



SCA Public Issues Committee

July 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/89904950091?pwd=JSuB5xTz2yA7wdaxAYduD5eDOF0FS9.1>

Or dial in by phone: 1-253-215-8782 / 899 0495 0091 / Passcode: 507670

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 – June 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes](#) 5 minutes
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4. **Chair’s Report** – Chris Roberts, Shoreline, Chair 5 minutes
5. **Executive Director’s Report** - Robert Feldstein, SCA Executive Director 5 minutes
6. [Regional Board and Committee Appointments](#) 5 minutes
ACTION
Page 17
Robert Feldstein, Executive Director
7. [King County Transportation District Sales Tax](#) 30 minutes
DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION
Page 19
Robert Feldstein, Executive Director
8. [New Indigent Defense Caseload Standards](#) 20 minutes
DISCUSSION
Page 27
Andie Parnell, Senior Policy Analyst
9. [Updates/Informational Items](#) 10 minutes
Page 32
 - a. Criminal Justice Sales Tax
 - b. [Overview of 2025 County Tax Proposals and Levies to Date](#)
 - c. [Public Issues Committee Revamp](#)
 - d. [Revised Attendance Protocols for SCA Caucus Members on Regional Boards & Committees](#)

- e. July SCA Newsletter
- f. [Regional Board and Committee Updates](#)
- g. [Levies and Ballot Measures](#)

10. For the Good of the Order

11. Adjourn

Upcoming Events

- a. SCA Monthly Leadership Meeting with the Executive's Office - TBD
- b. SCA Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday, July 16, 2025 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – Renton City Hall, Conferencing Center
- c. SCA Public Issues Committee Meeting – Wednesday, September 10, 2025 – 7:00 – 9:00 PM – Mercer Island Community & Event Center

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
KCEC	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

June 11, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Online Meeting

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, Public Issues Committee (PIC) Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. 22 cities were represented. ([Attachment A](#)).

Guests present included: Tracy Taylor, Auburn (PIC Alternate); Katie Halse, Bellevue Staff; Amy Tsai, Redmond Staff; Brandon Miles, Tukwila Staff; Tania Mondaca, King County Staff; and Misha Lujan, King County Executive Staff.

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 PIC Chair asked if there was anyone in attendance who would like to provide public comment and encouraged any individuals with comment to contact sca@soundcities.org .

Hearing none, Chair Roberts closed this portion of the meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes – May 14, 2025 Meeting

This item was moved to later in the agenda due to lack of quorum. Item was addressed once quorum was reached, following Item 5. Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair asked for any questions or amendments to the minutes of the May 14 SCA PIC meeting.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah moved, seconded by Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2025 SCA PIC Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Chair's Report

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair shared that, thanks to leadership, SCA's monthly meetings with the King County Executive have restarted. Chair Roberts stated these meetings were regular pre-pandemic, and this past month's meeting represents the first once since then.

5. Executive Director's Report

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein shared that PIC is the first business item at the meetings held with the King County Executive's office. Feldstein stated the Regional Utilities Affordability

Summit was discussed at the meeting with the Executive's office, with planning underway for the event to hopefully be held in October. He also shared that the Criminal Justice Sales Tax was placed on this PIC meeting agenda to inform his next meeting with the Executive's office.

Feldstein also reported on discussions in the Regional Policy Committee (RPC) related to the EMS Levy, sharing that the group appealed for the ordinance to go before RPC and proposed an amendment requesting annual reports to go before RPC as well to allow for greater engagement and access to data. He thanked SCA RPC Caucus members and Chair Auburn Mayor Nancy Backus for their work. Feldstein also stated that he joined an organics management panel at RPC, and thanked city staff members who helped with preparation for that meeting.

Feldstein also shared that SCA Policy Analyst Aj Foltz will be taking on the role of Senior Policy Analyst given current SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell's departure, though Parnell will stay on for a bit longer to ease the transition. The search for a Policy Analyst to fill Foltz's role is underway; a timeline will be finalized soon.

6. Regional Board and Committee Updates

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair opened the floor for questions regarding the regional boards and committee memorandum from SCA staff. Hearing none, Chair Roberts closed this portion of the agenda.

7. Revising the Public Issues Committee

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein overviewed the memo on this agenda item and invited members to discuss its proposed contents. He stated that PIC used to be a larger regional driver in policies and consensus, as well as a connection point for regional committees and boards. Feldstein stated that while PIC does not have to be identical to its prior renditions, the goal is to recreate discussing areas of concern amongst the body. He proposed this could be accomplished through shifting the focus from fewer presentations and instead to more conversation. He acknowledged that PIC may be the only place where smaller cities receive those presentations and proposed a separate meeting ahead of PIC to allow for cities to be briefed. Feldstein also stated a need to identify issues earlier; he proposed bringing issues to PIC for initial discussion, members subsequently discussing the item with their cities, and then ultimately having a second discussion at PIC informed by local discussions. Feldstein opened the floor for questions.

