



SCA Public Issues Committee

April 9, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Online Meeting

Members of the public may view and listen to the meeting by using the following link from a computer, tablet, or smartphone:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86418546133?pwd=IS3yrKla9vonvZgpxMkMpSWx3rYMRW.1>

Or dial in by phone: 1-253-215-8782 / 864 1854 6133 / Passcode: 150348

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Roll Call** – Chris Roberts, Shoreline, Chair 5 minutes
2. **Public Comment** – Chris Roberts, Shoreline, Chair 5 minutes
3. [Approval of Minutes – March 12, 2025 Meeting](#) 5 minutes
Page 6
4. **Chair’s Report** – Chris Roberts, Shoreline, Chair 5 minutes
5. **Executive Director’s Report** - Robert Feldstein, SCA Executive Director 5 minutes
6. [Legislative Update](#) 20 minutes
DISCUSSION
Page 17
Carl Schroeder, Deputy Director of Government Relations, AWC
7. [Wastewater Rate Proposal](#) 20 minutes
DISCUSSION
Page 20
King County Wastewater Treatment Division
8. [SCA Membership Survey Analysis](#) 20 minutes
DISCUSSION
Page 23
SCA Policy Staff
9. [Regional Boards and Committees Update](#) 5 minutes
UPDATE
Page 38
SCA Policy Staff

10. [Levies and Ballot Measures](#)

5 minutes

UPDATE

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Andie Parnell, SCA Senior Policy Analyst

11. For the Good of the Order

12. Adjourn

Upcoming Events

- a. SCA Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday, April 16, 2025 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – Renton City Hall, Conferencing Center
- b. SCA Public Issues Committee Meeting – Wednesday, May 14, 2025 – 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Sound Cities Association

Mission

To provide leadership through advocacy, education, mutual support and networking to cities in King County as they act locally and partner regionally to create livable vital communities.

Vision

Capitalizing on the diversity of our cities to lead policy change to make the Puget Sound region the best in the world.

Values

SCA aspires to create an environment that fosters mutual support, respect, trust, fairness and integrity for the greater good of the association and its membership.

SCA operates in a consistent, inclusive, and transparent manner that respects the diversity of our members and encourages open discussion and risk-taking. SCA acknowledges the systemic racism and inequalities in our society and continues its commitment to the work needed to address them.

Commonly Used Acronyms

ADS Advisory Council	Advisory Council on Aging and Disability Services
AHC	Affordable Housing Committee
AFIS Advisory Committee	Automated Fingerprint Identification System Advisory Committee
AWC	Association of Washington Cities
BOH	Board of Health
BPAC	PSRC Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
CIP	Capital Improvement Plan
CPPs	Countywide Planning Policies
CSO	Combined Sewer Overflows
CYAB	Children and Youth Advisory Board
DCHS	King County Department of Community and Human Services
DVI Task Force	Domestic Violence Initiative Regional Task Force
EDDB	Central Puget Sound Economic Development District Board
EMAC	Emergency Management Advisory Committee
EMS Advisory Task Force	Emergency Medical Services Levy Advisory Task Force
ETP	Eastside Transportation Partnership
GMA	Growth Management Act
GMPB	PSRC Growth Management Policy Board
GMPC	King County Growth Management Planning Council
GSP	Greater Seattle Partners
HIJT	Affordable Housing Interjurisdictional Team
IJT	Interjurisdictional Team – staff support to the GMPC
ICA	Interlocal Cooperation Agreement
ILA	Interlocal Agreement
JRC	Joint Recommendations Committee for Community Development Block Grants
K4C	King County-Cities Climate Collaboration
KCD	King Conservation District
KCDAC	King Conservation District Advisory Committee
KCFCD	King County Flood Control District
KCFCDAC	King County Flood Control District Advisory Committee
KCPEC	King County Project Evaluation Committee
KCRHA	King County Regional Homelessness Authority
LEOFF1 Disability Board	Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Plan 1 Disability Board
MCC	Hazardous Waste Management Program Management Coordination Committee
MIDD	Mental Illness and Drug Dependency
MKCC	Metropolitan King County Council
MRSC	Municipal Research Services Center
MSWMAC	Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee
MWPAAC	Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee
OPMA	Open Public Meetings Act
PHSKC	Public Health – Seattle & King County
PIC	Public Issues Committee
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Points

PSCAA	Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
PSCAAAC	Puget Sound Clean Air Agency Advisory Council
PSERN	Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
PRA	Public Records Act
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RLSJC	Regional Law Safety and Justice Committee
RPC	Regional Policy Committee
RPEC	PSRC Regional Project Evaluation Committee
RTC	Regional Transit Committee
RWQC	Regional Water Quality Committee
SCA	Sound Cities Association
SCAACG	South Central Action Area Caucus Group
SCATBd	South County Area Transportation Board
SeaShore	Seashore Transportation Forum
SKHHP	South King Housing and Homelessness Partners
SWAC	Solid Waste Advisory Committee
TPB	PSRC Transportation Policy Board
WTD	King County Wastewater Treatment Division



SCA Public Issues Committee

DRAFT MINUTES

March 12, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Virtual

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, Public Issues Committee (PIC) Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. 28 cities were represented ([Attachment A](#)).

Guests present included: Tracy Taylor, Auburn (PIC Alternate); Kelly Jiang, Issaquah (PIC Alternate); Mark Joselyn, North Bend (PIC Alternate); Cheryl Rakes, Auburn; Mary Lou Pauly, Issaquah; James Alberson, Renton; Amy Lam, Sammamish; Katie Halse, Bellevue Staff; Amy Tsai, Redmond staff; Eric Perry, Renton staff; Sumiran Poudel, Shoreline staff; Mike Chambless, Snoqualmie Staff; Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Seattle; John Taylor, King County DNRP; Warren Jimenez, King County DNRP Parks; Katherine Taylor, King County DNRP; Tania Mondaca, King County Staff; John Sheller, King County Library Systems; Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities (AWC); Claire Miccio, 4Culture; Mike Leahy; Paul Stickney; and Laura.

Chair Roberts noted that any discussion in the chat for those joining online would be maintained for public records purposes and included in the PIC minutes ([Attachment B](#)).

2. Public Comment

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA Public Issues Committee (PIC) Chair asked if there was anyone in attendance who would like to provide public comment.

Mike Leahy provided comment on his own behalf. Leahy is also the regional manager of the AFIS program, a levy-funded program that has provided fingerprinting service to King County since 1986. The program is up for renewal on the April ballot, which Leahy wanted to highlight for those not aware of it. The program funds 117 employees in areas spanning identifying arrestees prior to release, responding to crime scenes, and testifying in court. The program also provides technology for officers running fingerprints. The AFIS levy ordinance asks voters to approve funding for seven years at a rate of 2.75 cents per \$1000 of assessed value, representing a decrease from the 2024 rate of 2.9 cents per \$1000 of assessed value. The previous levy expired at the end of 2024, and the fund balance is currently being spent down. Leahy encouraged attendees to reach out with any questions.

Chair Roberts asked if there was anyone else who would like to provide public comment. He also encouraged any individuals with further comment to contact sca@soundcities.org . Hearing none, Chair Roberts closed this portion of the meeting.

3. Approval of the January 8, 2025 PIC Meeting Minutes

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair asked for any questions or amendments to the minutes of the January 8, 2025 SCA PIC meeting.

Councilmember Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., Covington, moved, seconded by Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2025 SCA PIC Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Chair's Report

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair, thanked everyone who was recently in Washington, D.C. for the National League of Cities where they have had productive meetings. He also noted that SCA's Board mini-retreat was held at the end of February where they met new SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein and had productive conversation. Chair Roberts also thanked those who filled out the SCA survey.

5. SCA Update

Des Moines Mayor Traci Buxton, SCA President, thanked everyone for their attendance at PIC. She highlighted the recent first SCA networking event of 2025, where attendees heard from hosting Renton Technical College's President Dr. Yoshiko Harden about the Renton PROMISE Program; from King County Executive Dow Constantine about his accomplishments and legacy over his 16 years as Executive; and from new SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein. President Buxton noted the event was well-attended by sponsors, elected officials, staff, and friends.

6. Executive Director's Report

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein thanked representatives and alternates for joining his first PIC meeting, as well as all staff and elected officials who have welcomed him. He encouraged attendees to reach out to schedule a meeting with him and shared his professional background working on the East Coast, City of Seattle, and Cedar River Group Consulting. Feldstein shared his enthusiasm for the work of PIC and that he looks forward to sharing ideas, discussing hard truths, respectfully responding to differences, and finding ways to move forward. He also pledged to meet with all cities in the County.

7. Growth Target Reconciliation

Presentation by SCA staff. Materials attached and available [here](#).

SCA Policy Analyst Aj Foltz provided an overview of the Growth Target Reconciliation process, which has been in the works at the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) for the past year. Foltz stated the purpose tonight is to inform all of the jurisdictions of options ahead of finalization at the March GMPC meeting and began by defining the following terms: growth targets, the King County Countywide Planning Policies, Vision 2050, and Interjurisdictional Team (IJT).

Foltz shared that in early 2024, the City of Snoqualmie requested housing growth target reconciliation. The IJT conducted outreach to King County jurisdictions in April and May 2024, in which Carnation and Black Diamond indicated a need for a reconciliation process. Black Diamond later withdrew.

The reconciliation requests represent a total reduction of 1,230 housing units, of which Snoqualmie has requested a reduction of 781 units and Carnation has requested a reduction of 499 units. These units represent 0.4% of the total targeted County-wide growth of approximately 309,000 housing units. In their initial reconciliation request letters, each city provided justification. Carnation's listed reasons cite concerns for the strain population growth would place on their infrastructure, including the potential for a Tolt River dam emergency, their limited total land area of only 1 square mile, and the fact that there is only one major road in and out of the city. Snoqualmie similarly cited a water supply shortage, the location of their downtown in a floodplain, the previously planned community having been built out, and the limited development potential due to land capacity. The requested adjustment of targets significantly reduces housing planned for the 81-121% bracket of average median income, but there are only marginal reductions for housing planned for the 0-80% average median income bracket. This ensures that Carnation and Snoqualmie still plan for affordable housing.

