council  
Regional Transit Committee members  
The Honorable Ed Murray, Mayor, City of Seattle  
The Honorable Claudia Balducci, Mayor, City of Bellevue  
The Honorable John Marchione, Board President, Sound Cities Association

## BEST STARTS FOR KIDS

**Resilient children and strong communities are the foundation for the future.**

Babies’ brains grow at lightning speed in the first three years, and continue to develop in adolescence and early adulthood. The lives they will grow up to lead hinge on the supports they receive as children and the strength of the communities in which they live.

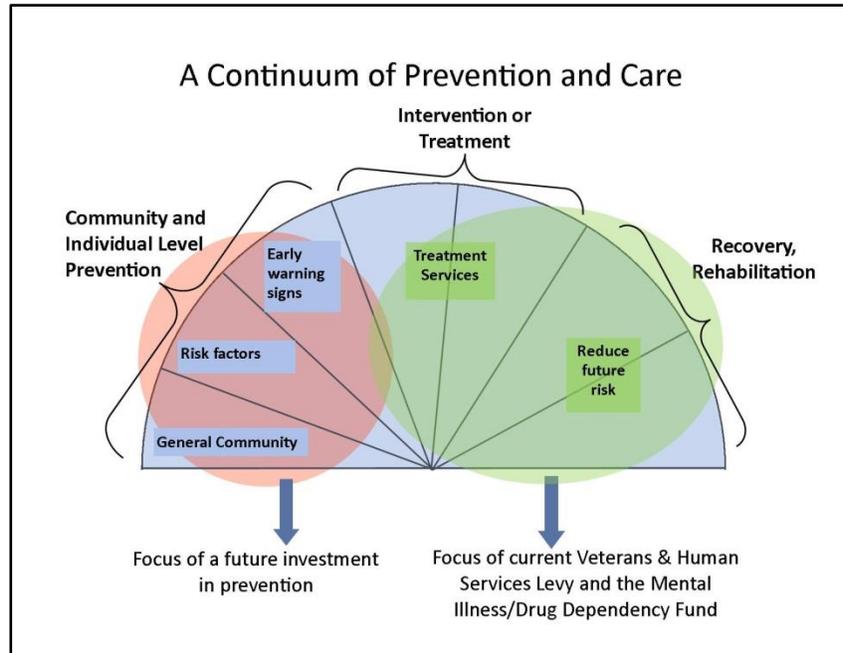
**We can build a better future for today’s children, families and communities.**

### A Prevention Investment Portfolio

		
<p><b>Pregnancy &amp; Early Childhood</b></p>	<p><b>School-aged Children &amp; Youth</b></p>	<p><b>Communities of Opportunity Fund</b></p>
<p><b>Prevention Opportunity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthier moms deliver healthier babies.</li> <li>• Families are supported to form close bonds and active roles in early childhood development.</li> <li>• Babies and toddlers have a healthy start in life and a strong foundation for brain growth, and preschoolers are set on a pathway to success.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Prevention Opportunity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and youth engage in meaningful social and family relationships and progress toward a healthy, safe, academically and vocationally successful life.</li> <li>• Physical and behavioral health issues are prevented outright or identified and treated early to prevent future crises.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Prevention Opportunity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The places where we live, work, learn and play are supported to create safe, welcoming and healthy neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Communities are in the driver’s seat and have the capacity to address issues they care about most.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assuring a Strong Return on Investment</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality, culturally responsive strategies.</li> <li>• Use of innovation, data and science to inform investments.</li> <li>• Measure results, learn from feedback, and make course corrections as needed.</li> </ul>		

## Why this? Why now?

The earliest experiences in life shape future physical, social and emotional well-being. To stay prosperous as a region, and achieve our vision of equity and opportunity for all, we must increase our investments in prevention. This is the critical next piece in our human and community investment portfolio, expanding on previous successes helping people with immediate crisis and recovery needs by intervening earlier.



## PREVENTION is the key.

Smart public investments in proven prevention strategies will pay back many times over. The result: people and communities are healthier, safer, more successful and prosperous.

**The earlier we invest, the better the outcomes.** Early childhood programs show returns ranging from \$3 to \$17 dollars for every dollar invested. More important is the difference these investments can make to the lives of our children, and to the community as a whole.

## The benefits are clear.

- **Positive brain development:** Families are supported and empowered to be their babies first teachers and the foundation is laid during the period of rapid brain development for lifelong success in learning.
- **Academic success:** Children entering kindergarten are ready to learn and stay on track for high school graduation.
- **Lower health care costs throughout life:** Costly chronic health conditions, including mental illness and substance use disorders, are prevented or addressed early on.
- **Safer communities:** Our communities will see less child abuse and neglect, less violence in homes and communities, less homelessness and fewer incarcerations.
- **Stronger economy:** Businesses have the skilled, productive workforce they need to stay competitive.

Join me at "Raising of America" screening and panel discussion

Dear Colleagues:

You are invited to join me on the evening of Thursday, Nov. 20 for a special preview screening and panel discussion of "Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of our Nation," a program produced by California Newsreel for national PBS broadcast next spring. The "Raising of America" documentary series reframes the way we look at early child health and development, and offers many ways to advance a vision in which all our children matter, are nurtured, and have opportunities to thrive.

With the help of an impressive stakeholder task force, King County is currently drafting a Youth Action Plan to better understand how we currently serve our youth and to make recommendations on future programs. As part of my 2015-16 budget address, I proposed my [Best Starts for Kids](#) regional prevention framework. This strategy builds on the work already underway here in King County, and around the state, to ensure that every baby born and every child raised in this community enters adulthood ready to succeed.

Please join me and representatives of the healthcare, early learning, education, and business sectors, along with parents, local and state policy makers, and members of the public to watch this film together and to discuss what we can do to improve the lives of our children. I ask that you share this invitation with others, including staff members and local providers and partners. This special screening is one of many community events to support King County's efforts to give all children a strong start in life.

King County's ability to remain prosperous as a region, with equity and opportunity for all, requires that we work together to align and integrate ongoing efforts and to increase our focus on prevention. Together we can fully support children of all ages, their families, and the communities in which they live. Like you, I am committed to improving the lives of children and families in King County, and I look forward to this opportunity to join together around our shared vision.

I hope to see you at this event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dow Constantine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Join us for a special screening of the documentary  
**“The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of our Nation”**  
Which will air this spring on PBS

**Followed by a panel discussion including King County Executive Dow  
Constantine**

Thursday, November 20, 2014

6:00 Doors Open \* Refreshments and Information Booths

Program 6:20 to 8:30 p.m. | IKEA Performing Arts Center at Renton High School

[Register Here](#)