Councilmember Toni Troutner, Kent, shared optimism for PIC returning to this direction, and stated that the goal of SCA is to support other cities in cases where it would not hurt your own city.

Feldstein listed various scenarios where PIC discussion would be relevant, such as ahead of committee action, when the SCA caucus is in agreement with each other but disagrees with other committee members, when there is disagreement among caucus members, or when a committee has recently completed a large body of work. Outside of committee work, other reasons a city might bring an item to PIC could be to discuss how cities are addressing a challenge or opportunity, or when there is concern about a policy or action.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, expressed appreciation for Feldstein's energy and enthusiasm and shared her excitement for pre-PIC meetings and discussions that impact all of us.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, agreed with Curtis that this gets back to the purpose of PIC and gives members reasons to ensure we have quorum, rather than just sharing information on items that may not be of urgency to cities. She stated that this presents an opportunity for us to share best practices, make sure we have one voice, and focus on our core vision.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ronn Mercer, Duvall, shared he is new to PIC and thinks moving toward discussion rather than presentation is of value. Mercer shared that as a smaller city with smaller staff, some initial analysis on an issue and the impact of related decisions would be helpful.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, stated that this is his 15th year on PIC and that he feels this list is a good distillation of what both newcomers and long-term members want to see from PIC. Marts liked moving longer items to before PIC to allow for greater conversation. Marts also stated that PIC's influence on County-level actions also depends on Feldstein's relationship with the King County Executive and PIC members' relationships with the King County Council. He shared that getting consensus from PIC has value to the county and that PIC's input will help the County get items done, which he hopes will encourage them to bring items to PIC in a timely fashion.

Feldstein added another driver of these proposed changes is the survey results.

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair shared that the amount members bring of themselves and their city's values is what makes PIC work. He stated that PIC will achieve more if members are engaged, informed, and have discussed items with their cities.

Feldstein shared that staff are excited about and will support these changes, but that success also hinges on the participation of PIC members; he encouraged members to spread the word about what PIC is doing.

Chair Roberts shared a desire for greater conversation with caucus chairs to bring items to PIC. Feldstein agreed.

8. House Bill 2015 & New Criminal Justice Sales Tax

Presentation by SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell. Materials attached and available [here](#) .

Parnell overviewed existing sales taxes allowed by state law. Public Safety Sales Tax is for any city, town, or county. The tax rate for cities or towns can be up to 0.1% with voter approval, while counties can tax up to 0.3% with voter approval; however, combined city and county rates may not exceed 0.3%. The Criminal Justice Sales Tax is available to any county, amounting up to 0.1% without voter approval.

Parnell then overviewed revenue requirements for the existing sales taxes. The Public Safety Sales Tax requires one-third of revenues to be used for criminal justice purposes, fire protection purposes, or both. Its revenues may be shared between the city and county, with the split of revenue determined by who placed the tax on the ballot. At this time, King County does not have a Public Safety Sales Tax, and only a few SCA cities do. The revenues of the Criminal Justice Sales Tax must all be used for criminal justice purposes. Ten percent of revenue is distributed to the county, with the remaining 90 percent shared between the county and its cities on a per-capita basis.

Parnell then introduced the two components of the Washington State House Bill 2015 (HB 2015): the Local Law Enforcement Grant Program, and a new local criminal justice sales and use tax.

The Local Law Enforcement Grant Program aims to provide direct support to local and tribal law enforcement agencies in hiring, retaining, and training. Grant funding may be used to recruit and fund new law enforcement officers, county correction officers, peer counselors, and behavioral health personnel working in co-response. It is funded by \$100 million of the state's operating budget and expires on June 30, 2028. To be eligible for the program, agencies must receive sales tax funding, have established policies that comply with state law, complete various trainings and required Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) certifications, and comply with data reporting. Applicants must also submit staffing plans and annual response data to CJTC. Selection of grant recipients will prioritize, in order, those seeking to establish co-response or community immersion law enforcement programs, those who currently maintain co-response teams and are seeking grants to hire additional law enforcement officers, and all other applicants.

The new local criminal justice sales and use tax authorizes cities or counties to create a 0.1% sales and use tax for criminal justice purposes, by resolution or ordinance, without voter approval, by June 30, 2028. To be eligible, cities or counties must demonstrate compliance with the Local Law Enforcement Grant Program requirements and submit documentation to CJTC, and the imposition and collection of the new tax may only occur if and when the city or county receives the CJTC grant. The tax has no revenue sharing requirements and requires annual reporting to AWC or WSAC on how the money received from the tax was expended. However, if the city or county voters have rejected the imposition of a criminal justice or public safety sales and use tax within the past 12 months, the city or county cannot impose the new sales and use tax. Additionally, if the city or county has not adopted a resolution or ordinance to impose the tax by June 30, 2028, the city or county may only impose the tax with voter approval.