Foltz outlined the options available to the GMPC: 1) deny the reconciliation requests, 2) accept the reconciliation requests and adjust County-wide goals, or 3) accept the reconciliation requests with an opportunity for other jurisdictions to take on the remaining 1230 units in their growth targets. Foltz shared that the SCA GMPC Caucus is currently supportive of option 2, as the caucus was concerned about the difficulty for cities to reopen their comprehensive plans to build additional capacity. However, the caucus emphasized that this decision should set a precedent moving forward as future requests may differ. Foltz overviewed the language proposed by the SCA Caucus, which will have minor edits to match tense and style while preserving the intended sentiment.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, SCA GMPC Caucus Chair, thanked Councilmember Syd Dawson, Maple Valley, for his work on GMPC. Curtis reiterated Foltz's statements and acknowledged the difficulty of the decision. She emphasized that the caucus felt that they wanted to support their sister cities who had valid reasons for reconciliation without imposing market-rate housing on other jurisdictions, since that will be met over the years. Curtis shared that the caucus had also discussed a possible hybrid option where there could be incentives for cities that decide to take on housing from another city. Curtis concluded by stating that she is available for questions.

Councilmember Errol Tremolada, North Bend, asked whether option 2 represents reconciling and recalculating targets across the board. Curtis replied that option 2 refers to those 1,230 market rate units without adding additional units to other cities, in recognition that cities finished their comprehensive plans and that re-opening them would be difficult. Foltz added that the housing adjustments apply only to these cities.

Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, stated general support for option 2 and asked if this has the support of King County leadership. Foltz shared that County leadership had initial hesitation due to the reduction of housing targets but are currently more supportive in light of the fact that the reduction is very small and for valid justifications.

8. King County Parks Levy Renewal

Presentation by King County staff. Materials from similar County presentation on February 28, 2025 attached and available [here](#) .

John Taylor, Director of King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, and Warren Jimenez, Director of King County Parks Division, introduced themselves. Taylor shared that he has met with several members and has heard concerns around the size of the levy. He shared that the parks division is working to bring more lands into their inventory, provide more access and facilities, be forward-looking, and build capacity, and that the cost of maintaining the system has risen. Taylor shared the Department has tried to make the levy more equitable.

Jimenez overviewed the history of the levy, with the first levy in 2002. This levy would be the fifth and is proposed to start at a rate of 24.43 cents per \$1000 of assessed value (AV) to generate approximately \$1.5 billion over the levy period. The current levy rate is 19.54 cents per \$1000 AV.

Jimenez stated that the goals of the levy are to keep parks safe and clean, increase access to parks and connect regional trails and open space, keep up with growth and demand, and further resiliency and equity goals. To this end, 36% of the funding will go toward operations and maintenance.

Jimenez then overviewed each of these sections. He shared that keeping parks safe, clean, and open included increasing capacity and meeting demands from the community accessing the park system, with an emphasis on lands use stewardship. Staff are needed to take care of the system, such as the park ranger program, and asset management is critical to further investing in care for the system. Other programs include doubling the youth conservation corps to provide opportunities for individuals interested in learning more about the parks system, the jobs and housing program which connects parks jobs with individuals seeking housing, and the Tribal, Indigenous, Historic Interpretation program. Another area is investing in asset management to support further investments in maintaining and improving the park system.

To increase park access, the levy would continue the four existing grant programs. These include Community Partnership Grants and the Healthy Communities and Parks Fund. Jimenez shared that the Parks Capital and Open Space Grant is primarily for cities and towns to have available grant funding to meet their needs through the parks system, whether it is playground rehabilitation or a plan for an aquatic facility. Pass-through in the current levy is at 8%; the new levy proposes 9%, which represents a doubling in the amount of money from \$60 million to \$119 million. Adjustments include increasing the minimum amount of money received to \$100,000 for all cities and towns as well as the addition of three park districts to the pass-through. Distribution has also been adjusted to be based 60% on population and 40% on AV. Jimenez shared that cities, towns, and jurisdictions are also eligible for grant programs.

Jimenez then overviewed other proposed investments. Part of the proposal includes investing in the aquatic center in Federal Way, where replacements to the HVAC and electrical system, energy efficiency investments, and improved building access are needed. Active recreation repair includes \$177 million for items like playground rehabilitation, accessibility improvements such as pathways and restrooms, regional trail rehabilitation such as signage and pavements, investing in Marymoor Park such as critical utilities or concert venue, and renovation and repair of Sunset Park. \$51 million are proposed for a new park, Lakeland Park, in the unincorporated area near

Federal Way and Auburn. Also proposed are conversion of South County ballfields to multi-use turf field, Skyway renovations, new amenities for backcountry trails, and dog parks. Investments for climate resiliency, conservation, and stewardship are also proposed, including items like demolitions, continuation of the fish passage program, stormwater pilot project, splash pads, electric vehicle chargers, and others. Jimenez also stated that \$179 million in funding is proposed for Eastrail, Lake to Sound, Green River Trail Extension, Interurban Trail South, Soos Creek, other new regional trails, and improving the regional trail system.

Jimenez shared that the goal is for this levy to be on the August Ballot and invited questions.

Councilmember Errol Tremolada, North Bend, noted that there is a \$46 million aquatics grant in the levy and historically there had been grant limits per year. Tremolada asked if those would be maintained in the new levy, and asked whether aquatics grant moneys would be received by project or by city in the case of multiple cities joining together for one aquatic center. Taylor answered that based on feedback, they are considering increasing the \$5 million limit. Taylor also stated that grants are handled per project and shared that some jurisdictions have applied for a grant and applied again during the next round of funding.

Councilmember Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., Covington, asked whether the County had looked at other funding distributions other than 60% on population and 40% on AV, such as 75% or even 100% on population. Cimaomo gave the example that Covington needs millions in funding for the parks system but in the current distribution is receiving \$690,000, though this number would rise to \$14 million if the distribution were based entirely on population. Taylor answered that they looked at a number of approaches and decided on the currently proposed model since it was familiar and that while any modulation would have impacts, the current 60-40 distribution would begin a more equitable shift. Taylor added that he heard from the Council that the equity impacts are not as pronounced when examining dollar amounts, so this may be an area where the Council takes action. He also shared that while he understands small communities do not have large grant-writing capacity, some nonprofits and organizations also apply to these grants and may deliver services in ways cities may not, so the County has tried to balance these components.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, stated that the 2019 ballot measure was widely supported and confirmed that the comparisons provided for monthly costs to homeowners were calculated using the rate of 19.54 cents per \$1000. Backus asked how the County has capacity to do uncompleted projects from the current levy moving forward or if those projects will be cancelled. Jimenez replied that trail projects and existing funding will carry over to the next levy period, and current projects will not go away. Taylor added that this levy has significant investment in building capacity to maintain the system, which requires significant amounts of people and maintenance resources, and that it is not unusual to have projects carry over between levy periods, and funding will continue to be connected to those projects.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ronn Mercer, Duvall, echoed concern around levy fatigue, particularly in the context of the AFIS levy. Mercer shared that Duvall is a city with many young families and while pass-through funding is increasing, the city's current Big Rock Park is unusable as of now, leaving residents to go to adjacent facilities. Mercer stated that Duvall can apply for grants but faces

challenges competing against larger cities and asked whether there are ways to target Duvall and address historic deficiencies. Taylor replied that the Fall City Park District has done great work building out their infrastructure and the County will have access to funding as part of lease payments that can be reinvested in creating a play area in that community to take the pressure off of Duvall and create an ecosystem of resources.

Councilmember Cara Christensen, Snoqualmie, echoed concerns around levy fatigue, particularly as property values increase, and echoed the desire to see additional pass-through money to cities, especially given that Snoqualmie has 40 parks and would pay-in substantially more money than it receives. Taylor stated these items are in dialogue at the Council currently, and that he is acutely aware of fatigue around levies.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, shared a desire for the levy to pass but echoed concerns of levy fatigue and shared recent levy failures in Issaquah. Marts also expressed that Issaquah supports a higher direct share than 9 cents, suggesting a figure closer to 25 cents, and stated that he hopes SCA can provide guidance to the County to make the levy more attractive.

Mayor Kelli Curts, Kirkland, asked if there is any polling data to share and what the County is planning if the levy does not pass. Curtis expressed the levy seems large and difficult to sell to community members, and that it hampers any other levies the city may try to do. Curtis instead suggested a levy more closely resembling the existing levy with an added inflation percentage would be ideal. Curtis also shared that while the pass-through to cities has increased, the addition of the park districts makes it so the dollar amount cities receive is lower and not as equitable as before. Curtis stated Kirkland has higher AV, so the less distribution is based on AV, the less they receive, and asked where to move forward from there. Curtis asked whether the Regional Policy Committee can convene and provide a recommendation to the County. Taylor shared that polling was done by an outside activist organization, though polling cannot be shared widely. Taylor agreed that a levy is a suboptimal way to finance a major operation and that the issue is particularly pronounced in the County given that property tax is their primary tax source. Taylor added that the Council is contemplating paring back the levy, and that the backup plan is to assess the vote outcome in August, make adjustments based on feedback, and likely target the February ballot.

Council President Kerry Garberding, Pacific, shared concerns that Pacific would receive 0.0007% of the funding moving forward, compared to a previous 1.15% of the total amount. Garberding shared that Pacific's major city park is only usable for around 3 months of the year and that seasonal events have disappeared because of this. Taylor suggested that there may be open space funding available through Conservation Futures and might be a real opportunity in the next couple of years.

PIC Chair Roberts intervened to ask whether PIC members would prefer to postpone Item 9 of the agenda to allow more time for the current discussion, to which members agreed. Association of Washington Cities Government Relations Deputy Director Carl Schroeder agreed to return next month and added that HB 1380 did not pass.

Deputy Mayor Dave Rosenbaum, Mercer Island, shared that 40% of their facilities in the parks system are rented by people outside of their city and that there are challenges to tying the funds directly to where people live.

Councilmember Ruth Pérez, Renton, thanked Taylor and Jimenez for their time and echoed the concerns of others. Pérez stated that the city has a responsibility to maintain their own parks and help with the County parks system, and that she has concerns regarding equitable distribution and that direct allocation may be better at times. Pérez shared concerns over levy fatigue and stated that it is hard to do local levies while maintaining the current level of service or increasing the city's parks system. Pérez stated that it is the responsibility of the legislature to help regionally and locally, but this is difficult given the cuts they have made. Pérez asked for Taylor and Jimenez to report back on how to better support the levy while also supporting local levies. Taylor replied that he will carry comments back to the County Council, and that he will also re-assess the process of discussing and compiling new levy packages moving forward to include the voices of city leadership earlier.