King County Executive Braddock has transmitted a proposal for a countywide 0.1% criminal justice sales tax to King County Council. If approved, the new revenue would be included in 2026-2027 county budget and is expected to address the anticipated \$175-180M budget shortfalls. The proposal is scheduled for action by the Budget and Fiscal Management Committee in July. A Public Safety Roundtable will be convened in July as part of Executive Braddock's 200-day plan. Participants will include SCA leadership, SCA members selected by the PIC Nominating Committee, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, King County Sheriff's Office, and City of Seattle.

Deputy Mayor Harry Steinmetz, Des Moines, asked whether the county implementing their tax pre-empts cities from doing the same. Parnell stated it does not pre-empt cities, there is no revenue sharing requirement, and that cities can implement the tax so long as they are eligible. She also clarified that the failed ballot measure criteria only applies to sales and use tax measures.

Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, asked whether the award is linked to a specific hire or if it is a general allocation, whether funds are returned or maintained if an officer does not complete training, and what guidance will be provided in terms of supplanting the rules. Parnell shared that funds are specific to law enforcement officers, peer counselors, and behavioral health workers, but there is no further specificity. Parnell also stated that she was unsure what would happen to funding in the situation of an officer being let go, and that there are many outstanding questions on the implementation of the program. She stated that she is unsure what training or help CJTC will provide to grant applicants. Nieuwenhuis also asked if Parnell has seen any comments from the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, as this might be difficult for cities that do not have the infrastructure or staffing in place to support the necessary reporting. Parnell stated she would follow up.

Councilmember Suzan Torguson, North Bend, asked if the sales tax was connected to grant requirements. Parnell replied that they are separate, but to be eligible for the sales tax, cities must meet the grant eligibility requirements. Torguson expressed that the extra requirements posed a barrier to achieving the basic need of paying for police services, and that she hopes cities can use these funds to address problems rather than making it so difficult that cities are left out and unable to pay for police services.

Steinmetz shared that Des Moines has a behavioral health specialist which frees patrol officers up for police activities, and that he is willing to share information with other cities. Steinmetz also asked whether there was any discussion around what will happen at the end of the grant funding and whether the anticipation is that the sales tax creates a revenue stream to keep officers on that were hired with grant money. Parnell stated that it is unclear what follows June 30, 2028, as much of the next steps will depend on seeing where the state budget is at the time.

Councilmember Toni Troutner, Kent, stated that a top legislative priority for Kent was getting additional money to hire police officers. She shared that she feels it is misleading to say that the city is raising taxes for public safety yet not raising enough money to hire officers such that the public cannot see the difference and thinks other large cities may feel similarly.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, applauded the City of Kent's efforts on sales tax for cities. Backus stated that the three years of grants are similar to the federal grants: these are great talking points, but do not really help cities in need of additional public safety officers. She also said she was unsure if there is a requirement to retain officers after those three years.

Mayor Henry Sladek, Skykomish, shared that as a small city that contracts with county, he assumes if the county raises funds, they can increase the staffing in the Sheriff's office which somewhat subsidizes the pool of funding they receive as a contract city. Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair shared that is what he has heard from Councilmember Dembowski and that if the tax passes it can keep community court open, fund patrols in unincorporated areas, and help with overall staffing across the board for county and contract cities. He warned that if the levy does not pass, many contract cities will be short on officers and costs will go up.

Roberts also shared that Shoreline is unlikely to go for their own sales tax levy but is supportive of the County doing so as he wants to see the community court preserved and ensure there are officers in the unincorporated areas of the county.

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein asked the body for input on who SCA's representatives may be for the roundtable and for cities' priorities for uses of funds.

Nieuwenhuis shared that Bellevue's top public safety priorities are recruitment, retention, and wellness of officers; training; joint crisis response; community growth and capacity pressures; and potential loss of federal funding. He asked how the roundtable will hear from cities and how feedback will be shared with the County. Feldstein stated the roundtable is being hosted by the King County Executive to inform how the tax will appear in the September budget.

Torguson stated she would hope the 0.1% would allow cities to use funds for anything related to criminal justice, since North Bend is looking at laying off city employees to pay for public safety, as costs have dramatically increased and they have no way to suddenly raise the funds. She asked whether we as a group can request that the rules allow for cities to utilize the funds in a way that makes sense for the city.

Steinmetz echoed Torguson's remarks, stating that each city has unique issues, all cities need help, and it is difficult to prescribe from a county level what every city must look like. He stated that the County has the benefit of economy of scale, as some items involved in law enforcement are better and easier to operate on a larger scale; since the county tax would apply to cities with their own police departments, it would be ideal if the County can provide some of those larger functions of law enforcement that benefit from the economy of scale.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, shared that there are county-wide crime issues that necessitate county-wide responses and that he does not want cities to outbid one another. Marts noted recent attention on high net wealth home invasion and that Issaquah sees a large difference between violent crime versus property crime.