Deputy Mayor Jim Ribail, Carnation, stated that for him to support the levy, he needs to know what the past wins were with previous levies and the potential impact on particular cities. Ribail shared that the County has a regional system, but cities also have their own parks, and he has noticed there are not enough fields on the East side to support youth sports, which is a concern of local families.

Deputy Mayor Harry Steinmetz, Des Moines, asked what percentage of the funding is for overhead. Steinmetz also expressed confusion for how Marymoor Park is not covering its own overhead and why more investments are needed. Steinmetz also stated that his largest concern is the percentage of the levy distributed outside of Seattle, as he does not feel only 9% is enough for cities outside of Seattle to support the levy. He also echoed concerns around tax fatigue and shared recent levies that failed, and asked if there were any King County members looking to compromise on the levy who concerned SCA members could contact. Taylor said that Marymoor Park is a good example of a park generating revenue, but that even that level of revenue does not cover all operations and that there is too much overhead for parks to ever be a truly independent enterprise. Taylor said that if members have a desire to pare back the levy, the department will try to work to make it a leaner levy, and that the County Council committees have asked similar questions. Taylor encouraged members to engage in the County committee process.

Councilmember Chance LaFleur, Enumclaw, shared concerns around polling being done by an activist group and echoed concerns around tax fatigues given rising costs, and shared recent bonds that failed in Enumclaw. LaFleur stated that Enumclaw has taken on Parks assets from the County, but that the equity of distribution of funding to cities does not sit well with them. LaFleur stated he thinks this should go back to the drawing board a bit and is unlikely to support it without additional work.

Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, shared that Bellevue believes funding the parks system is critical but echoed concerns around the overall levy size and voter fatigue on upcoming levies. Nieuwenhuis stated that the share of funding to cities may not be enough and increasing

to the city-to-regional split may increase a better sense of buy-in; he also expressed a desire for the additional data requested by the Regional Policy Committee.

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein asked attendees, and particularly Backus, (given her seat on the Regional Policy Committee), how SCA wants to respond as a group or support cities if we cannot move collectively, such as through a letter or reaching out to councilmembers.

Backus replied that the conversation at the Regional Policy Committee discussed concerns around voter fatigue and wanting more funding for cities and noted that she has written down concerns from PIC regarding the percentage of overhead costs. Backus relayed that the SCA Regional Policy Committee Caucus asked for a zip code or by-city breakdown as has been requested for other levies, as there is a need to know if cities are benefitting in an equitable manner. Backus stated she needs to know if PIC members are comfortable with the per 1000 rate that is proposed and reminded PIC members that even if all SCA cities vote no, Seattle may carry a ballot measure, so it is vital to work with both the King County and Seattle City Councils. Backus asked the group whether they are comfortable having the rate go forward, and if yes, whether they would like to see larger distribution for cities, or if they would rather reduce the amount of the ballot measure, if they would still want to see a larger distribution to the cities.

Tremolada shared that many residents of North Bend live there due to reasons related to the park levy, and highlighted Ribail's point regarding parks across multiple sports, expressing a desire to focus on regionalization of access, including building fields that are designed for multiple sports and all-weather. Tremolada stated he is not as concerned with the number, as he feels paring down the levy risks making it ineffective.

Councilmember Melissa Stuart, Redmond, expressed uncertainty around approval of the rate per 1000, and highlighted that there has not been enough time for members to know, particularly since some members have been in Washington, D.C. Stuart expressed support for Nieuwenhuis's request for additional data, and suggested making time for additional conversations, including asking the Council questions and to engage in dialogue with cities.

Mayor Nigel Herbig, Kenmore, agreed with Stuart and expressed it is too early to make a decision. Herbig expressed that voters may not be as sensitive to the size of the levy but does not have enough information to weigh in yet.

Feldstein expressed that he does not feel PIC needs to pass action today, and shared that both the Regional Policy Committee Chair and Councilmember Dembowski have expressed concerns around the timeframe. Feldstein added he has heard a lot about the full levy size and distribution to cities as well as a desire to further discuss the distribution, which does not need to be a formal vote or action.

PIC Chair Roberts asked if there was interest in pushing the levy to the November ballot to allow for discussion time. Taylor replied he is available for another session if desired, but that there are three major levies staggered across different ballot, so there is a strong preference for the Parks

Levy to remain on the August ballot. Roberts added that staggered propositions add to tax fatigue as voters will get confused and be unaware of the cumulative impact of these items.

Des Moines Mayor, Traci Buxton, SCA President, stated that while there seems to be no desire for emergency action, the lightest collective response could be a summary statement of concerns expressed at this meeting, though this would be a tight timeline. Buxton stated that if there are any serious concerns, SCA has a policy that prevents positions that harm any individual city. Roberts stated a vote is needed to take any action and would require a supermajority, but that he has not heard a desire for collective action.

PIC Chair Roberts asked Backus whether she had the information needed from PIC to give direction, to which Backus replied she was unsure if she heard consensus on specific issues. Backus asked if there was interest in having a special short meeting of PIC to discuss this issue in a week or two if more information becomes available and shared that members will be voting on April 3rd. SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell noted striking amendments are due March 26th.

Ribail asked whether the question in front of PIC is whether to have an emergency meeting should additional information be received. Roberts replied yes and stated he is seeing agreement among members. Feldstein stated PIC minutes will be shared by the end of the week.

Mayor Ronn Mercer, Duvall asked Backus to distribute any information, such as a list of wins from past levies, she receives in advance so members can bring the information back to their cities.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, requested the slide deck, which Taylor agreed to send.

9. Legislative Update

In the interest of time, Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair postponed this item until next month.

10. For the Good of the Order

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah shared that Councilmember Kelly Jiang had been appointed to Issaquah's city council and as Issaquah's alternate to PIC; she will substitute for him at the May PIC meeting.

11. Adjourn

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, moved, seconded by Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Public Issues Committee Meeting – Attachment A
March 12, 2025

City	Representative	Alternate
Algona	Troy Linnell	David White
Auburn	Nancy Backus	Tracy Taylor
Beaux Arts Village	Aletha Howes	
Bellevue	Jared Nieuwenhuis	Dave Hamilton
Black Diamond	Tamie Deady	
Bothell	Carston Curd	Rami Al-Kabra
Burien	Kevin Schilling	
Carnation	Jim Ribail	
Clyde Hill	Steve Friedman	
Covington	Joseph Cimaomo, Jr.	Kristina Soltys
Des Moines	Harry Steinmetz	Yoshiko Grace Matsui
Duvall	Ronn Mercer	Mike Supple
Enumclaw	Chance LaFleur	Corrie Koopman-Frazier
Federal Way	Susan Honda	Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey	
Issaquah	Tola Marts	Kelly Jiang
Kenmore	Nigel Herbig	Melanie O'Cain
Kent	Bill Boyce	Toni Troutner
Kirkland	Kelli Curtis	John Tymczyszyn
Lake Forest Park	Lorri Bodi	Tracy Furutani
Maple Valley	Syd Dawson	Dana Parnello
Medina	Michael Luis	
Mercer Island	Dave Rosenbaum	Ted Weinberg
Milton	Tim Ceder	Shanna Styron Sherrell
Newcastle	Paul Charbonneau	Ariana Sherlock
Normandy Park	Eric Zimmerman	Sue-Ann Hohimer
North Bend	Errol Tremolada	Mark Joselyn
Pacific	Kerry Garberding	Vic Kave
Redmond	Melissa Stuart	Osman Salahuddin
Renton	Ruth Pérez	Armondo Pavone
Sammamish	Sid Gupta	Amy Lam
SeaTac	Jake Simpson	Iris Guzmán
Shoreline	Chris Roberts	John Ramsdell
Skykomish	Henry Sladek	
Snoqualmie	Cara Christensen	Louis Washington
Tukwila	Jovita McConnell	Armen Papyan
Woodinville	David Edwards	James Randolph
Yarrow Point	Katy Kinney Harris	

Cities present at the meeting are **bolded**. Voting representatives present are highlighted.

SCA PIC March 12, 2025

Attachment B: Chat Log

20:42:01 From Andie Parnell, SCA to Everyone:

March 12 RPC meeting packet: <https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/agendas/RPC/20250312-RPC-packet.pdf>

20:42:40 From Andie Parnell, SCA to Everyone:

Staff memo begins on page 147.

20:46:58 From Jim Ribail Deputy Mayor Carnation to Hosts and panelists:

I would be looking for what the distribution looks like for my city, but also what neighboring cities are getting. People travel all over the east side to visit parks. I'd like to see what the past levy did with this, and what the future levy would do.

20:59:48 From Ronn Mercer, Duvall to Hosts and panelists:

Would the info be distributed in advance of any special meeting? Also, a list of wins at a city or near proximity would be helpful.

21:02:37 From SCA to Everyone:

THank you all!

Item 6:
Legislative Update
DISCUSSION

SCA Staff Contact

Andie Parnell, SCA Senior Policy Analyst, andie@soundcities.org , 206-724-4060

Update

PIC will be joined by Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Deputy Director of Government Relations Carl Schroeder, who will provide an update on the 2025 Washington State Legislative Session. Time will be allotted for questions and answers. Members are encouraged to provide any questions or topics of interest to SCA staff in advance of the meeting to help facilitate discussion.

Background

The 2025 Washington State Legislative Session began on January 13. The 105-day session will come to a close on April 27, 2025.

PIC will be joined at the March meeting by Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Deputy Director of Government Relations Carl Schroeder, who will provide an update from midway through the session.

The latest information on AWC priority bills can be found on AWC's weekly [Hot Sheet](#) and [bill tracker](#) .

2025 Session Cutoff Calendar

January 13	First Day of Session
February 21	Last day to pass bills out of policy committees in house of origin
February 28	Last day to pass bills out of fiscal committees and transportation committees in house of origin
March 12	Last day to consider bills in house of origin
April 2	Last day to pass bills out of policy committees in opposite house
April 8	Last day to pass bills out of fiscal committees and transportation committees in opposite house

- April 16 Last day to consider opposite house bills (except fiscal, initiatives, and resolving differences between chambers)
- April 27 Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution

2025 SCA Legislative Agenda

The 2025 SCA Legislative Agenda, as recommended by PIC, was approved by the SCA Board of Directors in January ([Attachment A](#)). Overall, SCA requested the state consider new state revenue sources to share with localities, grant local authority to institute local revenue sources, and not reduce existing shared revenues. Key priority areas identified by SCA members include public safety, housing affordability, equitable resource distribution for local climate action, sustainable funding for core local services, investment in transportation infrastructure and mobility, behavioral healthcare capacity, and support for workforce pipelines.