Feldstein stated he wants to manage expectations about letting cities choose how to spend money, as the County faces a huge deficit and the sales tax will likely pay for a hole of existing items that the County does not have money for. He stated that SCA will use the typical nomination process to identify members for the roundtable.

Deputy Mayor Sue-Ann Hohimer, Normandy Park, shared that she wants roundtable representatives with fire since the County pushes many items and everyone is tax-fatigued and feels that they pay and do not see nearly enough. Hohimer stated other causes the County funds do not show fruitfulness, and that representatives should ask to see results of where the money is going, how it is being spent, and what the resulting improvements have been. She stated she hopes that the representatives are willing to bring a big voice and lean into the fact that while Washington has come a long way and she is proud of that work, she wants to see more from County and State governments.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ronn Mercer, Duvall, stated he is unsure how Duvall will weigh in but appreciates Feldstein's comments. He shared that Duvall leverages some services and has a relatively small level of crime. Mercer stated they finally fully staffed their police force and are struggling to maintain it, and do not want to bring people on just to have them cycle off. He shared fatigue around the cost and that while it is a shared County service, there is not always visible representation in city limits.

9. King County Transportation District Sales Tax

Presentation by SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell. Materials attached and available [here](#) .

Parnell overviewed that state law allows for the creation of Transportation Benefit Districts (TBD) to fund and implement transportation improvements, established by the legislative authority of a county or city. Funding sources available to TBDs include vehicle license fees, sales taxes, development impact fees, tolls, property tax excess levy, and Local Improvement District. A sales tax is not to exceed 0.3%. A councilmanic sales tax can be for 10 years at a rate of 0.1%, and renewal requires voter approval. A voter-approved sales tax can be for 0.2%. Sales tax funds must be used for transportation improvement, such as investment in or operation, preservation, and maintenance of new or existing programs.

The King County Transportation District (KCTD) was created in 2014 with the support of SCA, informed by PIC policy positions. It is governed by the KCTD Board, consisting of all 9 King County Councilmembers. KCTD placed a transit funding measure on the ballot in 2014, which was not approved. Another measure was discussed in March 2020, but was not pursued due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Locally, many cities have their own transportation districts funded by their own sales taxes.

A 10-year 0.1% sales and use tax is now being proposed by the County for transportation improvements. The tax would be imposed countywide in addition to the sales tax currently imposed by local TBDs and would generate an estimated year-one revenue of \$95 million. Revenue would be evenly distributed between roads (focused on high-priority road and bridge projects) and metro (focused on safety and security upgrades for operators and riders).

The KCTD is an independent government; only the KCTD Board has decision-making authority. The proposed sales tax does not require review by the Executive, regional committees, local

jurisdictions, or other governing bodies. In the future, the King County Council could vote by ordinance to assume the KCTD into King County, meaning responsibilities and funding authority would then be managed by King County Executive, Council, and regional committees. For now, the Regional Transit Committee only tangentially has authority over Metro's tax revenues through the renewal of Metro's three policy documents.

Covington Councilmember Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., SCA PIC Vice Chair corrected the chart of local TBDs, stating that Covington removed their \$20 car tab in January due to a sales tax increase.

Councilmember Syd Dawson, Maple Valley, shared that Maple Valley also removed their car tab fee due to implementation of a 0.1% sales tax.

Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, stated that he knows the County is facing pressures from revenues not coming in, but the cities face these same pressures. He shared that this is a great opportunity for SCA to weigh in strongly and get upstream to provide input before major decisions happen in King County. Nieuwenhuis said he was unsure of any outreach from County Councilmembers to Bellevue, which he found concerning. He stated that with the AFIS levy in April, the Public Safety and Criminal Justice Sales Tax, MIDD renewal, Parks Levy Renewal, TBD tax, and the EMS levy, he hopes voters will still have some appetite but that this list is concerning. Nieuwenhuis said voters are facing tight budgets, higher taxes, sales and property taxes, and more. He asked how the distribution of revenue to roads and metro will look in this upcoming proposal. Parnell stated it is proposed as a 50-50 split to roads and metro.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, echoed Nieuwenhuis's concerns regarding tax fatigue. Curtis stated she thinks SCA needs to clearly communicate to King County how much the assessed value is per city and what kind of money this brings in, as cities contribute a lot to these levies. She said this is not required to go to the Regional Policy Committee or Regional Transit Committee, but we can request it. Curtis asked if the road improvements are in unincorporated areas of the County, as cities need to benefit from contributing to the tax and stated it may be worth PIC creating a letter on this.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, agreed with Nieuwenhuis that many tax measures on the ballot, including renewals. Backus stated that we fought for the Parks Levy rate to go down to 23.5¢ (from 25¢) per \$1000, which results in \$1.5 billion in revenue, that the EMS Levy is also at 25¢ per \$1000 and thus another \$1.5 billion, and that MIDD is also up for renewal.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, requested more information to determine whether tax rates are actually higher, or if they remain the same once inflation and population growth are taken into account. Marts stated the context and history would be helpful to respond to questions like this.