SOUND CITIES ASSOCIATION

2025 Legislative Agenda



SOUND CITIES ASSOCIATION

38 Cities. A Million People. One Voice.

The Sound Cities Association (SCA) represents 38 cities and over one million people in King County. SCA's primary goal is to create vital, livable communities and unite leaders toward collective decision-making on regional policy issues. The vitality of King County is determined by cities' collective voice in county and state decision-making. It is important to recognize that **King County's cities are currently facing a significant budget crisis**. In response to these urgent challenges, SCA requests the state to consider new state revenue sources to share with localities, grant local authority to institute local revenue sources, and not reduce existing shared revenues.

SCA asks the Legislature to partner with cities and act on the following priorities:

Improve Public Safety

Increase state funding for capital and operating expenses and maintain and/or increase existing tools and resources at the current level. Provide a local option for taxing authority to address public safety expenses and continue to provide other vital local government services.

Promote Housing Affordability

Provide additional funding resources (such as local option REET) to assist cities with the implementation of affordable housing legislation. Prioritize partnerships with cities on existing regulations that support the development of affordable housing prior to enacting new regulations.

Prioritize Equitable Resource Distribution for Local Climate Action.

Support legislation that emphasizes environmental justice and equity in the allocation of resources for implementation of local climate actions, including preventing and mitigating impacts of environmental harm to overburdened communities. Improve city access to Climate Commitment Act funding, considering geographical differences and specific climate-related needs.

Support Sustainable Funding for Core Local Services

Expand the variety of local revenue options that allow cities to provide and maintain core local services. Support local revenue options that respond to inflation and population growth, such as allowing property tax increases above 1%.

Invest in Transportation Infrastructure & Mobility

Support sustainable state transportation revenue that provides funding for local preservation, maintenance, operations, and safety improvements. Prevent diversion of funds and increase investment in the Public Works Assistance Account. Support local funding options to preserve and maintain public transportation systems.

Address the Behavioral Healthcare Crisis

Increase the capacity of the crisis response system and fund local systems that connect individuals with needed care and diversion programs.

Confront Labor Challenges

Increase support for workforce pipelines in order to address the gap between available jobs and the realities of labor shortages. Focus on recruitment and retention of individuals in critical fields.

Legislative Guiding Principles

SCA supports legislation that aligns with the following guiding principles:

*Advance racial equity and social justice

*Improve the social safety net

*Make no unfunded mandates to cities

*Preserve local decision-making authority¹⁹

Item 7:
Wastewater Rate Proposal
DISCUSSION

SCA Staff Contact

Laura Belmont, SCA Policy Analyst, laura@soundcities.org , (206) 849-7864

SCA Regional Water Quality Committee Members

Deputy Mayor Laura Mork, Shoreline; Councilmember Penny Sweet, Kirkland; Councilmember Yolanda Trout-Manuel, Auburn; Councilmember Conrad Lee, Bellevue; Deputy Mayor Sarah Moore, Burien; Mayor Jessica Rossman, Medina

Discussion

The Wastewater Treatment Division has been preparing the 2026 rate proposal, which has been presented to the Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) and the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC). For 2026, the sewer rate is proposed to raise 7.5% while the capacity charge is proposed to raise 2.5%.

WTD has transmitted a rate proposal to the King County Executive, to which MWPAAC has submitted a response letter. Later in April, the Executive will transmit the proposal to the King County Council, to which MWPAAC will also write a response letter. RWQC will discuss the rate recommendation throughout April, May, and June, and is planning to vote on a rate letter of their own at their May meeting. Ultimately, action will be taken on the rate proposal by the King County Council in June. A timeline for WTD's rate process is included.

WTD has transmitted a rate proposal to the King County Executive, who will later transmit the proposal to the King County Council, which will act on the proposal in June. MWPAAC submits response letters alongside these transmittals; RWQC is planning to submit a letter alongside transmittal to the King County Council. PIC will be joined by Wastewater Treatment Division staff who will provide an overview of the rate forecasting process and proposal.

Wastewater Treatment Division Rate Planning

The Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) is working on their proposal for the 2026 rates, based on forecasts that extend through 2045. Costs are rising significantly, leading to proposed rate increases. The main capital cost drivers are regulatory needs, asset management conveyance and plants, capacity, and other portfolio categories. Regulatory needs include items

like fulfilling the terms of the Mouth of the Duwamish Combined Sewer Overflow consent decree, conceptual projects to meet the Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan, nitrogen reduction planning, and other items. Asset management conveyance and plants refers to replacing high risk assets in the system that are aging. Capacity refers to planned conceptual projects like inflow and infiltration projects. WTD also plans to address current and growing operational needs.

WTD currently forecasts capital spending at \$11.4 billion from 2025 to 2035 and \$8.2 billion from 2036 to 2045. As a result, the revenue requirement is increasing over the 20-year forecast period from \$58 million in 2025 to \$174 million in 2045. Rate increases are proposed to cover the increased revenue requirement.

WTD charges a sewer rate and a capacity charge. Sewer rates are charged on usage each month to new and existing customers, while the capacity charge is levied on new connections to the sewer system and is paid by new customers on top of their sewer rate. For the 2026 rate proposal, the sewer rate is proposed to increase by 7.50%, and the capacity charge is proposed to increase by 2.5%. While not included in the current rate proposal, the sewer rate is forecasted to increase by amounts higher than previously projected from 2027 to 2045, while the capacity charge is forecasted to continue increasing by 2.5% from 2027 to 2030, as shown below. WTD charges contract cities and sewer districts for their wastewater, who then bill customers. Therefore, exact rates customers pay will likely vary by city.

Sewer Rate Forecast

Adopted 2025 Rate and 2026-2034 Forecast:

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Rate Increase %	5.75%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	8.25%	8.25%	8.25%	9.25%	9.25%	9.25%
Monthly Sewer Rate	\$58.28	\$62.36	\$66.73	\$71.41	\$77.31	\$83.69	\$90.60	\$98.99	\$108.15	\$118.16
All-In Debt Service Coverage	1.74x	1.68x	1.59x	1.69x	1.60x	1.49x	1.48x	1.53x	1.52x	1.63x

Proposed 2026 Rate and 2027-2045 Forecast:

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Rate Increase %	5.75%	7.50%	12.75%	12.75%	13.50%	13.50%	13.50%	7.25%	7.25%	2.00%	2.00%
Monthly Sewer Rate	\$58.28	\$62.66	\$70.65	\$79.66	\$90.42	\$102.63	\$116.49	\$124.94	\$134.00	\$136.68	\$139.42
All-In Debt Service Coverage	1.65x	1.48x	1.47x	1.57x	1.50x	1.47x	1.57x	1.59x	1.57x	1.55x	1.53x
	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045
Rate Increase %		2.00%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
Monthly Sewer Rate		\$142.21	\$148.61	\$155.30	\$162.29	\$165.14	\$168.03	\$170.98	\$171.84	\$172.70	\$173.57
All-In Debt Service Coverage		1.48x	1.49x	1.52x	1.58x	1.58x	1.58x	1.64x	1.65x	1.67x	1.67x

Forecasted rates provided in Regional Water Quality Committee meeting materials for March 2025.

WTD has been working on forecasting and developing a proposal for rates, which has been presented to members of the Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) and the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC). WTD has transmitted a rate proposal to the King County Executive, to which MWPAAC has submitted a response letter. Later in April, the Executive will transmit the proposal to the King County Council, to which

MWPAAC will also write a response letter. RWQC discussed the rate recommendation in April and will again in May and June; they also are working to draft a letter in response to the rate recommendation to be sent to the King County Council. Ultimately, action will be taken on the rate proposal by the King County Council in June. A timeline for WTD's rate process is below.

MONTH	ACTIVITIES
Feb	February 6 and 26- MWPAAC — Briefings on WTD's preliminary 2026 sewer rate and financial forecast
March	March 6 – MWPAAC – Briefing on WTD's 2026 sewer rate proposal, MWPAAC considers and acts on rate recommendation letter to King County Executive
	Mid-March — DNRP/WTD submits 2026 sewer rate proposal to King County Executive
	March 26 – MWPAAC – Briefing on WTD's 2026 sewer rate proposal, MWPAAC considers and acts on rate recommendation letter to King County Executive
April	April 2—RWQC – Briefing on WTD's 2026 sewer rate proposal <i>*Potential SCA input: RWQC members decided to begin drafting a rate letter</i>
	April 3 – MWPAAC considers and acts on rate recommendation letter to King County Council
	April 23 – MWPAAC considers and acts on rate recommendation letter to King County Council
	April 24 – King County Executive transmits 2026 sewer rate proposal to King County Council
May	May 7 – RWQC – Briefing on the Executive's 2026 sewer rate proposal <i>*Potential SCA input: RWQC will vote on their rate letter</i>
	May 28 – Budget and Fiscal Management Committee discussion on rates
June	June 4 – RWQC – Briefing on sewer rate
	June 11 —Budget and Fiscal Management Committee briefings and possible action on the Executive's 2026 sewer rate proposal
	Public hearing and action on the Executive's 2026 sewer rate proposal by King County Council
	June 30 – Approval date requirement for sewer rate

Rate timeline adapted from Regional Water Quality Committee meeting materials for March 2025.

Next Steps

Members of RWQC, including the SCA RWQC caucus, discussed drafting a letter to respond to the rate proposal at their April meeting. Staff are gathering comments and feedback for the letter ahead of drafting through April 9. The letter will then be discussed and voted on at the May 7 RWQC meeting. SCA staff are hoping to bring this discussion to PIC for any input to inform actions of the SCA RWQC Caucus.

Questions and comments can be directed to SCA Policy Analyst Laura Belmont at laura@soundcities.org or 206-849-7864.

Item 8: 2025 SCA Membership Survey Analysis

DISCUSSION

SCA Staff Contacts

Aj Foltz, SCA Policy Analyst, aj@soundcities.org , (206) 849-3056

Laura Belmont, SCA Policy Analyst, laura@soundcities.org , (206) 849-7864

Discussion

During the month of February, the Sound Cities Association (SCA) staff developed and shared a membership survey with the SCA network of members, staff, and sponsors. The goal of the survey was to gather feedback on SCA's strengths and areas for improvement as we move forward with a new Executive Director. Please note that the graphical information provided reflects the number of survey respondents that were directed to that section of the survey, and that not all respondents answered every question. This memorandum provides an analysis of the survey results. Each survey section is listed and provides a summary of the major themes gathered from the written survey responses. Quotes for each section and theme were selected as representations of sentiments shared by multiple respondents. All survey information in this memorandum is anonymous.

Executive Summary

The 2025 SCA Membership Survey posed questions to the SCA network on the range of services and support SCA provides for its membership. The major themes from the survey responses are outlined in this memorandum. This survey comes at a pivotal time for SCA, as the organization is refocusing its efforts under the new leadership of Executive Director Robert Feldstein. Many survey respondents gave direct feedback to the Executive Director, as well as praise for the SCA staff for continuing to provide support to the SCA membership during this state of transition. The feedback received in the survey will inform future SCA actions to improve the delivery of services and engagement on policy issues in the region, within the boundaries of the SCA staff's capacity as a small team.

Major Themes

Membership & Engagement

- City Council Engagement: Looking for more engagement with SCA member city councils
- Increased Collaboration Across Cities: Desire for more collaboration with member cities
- Increasing SCA Outreach: Suggestions for improving SCA's outreach

Public Issues Committee (PIC)

- Action Items and Policy Discussions: Feedback on PIC discussions and action items
- Connecting PIC to City Councils and Committee Caucuses: Desire to connect PIC's work to the larger network, and vice versa
- Increasing Regional Impact: Increasing PIC's voice and impact in the region

Policy Support

- Improving Caucus Materials: Suggestions to improve SCA policy staff's materials
- New Appointee Onboarding: Suggestions for supporting new appointees
- Policy Support for SCA Network: Suggestions on how the SCA policy staff can support the wider SCA network

Networking & Events

- Facilitating Interactions & Discussions: Desire for small group discussions and collaborative opportunities at SCA events
- Increasing Value & Attendance: Suggestions to improve attendance and value of events
- Value for Sponsors: Feedback from SCA sponsors on the value of SCA events

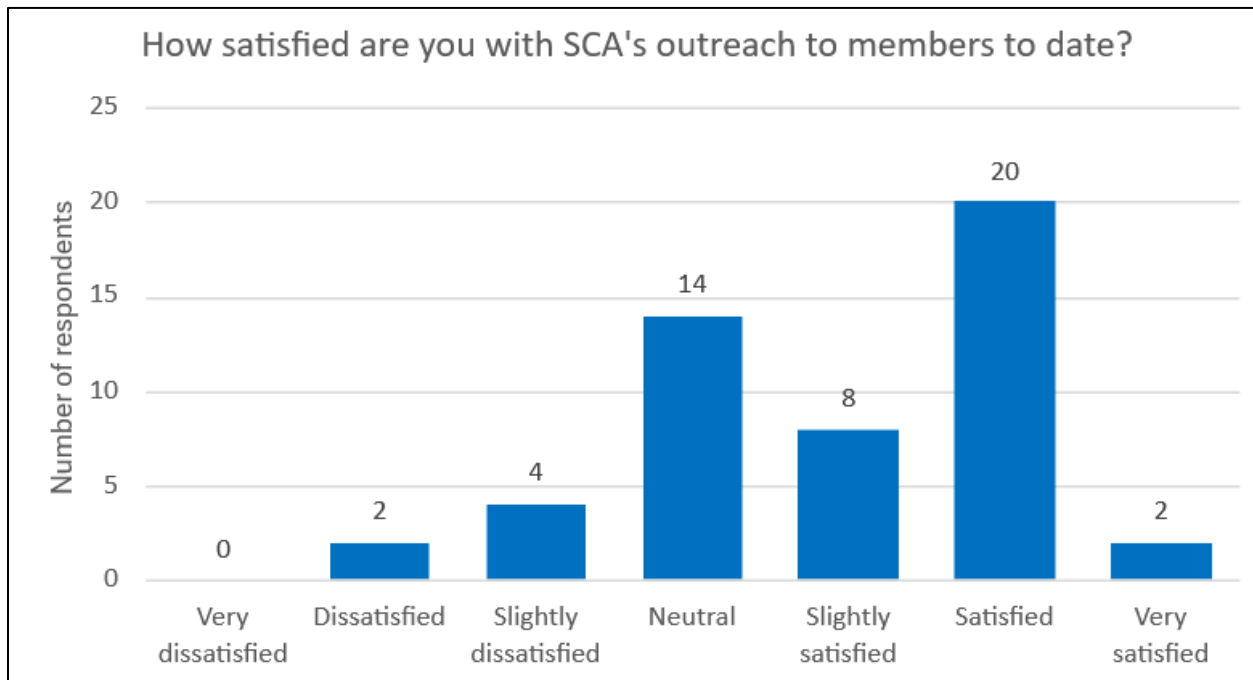
Survey Response Rate & Respondent Data

The survey was distributed to elected officials and city staff of all SCA member cities, along with sponsors and SCA members emeriti. The response rate for the survey is estimated to be 18.5%.

Table 1: Respondent Data	
SCA Affiliation	
SCA Member City Elected Official	58.4%
SCA Member City Staff	28.3%
SCA Sponsor	10.6%
SCA Member Emeritus	0.88%
Other	1.77%
Jurisdiction Population	
< 10,000 people	17.9%
10,000 - 50,000 people	32.1%
50,000 - 100,000 people	30.4%
> 100,000 people	10.7%
Would rather not say	8.9%
Form of Government	
Strong Mayor	51.7%
Council/Manager	34.5%
Does not apply	13.8%
Caucus Subregion	
North Caucus	42.9%
South Caucus	25.0%
Snoqualmie Valley Caucus	8.9%
South Valley Caucus	8.9%
Would rather not say	14.3%
Past or Current PIC Member	52.2%
Current SCA Appointees	40.5%

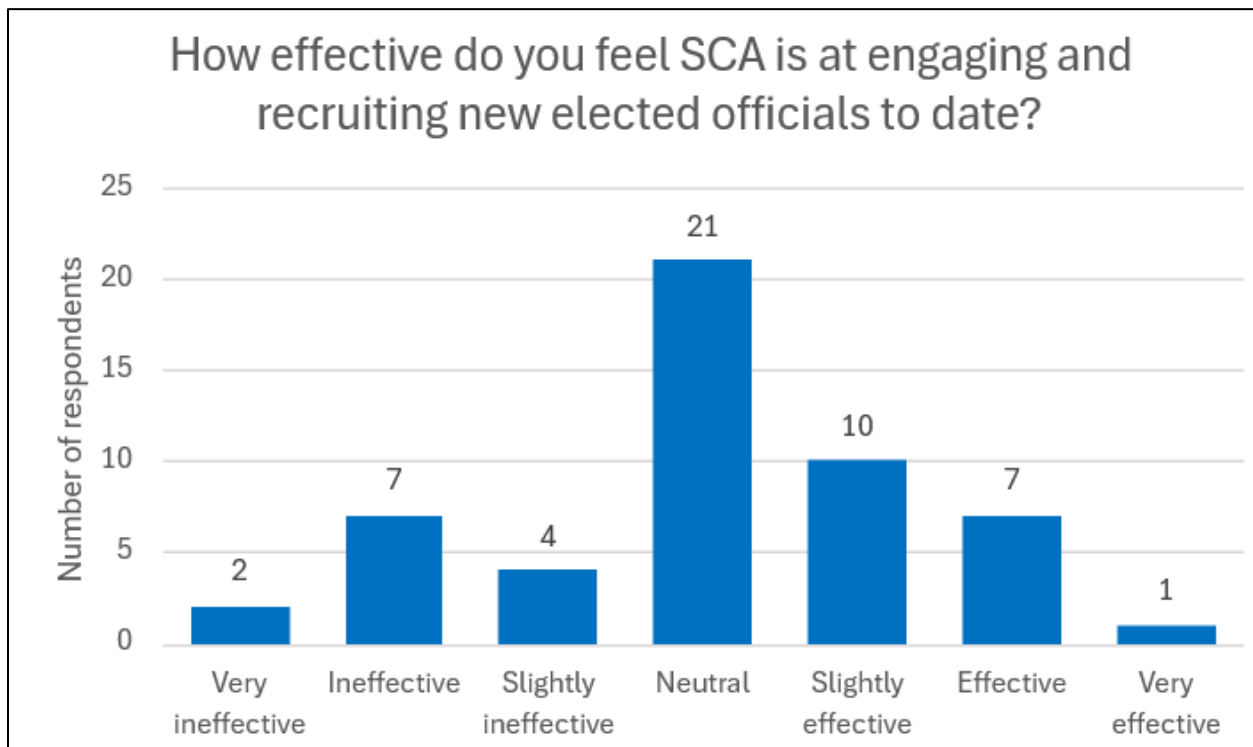
Membership & Engagement

“We need to know our neighbors better. SCA could co-host tours when new capital projects break ground, offer tours of housing solutions in member cities, and more. We need to know our neighbors and have a chance to learn from them too.”



Summary

Many respondents feel that SCA needs to improve relationship-building and communications, most notably with new and existing SCA members, city councils, and county entities. Our members are looking to SCA's new Executive Director, Robert Feldstein, to strengthen these relationships. Additionally, some respondents request more communication with the wider SCA network about discussions and actions taken in committee caucus meetings. Many are looking for ways to connect SCA's regional policy work to the work of their cities.



“...as new [councilmembers] and mayors are elected, SCA has a great opportunity to open their eyes to the value of regional collaboration...”