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein appreciated Marts's comments and stated that SCA will have a look across the various King County governments and add them up to determine whether it is more money per person over time. Feldstein also urged members to not regard the County

and County Council as a monolith, as he has heard various timelines and viewpoints, and stated this indicates that it is a good time for those on the fence to hear from SCA members. He also shared that in discussions with the staff of TBD Chair Councilmember Claudia Balducci, the staff did not anticipate both discussion and action occurring in one meeting. [CLARIFICATION AFTER THE MEETING: Staff from Councilmember Balducci clarified that since the KCTD discussed the potential tax in their June 2 Special Meeting, it was possible that there would be a vote in the next KCTD meeting, sometime in July.]

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair stated that information on tax rates per city would be informative.

Mayor Henry Sladek, Skykomish, asked for clarification on whether the 0.1% proposal affects cities as well if enacted by the county, which Parnell stated it does.

10. Levies and Ballot Measures

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair requested that members share with SCA staff information regarding city ballot measures and levies, or to share relevant information verbally.

11. June Newsletter

SCA Policy Analyst Aj Foltz provided a brief update on the new SCA newsletter. The launch of the monthly SCA newsletter was informed by feedback from the 2025 SCA Membership Survey. The purpose of the newsletter is to engage regularly with our entire membership and keep our member cities informed of SCA's work. The proposed newsletter content will include an Executive Director update, updates from the Public Issues Committee, updates from policy staff on boards and committees, and upcoming events, lunch & learns, and tours. The newsletter will be disseminated to SCA member city elected officials and affiliated staff.

12. Proposed Standing Item: Upcoming SCA Meeting with the Executive's Office

Executive Director Robert Feldstein shared that himself; Des Moines Mayor, Traci Buxton, SCA President; Renton Mayor, Armondo Pavone, SCA Vice President; and Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair share PIC's thoughts in regular meetings with the King County Executive's Office. Feldstein stated he has high-level thoughts on items discussed at the meetings but opened the floor for members to share any other items that are important to bring back to PIC at a follow-up meeting following discussions with the Executive's Office.

13. For the Good of the Order

There were no items for the good of the order.

14. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Public Issues Committee Meeting – Attachment A
June 11, 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	Sue Ann Hohimer	Jack Lamanna
North Bend	Errol Tremolada	Suzan Torguson
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	Hannah Hedrick
Woodinville	David Edwards	James Randolph
Yarrow Point	Katy Kinney Harris	

SCA PIC June 11, 2025

Attachment B: Chat Log

(no content to record)



July 9, 2025
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 6:
Regional Board and Committee Appointments
ACTION

Staff Contact

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

SCA PIC Nominating Committee Members

Mayor Troy Linnell, Algona, Chair; Councilmember Ruth Pérez, Renton; Councilmember Cara Christensen, Snoqualmie (*absent*); Councilmember Paul Charbonneau, Newcastle (*absent*)

Action

The PIC Nominating Committee met on June 18, 2025 to recommend mid-2025 SCA Board and Committee Appointments for consideration by the PIC. The PIC is anticipated to take action at the July 9, 2025, PIC meeting to recommend appointments to the SCA Board of Directors, who will consider PIC's recommendations at their meeting on July 16, 2025.

Background

A nominating committee of the Public Issues Committee (PIC) consisting of one representative of each SCA Regional Caucus (South, North, South Valley, and Snoqualmie Valley) is appointed annually by the Chair of the PIC, and makes recommendations to the PIC on appointments. The PIC in turn makes recommendations on regional board and committee appointments to the SCA Board of Directors.

Per SCA Bylaws, appointees to major regional committees shall be selected from among elected officials otherwise qualified to serve in such positions, in accordance with the terms of the enabling documents for creating such boards and committees. Appointees shall represent the positions of all SCA member cities. Equitable geographic distribution shall be considered in recommending appointments to the Board of Directors.

No member shall serve more than six (6) consecutive years on a regional board or committee appointed by SCA. This limitation shall not apply to alternates to regional boards and committees. Once a member has served six (6) consecutive years on a regional board or committee, they shall be ineligible to serve on said committee for a minimum of one (1) year. Pursuant to a bylaw amendment adopted on December 2, 2015, "In extraordinary circumstances, the Board may make exceptions to the six-year term limit upon the recommendation of the PIC nominating committee and the PIC when a supermajority (2/3) of Board members present and voting at a meeting finds that doing so would be in the best interests of SCA and its member cities."

The PIC Nominating Committee met on June 18, 2025, to review applications for vacancies on the Domestic Violence Initiative Regional Task Force (DVI) and the Joint Recommendations Committee (JRC). One application was received for each committee. The Nominating Committee recommends appointing Councilmember Alex Andrade, Burien, as Alternate to the DVI; and Councilmember Jessica Merizan, Carnation, as Member to the JRC.

Domestic Violence Initiative Regional Task Force (DVI)

Seat	Name	City	Caucus
Member	Satwinder Kaur	Kent	S
Member	Susan Honda	Federal Way	S
Member	Yolanda Trout-Manuel	Auburn	S
Member	Troy Linnell	Algona	SV
Alternate	Neal Black	Kirkland	N
Alternate	Hannah Hedrick	Tukwila	S
Alternate	Alex Andrade	Burien	S
Alternate			

Joint Recommendations Committee (JRC)

Seat	Name	City	Caucus
Member	Amy McHenry	Duvall	SNO
Member	Elizabeth Porter	Covington	S
Member	Karen Howe	Sammamish	N
Member	Jessica Merizan	Carnation	SNO
Alternate			
Alternate			

The following committee positions remained unfilled following the Nominating Committee's meeting on April 28:

- Domestic Violence Initiative Task Force (1 Alternate)
- Joint Recommendations Committee (2 Alternates)
- Aging and Disability Services Advisory Council (1 Member)
- Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) Advisory Committee (1 Member)

Next Steps

Following action by the PIC, recommendations will be forwarded to the SCA Board for final approval at their next meeting on July 16, 2025.

Item 7:**King County Transportation District Sales Tax*****DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION***

SCA Staff Contact

Robert Feldstein, SCA Executive Director, robert@soundcities.org, 206-499-4268

Discussion and Possible Action

At the July PIC meeting, members will discuss SCA's draft letter to the King County Transportation District. Proposed language changes received by July 2 are described below. PIC representatives are encouraged to discuss the draft letter and the proposed changes with their cities ahead of the July PIC meeting. The redlined version is available in [Attachment A](#), while the clean version can be found in [Attachment B](#).

Note: emergency PIC action is expected for this item. Per the SCA policies, this requires two votes. First, 85% of the PIC members in attendance must vote to approve taking emergency action. Second, a vote of 2/3 is required supporting the action for the advancement of a policy position to the Board.

Background

Transportation Benefit Districts (TBDs) are independent governments that fund and implement transportation improvements. The King County Transportation District (KCTD) is the county-wide TBD, governed by the nine King County Councilmembers. On June 2, the King County Council proposed a 10-year, 0.1% sales tax for transportation improvements, with proceeds split evenly between the Road Services Division and Metro Transit.

Under state law, the TBD Boards can impose a 10-year, 0.1% sales tax without voter approval and are not required to consult or seek input from other jurisdictions or governing bodies, such as the Regional Policy Committee. The 0.1% sales tax would be imposed countywide and would be in addition to the TBD sales tax, and vehicle license fees, currently imposed by the 19 King County jurisdictions with their own TBDs.

SCA Letter

At the June PIC meeting, members discussed the proposed KCTD sales tax increase. In response to the shared concerns, SCA staff drafted a letter to the KCTD with the overall sentiment that (1) now is not the right time for a new sales tax, and (2) regional collaboration is critical before choosing a new transportation revenue option.

SCA staff shared the initial draft with SCA city intergovernmental relations staff for their initial feedback before sharing it with PIC representatives and the SCA Board. This approach mirrors

our regional committee process, in which staff collaborate first to deliver the most informed work products and drafts to our elected officials.

Proposed Changes

The proposed changes have been put forward by PIC representatives. Most of these revisions have been incorporated into the new draft up for discussion and review by PIC members at the July meeting. The redlined version is available in [Attachment A](#), while the clean version can be found in [Attachment B](#).

1. Yarrow Point:

- a. Changing “alternatives” to “alternative” in paragraph 1, page 1
- b. Removing “even” in paragraph 3, page 2

2. Des Moines:

- a. Tightening the language in paragraph 2, page 1
- b. Revising language in paragraph 2, page 2 to avoid redundancy
- c. Removing language in paragraph 3, page 2 for clarity around messaging
- d. Adding “that” in paragraph 4, page 2

3. Renton:

- a. Adding “Cities across the region draw upon the same limited sources of revenue that fund essential services such as public safety, behavioral health, housing, street maintenance, and community programs. Without a coordinated and strategic approach to taxation across the region, we risk undermining our collective ability to sustain the crucial services our residents expect and rely upon.” at the top of page 2

Emergency Action

SCA Bylaws 4.16.7e states: “Issues will be heard at one regularly scheduled meeting for discussion and may return no sooner than the next regularly scheduled meeting for action. *If not immediately addressing a policy issue renders SCA unable to take a position on a timely basis, 85% of those present at a regularly scheduled meeting may declare an issue an emergency and the issue may be discussed and voted upon at the same meeting.*”

Further, the SCA Bylaws requires a “vote of two thirds (2/3) represented in person at a meeting at which a quorum is present” for the advancement of a public policy position to the Board.