Major Themes

City Council Engagement

- Involve city councils more broadly, not just council leadership
- Provide education sessions for city councils on the work of SCA
 - *“[There is a need for] council education in a short, fun way. I think many people want to engage more and they may not even understand or know how fulfilling, enriching, and powerful SCA can be in magnifying a voice.”*
- Visit and present to city councils
 - *“To get more engagement I think the new ED needs to physically get out into the cities, go to council meetings, be more personal in recruitment. SCA is so important to the region, but I am worried that the message has been lost.”*
- Recruiting for boards and committees should be more personalized; involve more targeted outreach to new elected officials to engage them in SCA earlier

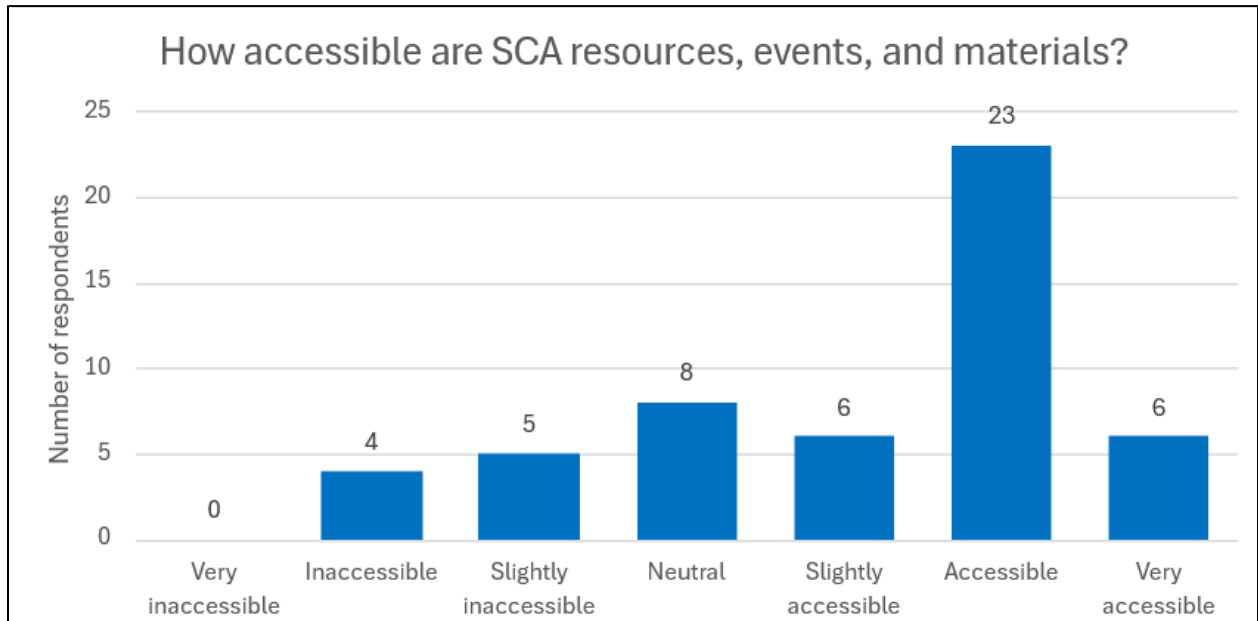
Increased Collaboration Across Cities

- Increase learning opportunities across cities
- Elevate city issues to the broader network to increase collaboration
 - *“AWC has run some nice lunch events in each of their districts where electeds can share what they're working on. Instead of it being just a networking event or just an event focused on content sharing from SCA, this type of event allowed more sharing across cities from what we were currently working on.”*
- Identify issues across cities and the approaches used to address them

- Find ways to share brief information on key issues

Increasing SCA Outreach

- Increase transparency and communication with the wider SCA network
 - *“SCA needs to demonstrate that it has our collective, good governance as a key pillar of its outsize impact on regional boards and committees. It has resulted in the concentration of narrow viewpoints advocating for status quo and lacks accountability to our member jurisdictions...Transparency of decisions and information discussed in SCA meetings will be key to rebuilding my trust in this institution.”*
- Orientations and events should be planned further in advance, with varying time options
 - *“New electeds usually haven't heard of SCA...The orientation options should be scheduled with enough time for people to have a chance to join, and the outreach should be very deliberate. If you've never heard of an organization, why would you put much merit in their last-minute email invite to a meeting?”*
- Emphasize the importance of speaking with one voice, and the regional impact that results from collaborating on issues in this way
 - *“Onboard in context what each voice means for the whole and how we regionally leverage alignment to be effective.”*
- Ensure that members have connections to SCA leadership and the SCA Board of Directors
 - *“[It] would be great to see [the SCA Board of Directors] engage more with member jurisdictions, understand our individual problems, and connect us with other [councilmembers] and mayors in the region working on the same stuff.”*
- Utilize social media to spread information and events
- Reinvigorate Lunch & Learns
- Leverage partnerships with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) and the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC)



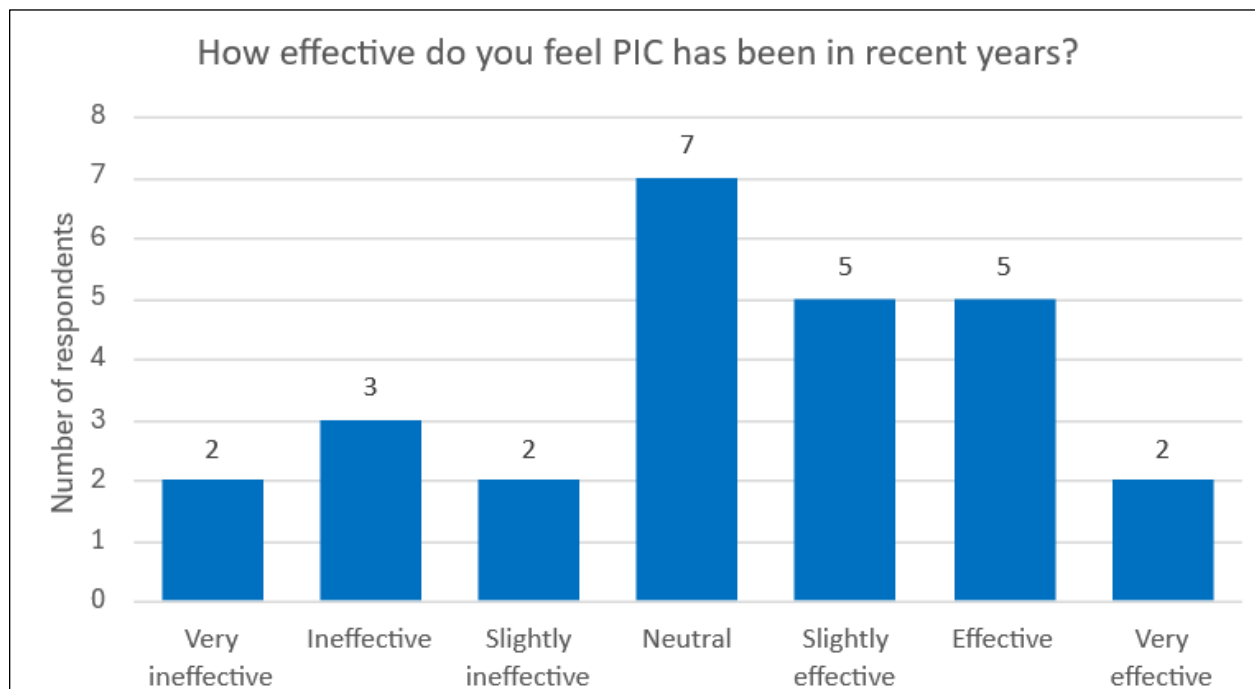
“I see the [Executive Director] as needing to focus on relationships-- being responsive, engaging elected officials, and bringing cities together to get them on the same page. More unity among SCA cities will translate into more effectiveness of the larger group.”

Public Issues Committee (PIC)

“PIC is in my opinion the preeminent body for addressing regional issues.”

Summary

Most respondents feel neutral on PIC’s effectiveness in recent years. Some suggested areas for improvement include increasing the level of discourse on regional issues, being proactive in policymaking discussions, and providing summaries of the PIC discussions to SCA member city councils. Some respondents wish for a stronger connection between PIC discussions and committee caucus meetings. Some suggest PIC can be used as a forum where cities can collaborate on shared issues and needs.



Major Themes

Action Items and Policy Discussions

- There is a misunderstanding of the usefulness of PIC actions and discussions
 - *“We need to clarify the purpose of PIC. Is it for cities to discuss items of mutual interest with the outcome for policy direction that benefits all 38 cities, or is it for in-depth briefings that small cities don't have the opportunity to receive? Lately, many of the presentations are interesting, but I could also read them in a briefing document rather than sit through a presentation.”*
 - *“Topics have been irrelevant to issues affecting my city.”*
- Differing opinions on whether PIC should take on “meatier” policy issues or stick to the basics
 - *“Would love for PIC to take on some meatier policy questions -- Opportunities for regionalization, highlighting policy being tested elsewhere or studied in peer reviewed journals...”*
 - *“Please stick with the basics for now. Until those are productively covered there is no time for other areas like legislative agendas or other possibly controversial issues.”*
- Differing opinions on whether there should be more action items or if forcing action items for the sake of having action items is unnecessary
 - *“I do not think we should force new action items on the committee just to have action items.”*
- Presence of external presenters dampens the interactions and discussion between PIC members
- PIC & SCA staff should develop a roadmap and determine high-priority issues
 - *“...it seems like it would be helpful for PIC to have a roadmap of what issues they'll address and potentially be a convening forum for SCA to determine which issues are of highest priority to work on.”*
- Allow PIC alternates to engage in the discussion

Connecting PIC to City Councils and Committee Caucuses

- Need clear messages and direction for PIC members to take back to their city councils
- Develop shareable content to distribute following PIC meetings
 - *“I would say regular (bulleted) summaries would help emphasize PIC's work.”*
 - *“A summary [or] shareable type content would be helpful. Also bullet point type questions for members to easily solicit targeted feedback from their councils.”*
- Refocus on issues that are coming up in regional committees
 - *“Ask Policy Analysts to flag issues that are meaningful in boards and committees, connecting Board decisions to community impacts.”*
- Include reports from SCA members on boards and committees about current work
 - *“I think it might be beneficial to have members from some of the positions on the boards & commissions to come give reports on what they're working on. SCA staff does a great job on sharing policy decisions, but this would allow for electeds to provide their feedback.”*

Increasing Regional Impact

- PIC needs to regain effectiveness and power in the region
 - *“The past couple of years have felt like a decreased importance of PIC, but I know that it’s an important body for the region...”*
- PIC feedback should be elevated to the King County Executive
- Education on the purpose of PIC to elected officials countywide
- Need to clarify the purpose and scope of PIC

“...we seem to have moved away from providing space for a diversity of opinions. SCA Guiding Principles of remaining open-minded and respecting differing views seems to have gone by the wayside.”