Sound Cities Association
6300 Southcenter Blvd., Suite 206
Tukwila, WA 98188

July XX, 2025

ATTN: King County Transportation District (KCTD)
Councilmember Claudia Balducci, KCTD Chair

Honorable King County Transportation District:

The Sound Cities Association is writing regarding the proposed 0.1% sales tax by the King County Transportation District (KCTD). Given the range of scheduled taxes this year and limited engagement to date, we are concerned about the timing and development of this funding proposal. With state and federal fiscal uncertainty, the proposed KCTD sales tax does not fully account for broader economic risks. While we understand and appreciate the deep and longstanding needs of the County's local roads and transit, we urge that any new tax be delayed, allowing time for alternatives revenue options to be thoroughly explored and policy priorities to be developed in partnership with local jurisdictions.

In 2025, the combined level of taxation for our residents and businesses is already high and is only going to increase this year with the new fiscal policies adopted and under consideration by the state and King County. First, Washington State anticipates raising an additional \$9 billion over the next four years ~~with the tax increases they adopted this year~~ from this year's tax increases, with much of that revenue paid by King County residents and businesses. Then, following the passage of the AFIS levy in April, and the potential passage of the Parks Levy and EMS Levy ~~ballot measures~~ later this year, the combined impact of all three levies cost property taxpayers around \$4 billion over the next six years. ~~In addition~~ Lastly and most recently, the County Executive has proposed submitted, and the Council is considering, ~~the councilmanic addition of a new~~ 0.1% sales tax for criminal justice.

Although each additional tax and levy fund vital countywide services, these increases not only add to the growing cost of living but also contribute to a shared and growing fatigue that risks the success of future local bonds and levies for essential local services. Cities across the region

draw upon the same limited sources of revenue that fund essential services such as public safety, behavioral health, housing, street maintenance, and community programs. Without a coordinated and strategic approach to taxation across the region, we risk undermining our collective ability to sustain the crucial services our residents expect and rely upon.

In addition, Our region and our residents value collaboration across jurisdictions, but the proposed KCTD sales tax lacks important regional input. This ~~unbalanced~~ legislative approach contradicts the inclusive principles of county governance, where jurisdictions that bear the tax burden should participate in decisions regarding revenue allocation. Although increases in recent levy renewals have added pressure on local jurisdictions and property owners, each of these levies was approved through collaborative processes involving the local jurisdictions. ~~Introducing a new sales tax and plan for allocation without meaningful local input contradicts our regional values of fundamental partnership and collaboration.~~

Local jurisdictions recognize the budgetary needs of the King County Roads Division and King County Metro, including Metro's safety and security needs. However, the County has not yet considered how Washington State's new expanded sales tax policies could help fill these revenue gaps. At the same time, we are preparing to have a regional conversation about the affordability crisis of our utilities and face the uncertainty of losing vital federal support for important functions, both in the County's and in Metro's budget. Given ~~these~~ the state and federal uncertainties, it is premature to impose a new sales tax and designate its use without further investigating other revenue sources, ~~and the scope and severity of the needs across both County Roads and Metro.~~

The thirty-eight jurisdictions of Sound Cities believe that the proposed KCTD sales tax should not be pursued this year, and that any new revenue will be ~~even~~ more successful with increased collaboration between King County and local jurisdictions. More time would allow for a thorough analysis of geographic needs, looking at alternative or additional revenue sources, and the development of appropriate solutions for a balanced approach to raising revenues that benefit the entire transportation system for the region.

Thank you for your continued commitment to regional collaboration. We look forward to discussing our concerns and future solutions further.

Sincerely,

[Sound Cities Association]

CC:

Executive Shannon Braddock
Councilmember Rod Dembowski
Councilmember Girmay Zahilay
Councilmember Sarah Perry
Councilmember Jorge L. Barón
Councilmember De'Sean Quinn
Councilmember Pete von Reichbauer
Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda
Councilmember Reagan Dunn



Sound Cities Association
6300 Southcenter Blvd., Suite 206
Tukwila, WA 98188

July XX, 2025

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In 2025, the combined level of taxation for our residents and businesses is already high and is only going to increase this year with the new fiscal policies adopted and under consideration by the state and King County. First, Washington State anticipates raising an additional \$9 billion over the next four years from this year's tax increases, with much of that revenue paid by King County residents and businesses. Then, following the passage of the AFIS levy in April, and the potential passage of the Parks Levy and EMS Levy later this year, the combined impact of all three levies cost property taxpayers around \$4 billion over the next six years. Lastly and most recently, the County Executive has proposed, and the Council is considering, a new 0.1% sales tax for criminal justice.

Although each additional tax and levy fund vital countywide services, these increases not only add to the growing cost of living but also contribute to a shared and growing fatigue that risks the success of future local bonds and levies for essential local services. Cities across the region draw upon the same limited sources of revenue that fund essential services such as public

safety, behavioral health, housing, street maintenance, and community programs. Without a coordinated and strategic approach to taxation across the region, we risk undermining our collective ability to sustain the crucial services our residents expect and rely upon.