Potential PIC Topics

One of the survey questions asked current and former PIC members what issues and topics they want PIC to discuss. This list includes many of the topics mentioned by respondents, grouped into similar issue areas.

- Housing affordability; homelessness
- Sustainability; climate resilience
- Collaboration of programs and services
 - *“Would love to see more conversation around collaboration of services. We all provide programs and services to our communities, but depending on our borders, it can be duplicative. Where are the opportunities for regionalization that promote cost sharing and better service to our communities?”*
- Impact of federal policy decisions
- Public safety; funding for police and fire services
- Growth management; land use
- County tax measures; county initiatives
 - *“Discuss items that will create more interaction with the county that will help the county be more of a partner for the cities.”*
 - *“...if the County has initiatives that are coming up for renewal, we should be taking a stance.”*
- Transportation funding; transit policy; regional mobility
- Solid waste
- Municipal finances and revenues
- Addiction; mental & behavioral health

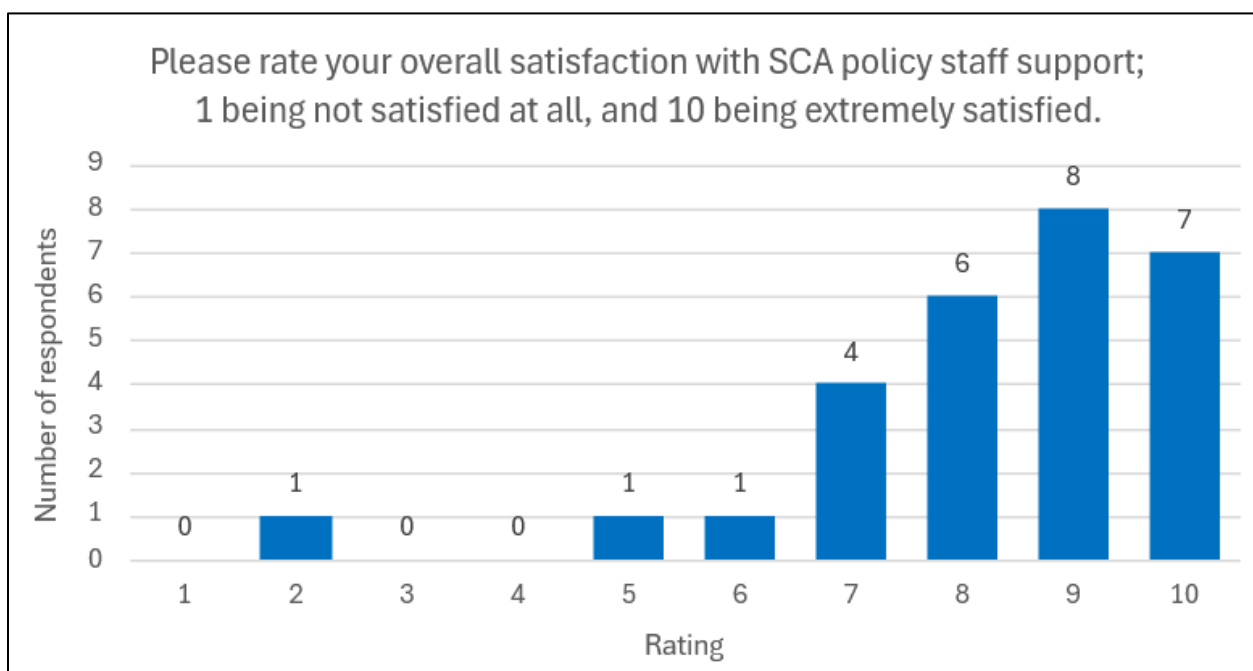
“[Provide] an avenue for active engagement of cities in creating legislation on the same topic - leverage each other's experience and knowledge to encourage cities who have success in an area (parking codes, city budget process, etc.) to make those successes known and available to other cities who maybe don't have the same bandwidth to get to those goals.”

Policy Support

“The skills and caliber of the staff has improved dramatically over the year. I tend to like the support we are receiving.”

Summary

Many respondents expressed satisfaction with the current SCA policy staff, the format and discussions in caucus meetings, and the level of policy analysis that staff provide. The average rating for the SCA policy staff support is 8 stars out of 10. Some respondents requested standardizing the caucus materials and when they are scheduled for release. Other respondents requested that policy staff clearly identify relevant policy questions and related regional policy issues that would be of interest to elected officials. There was an emphasis on the importance of retaining policy staff and preserving institutional knowledge.



“...an understanding of the issues and connecting them to real life impacts is important. Ask ‘how will this impact our electeds? Will their citizens complain? Will their citizens blame them? Will their citizens celebrate this?’”

Major Themes

Improving Caucus Materials

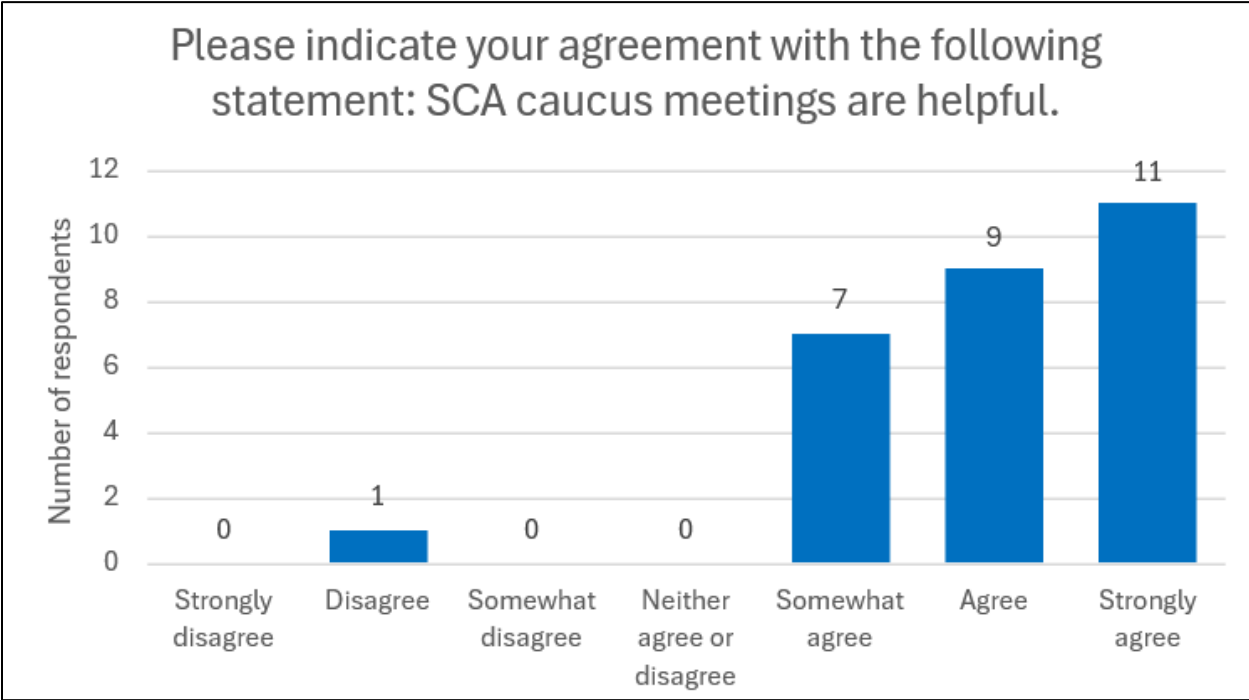
- Tease out the policy questions in committee agendas for the caucus to consider
- Provide examples of successful policies to strengthen understanding of the issue
 - *“...especially for small cities - sample policy would be very helpful. If everyone wants streamlined ADUs, who has effective policy already written?”*
- Standardize materials for all committees; provide materials in a timely manner
- Connect SCA and PIC positions to the caucus materials
 - *“Having the regional meeting agenda, along with SCA/PIC recommendations. It is helpful to have that information, so we aren't just representing our own cities... We do our best from what we know but it may not be all-representative.”*
- Provide summaries and breakdowns of issues in the caucus materials
- Provide insights beyond what's in the packet – amendments, Seattle & King County positions

New Appointee Onboarding

- Ensure that new appointees get calendar updates and materials
- Improve new appointee onboarding; brief appointees on the committee and issues prior to first meeting
 - *“First committee I was on, there was no introduction. I didn't receive the material to read prior to meeting and figured out 3/4 the way through that they all must have been reading something...”*

Policy Support for SCA Network

- Provide policy analysis for issues affecting all cities (i.e. Homelessness)
 - *“Individual cities even within a caucus area might not know or understand area needs. That should always be a prime area for staff to communicate possibilities as well as problems.”*
 - *“I'd like to ask my policy analyst about what other cities are doing about [an issue] and get some direction on who I should reach out to.”*
- Develop “white papers” or position papers on issues for SCA members to reference
 - *“[There is a need for] more widely accessible reporting out summaries from each committee... potentially white paper topics like MSRC has.”*
- Provide reports from caucuses on actions and issues
 - *“...it would be great to have a better sense of what's happening in all the regional groups. Perhaps SCA policy staff could share quick updates on their policy areas in a newsletter with all SCA electeds?”*
- Provide education sessions on regional policy issues



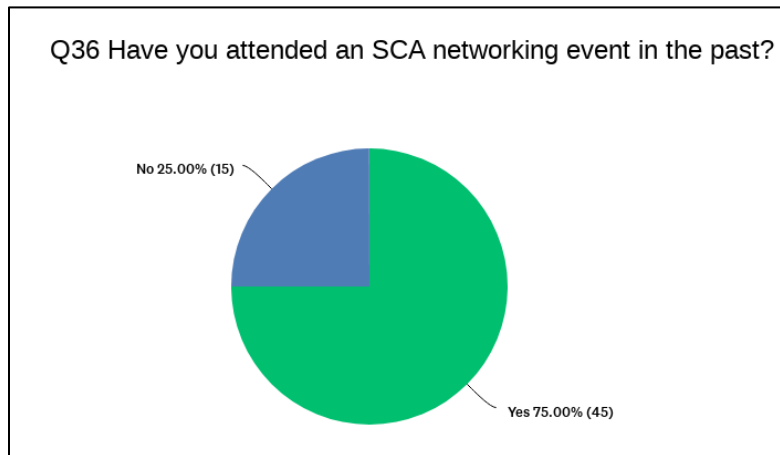
“Would love to see better focus on our role as policymakers. Especially when a regional board/committee is more focused on programming and administration. What are the problem statements and policy questions we should dig into? What is the current state of a particular system and what could be better?”

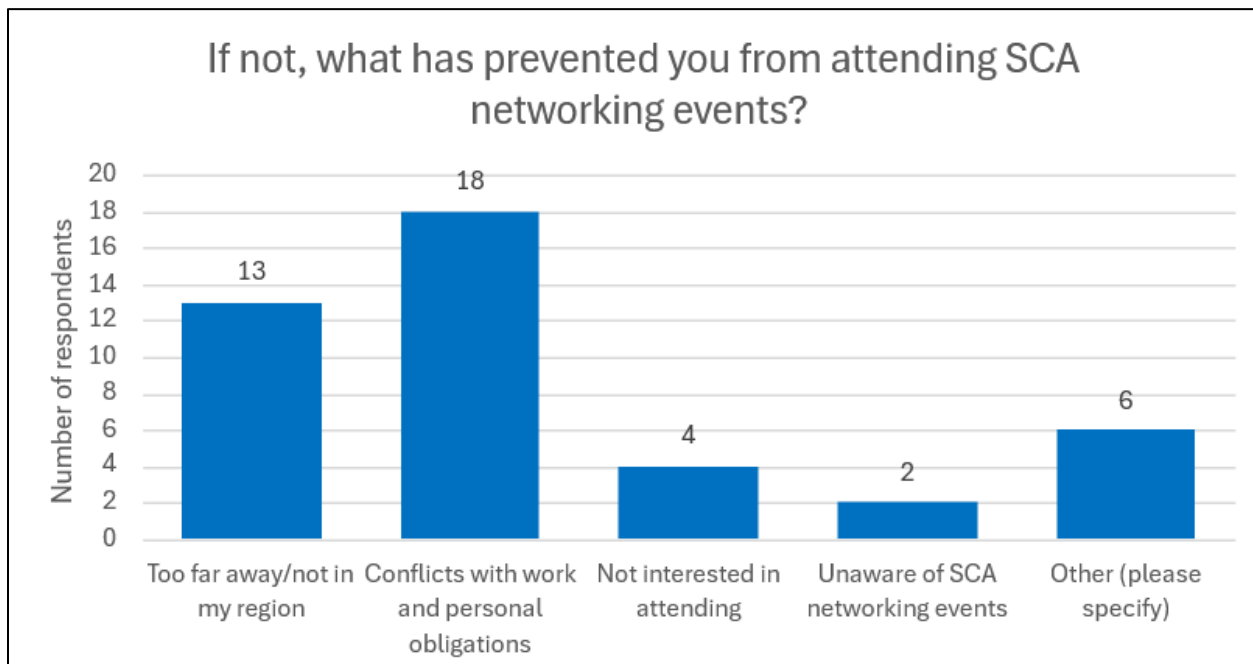
Networking & Events

“SCA has served an increasingly important role for the cities in King County, and a good platform for the sponsors to be able to share what they are doing. As both a former elected official and now an employee of a sponsor, sharing new information and providing new opportunities for sponsors to share information provides a great deal of value to SCA.”

Summary

Overall, most respondents enjoy SCA’s networking events; the median rating for attendee’s experience is 7 stars out of 10. Many respondents expressed that outreach for SCA’s networking events could be improved, as well as a strong preference for the location of events to rotate around the county. Some suggested incorporating small group policy discussions, providing different opportunities for members to meaningfully connect, and rotating event days and times. Many respondents gave suggestions for speakers, trainings, and educational sessions for SCA to consider for future events, including hearing from state elected officials and learning how state and federal policies will impact cities.





“Hard to come back [after the pandemic] and most organizations are struggling with the same question; How do we draw people together again in a meaningful way?”

Major Themes

Facilitating Interactions & Discussions

- Many would appreciate small group discussions incorporated into networking events; provide opportunities for city officials to collaborate and for sponsors to gain insight on regional issues
 - *“Perhaps more opportunities to talk about issues and solutions with councilmembers from other jurisdictions...”*
- Provide discussion questions and engage the audience in the presentations
 - *“Content has been helpful...Format does well in allowing for key speakers but then could use more structure to facilitate interaction of attendees.”*
 - *“I believe the format is reasonable but not engaging. If SCA is interested in having workshop style meetings that stoke conversation, breaking attendees into groups for discussion or smaller seminar-style presentations would be beneficial...”*
- Encourage new attendees to engage by making the space welcoming; one-on-one interactions with Executive Director can open the door

Increasing Value and Attendance

- Events provide great opportunities for networking
- Many respondents suggest rotating the events throughout the region; many are unable to attend due to the location
 - *“Would be prefer some different locations for events, and in other cities...”*
 - *“Consider rotating the dates a bit more and perhaps the locations. Continuing to hold these events on Wednesdays [conflicts] with standing meetings for some*

agencies. Would be nice to see some variety in scheduling so that we can all attend."

- Host events on other days of the week, not just Wednesday
- Connect presentations directly to the needs of member cities

Value for Sponsors

- Sponsors find that events are insightful and relevant to regional policy issues
 - *"I find these meetings insightful and relevant to regional issues. They provide a platform for Lumen to know what is important for our regulatory partners and how best to stay in touch with decision makers [from] member cities."*
- Events provide opportunities for sponsors to engage with regional decision-makers

"...pick a topic that most if not all of us are familiar with or dealing with, have the speaker talk about it and then allow time for the group to network and talk to each other in small groups ... [this will] help us build stronger relationships with elected officials from other jurisdictions."

Item 9:
Regional Boards & Committees Update
UPDATE

SCA Staff Contacts

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Aj Foltz, SCA Policy Analyst, aj@soundcities.org , (206) 849-3056

Laura Belmont, SCA Policy Analyst, laura@soundcities.org , (206) 849-7864

Update

At the April PIC meeting, SCA policy staff will briefly update members on current and upcoming hot topics in regional boards and committees.

Regional Policy Committee (RPC)

The RPC unanimously approved the amended 2026-2031 Parks Levy renewal. The SCA caucus members worked diligently on behalf of SCA cities to lower the levy rate and increase the direct allocation to cities. Compared to the Executive proposed \$0.2443 levy rate, the RPC approved a \$0.2323 levy rate, and an additional \$25M direct distribution to opportunity areas in King County. The King County Council will take up the levy at their April 15 meeting, and if approved, the levy will be placed on the August 5, 2025 ballot. (SCA Lead: Andie Parnell)

Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)

In addition to discussions regarding 2026-2027 rates, SWAC is beginning their process of reviewing and updating the Comprehensive Plan chapter by chapter. SWAC members have also provided feedback on the Long-Term Disposal Study report and an accompanying FAQ that will be published alongside the report. (SCA Lead: Laura Belmont)

Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC)

The 2026 rates have been a primary focus of the RWQC, as have various projects related to regulatory requirements such as the Mouth of the Duwamish Combined Sewer Overflow Consent Decree. Additionally, RWQC members have been reviewing materials related to the Vision for Clean Water, which is meant to guide the county's work in wastewater and beyond through 2100. (SCA Lead: Laura Belmont)

King County Board of Health (BOH)

Public Health – Seattle & King County has released their [report on the 100 Days of Action](#), a gun violence prevention initiative. BOH members will also be receiving updates at their April meeting on the Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention. (SCA Lead: Laura Belmont)

Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund (MIDD) Advisory Committee

The MIDD Advisory Committee has been focused on preparing for the renewal of the MIDD behavioral health sales tax, a 0.1% sales tax ordinance that pays for behavioral health programs and services. As part of this process, subject matter expert steering committees and workgroups are developing recommendations for the renewal plan. The Advisory Committee is also working to rename the sales tax for the renewal. (SCA Lead: Laura Belmont)

King County Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC)

On March 26, 2025, the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) voted to approve the housing growth target reconciliation requests submitted by SCA member cities Carnation & Snoqualmie. The SCA GMPC Caucus members have been working diligently for the past year to review the requests and honor the needs of SCA's member cities. (SCA Lead: Aj Foltz)

King County Affordable Housing Committee (AHC)

This year, the Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) is tasked with developing amendments to its charter as well as discussing and shaping the future of the committee. This discussion began at the March meeting, yielding the first round of draft charter amendments. The SCA Caucus is weighing the needs of all SCA member cities and bringing this perspective to the committee discussion. The final draft charter will be discussed and approved by the Growth Management Planning Council this fall. (SCA Lead: Aj Foltz)

King County Emergency Management Advisory Committee (EMAC)

The Emergency Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) is standing up a new workgroup focused on cybersecurity issues. All city staff and elected officials are encouraged to attend Cybersecurity Workgroup meetings, regardless of your affiliation with emergency management, IT/technology, or EMAC itself. The workgroup is open to all who are interested. The next Cybersecurity Workgroup date is still to be determined but will be communicated to the SCA network. (SCA Lead: Aj Foltz)



April 9, 2025
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 10:
Levies and Ballot Measures in King County
UPDATE

SCA Staff Contact

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Update

The upcoming King County levies and ballot measures are below. PIC members are encouraged to share upcoming or recently approved city and special districts levies and ballot measures with SCA staff.

Upcoming Ballot Measures – King County				
Year	Month	Measure	Proposed Levy Rate	Status Update
2025	April	Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) Levy renewal	\$0.0275 per \$1000 of assessed property value	Slated for the April 22 special election
2025	August	Parks Levy renewal	\$0.2329 per \$1000 of assed property value (increase from current \$0.1973 levy rate)	Final action scheduled for April 15 King County Council meeting
2025	November	Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy renewal	\$0.250 per \$1000 of assed property value (decrease from current \$0.265 levy rate)	EMS staff has been meeting with the 11 individual jurisdictions required to approve the levy by resolution; Staff will provide more information to PIC in May

Other Renewals – King County		
Year	Renewal	Status Update
2026	Mental Illness & Drug Dependency (MIDD) 0.1% sales tax renewal	DCHS is hosting community engagement sessions and working with the Executive’s Office to finalize