In addition, our region and our residents value collaboration across jurisdictions, but the proposed KCTD sales tax lacks important regional input. This legislative approach contradicts the inclusive principles of county governance, where jurisdictions that bear the tax burden should participate in decisions regarding revenue allocation. Although increases in recent levy renewals have added pressure on local jurisdictions and property owners, each of these levies was approved through collaborative processes involving the local jurisdictions.

Local jurisdictions recognize the budgetary needs of the King County Roads Division and King County Metro, including Metro's safety and security needs. However, the County has not yet considered how Washington State's new expanded sales tax policies could help fill these revenue gaps. At the same time, we are preparing to have a regional conversation about the affordability crisis of our utilities and face the uncertainty of losing vital federal support for important functions, both in the County's and in Metro's budget. Given the state and federal uncertainties, it is premature to impose a new sales tax and designate its use without further investigating other revenue sources.

The thirty-eight jurisdictions of Sound Cities believe that the proposed KCTD sales tax should not be pursued this year, and that any new revenue will be more successful with increased collaboration between King County and local jurisdictions. More time would allow for a thorough analysis of geographic needs, looking at alternative or additional revenue sources, and the development of appropriate solutions for a balanced approach to raising revenues that benefit the entire transportation system for the region.

Thank you for your continued commitment to regional collaboration. We look forward to discussing our concerns and future solutions further.

Sincerely,

[Sound Cities Association]

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Councilmember Jorge L. Barón
Councilmember De'Sean Quinn
Councilmember Pete von Reichbauer
Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda
Councilmember Reagan Dunn

Item 8:**New Indigent Defense Caseload Standards*****DISCUSSION***

SCA Staff Contact

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

Discussion

The Washington State Supreme Court has announced a [10-year phased reduction in public defender caseloads](#), starting January 1, 2026. By 2036, caseload limits will drop to 47 felony credits and 120 misdemeanor credits—about two-thirds lower than previous standards. Local courts can define, and weigh case credits based on local practices, considering serious or complex charges requiring more investigation. The phased approach is an improvement to the initial proposal, which had recommended a two-year implementation, but still demands significant new resources for cities to meet these targets by 2036.

At the June PIC meeting, members will discuss the Supreme Court's new public defender caseloads and its implications for cities. Many cities across the state have begun adjusting their upcoming budgets to align with the new standards. Kent has recently shared a letter with the Supreme Court ([Attachment A](#)) requesting the Court to pause implementation of the standards until a Washington State-specific study has been conducted.

Background

In March 2024, the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) adopted revised public defense standards and submitted those as recommendations to the Washington State Supreme Court. Read the 2024 standards as recommended [here](#). Included in the recommendations before the Supreme Court was a change to caseload standards that would reduce by nearly two-thirds the maximum caseload for public defense lawyers. The revised caseload standards were proposed in response to a [national study](#), that did not include any Washington State representation.

The State Supreme Court first adopted the current case load standards for indigent defense in 2012. The current indigent defense standards cap public defenders at:

- 150 felonies per attorney per year
- 300 misdemeanor cases per attorney per year, OR 400 misdemeanor cases per attorney per year in jurisdictions that have not adopted a case weighting system.
- 250 juvenile offender cases per attorney per year.

WSBA's proposed standards would phase in progressively lower caseload limits over the next three years that cap public defenders and effectively cuts by two-thirds the number of cases a defender can accept:

- By July 2025: 110 felony case credits per full-time felony attorney per year, or 280 misdemeanor case credits full-time misdemeanor attorney per year.
- By July 2026: 90 felony case credits per full-time felony attorney per year, or 225 misdemeanor case credits per full-time misdemeanor attorney per year.
- By July 2027: 47 felony case credits per full-time felony attorney per year, or 120 misdemeanor case credits per full-time misdemeanor attorney per year.

WSBA’s 2024 proposed standard goes to a different system of weighting cases for the purposes of the cap. Under the proposed standard, each case type is assigned a case credit weight used to calculate an attorney’s workload. Importantly for cities, misdemeanors are split into “high” and “low” categories with different credit weights:

- Misdemeanor-High cases are weighted at 1.5 credits each. The category includes drug offenses, sex offenses, domestic violence offenses, and DUIs.
- Misdemeanor-Low cases are weighted at 1.0 credits each. This category includes all other misdemeanors.

Washington State Supreme Court Approved Standards

In June 2025, the Washington State Supreme Court adopted caseload limits approved by WSBA in 2024. However, instead of defining case weighting, the Court’s new standards include local authority for adopting policies defining “case credits” to count and weight caseloads based on local court practices. The Supreme Court’s complete order can be found [here](#).

The new caseload limits take effect on January 1, 2026, and caseload reduction can be phased in at a rate of at least 10% each year. This phase in approach is a significant improvement to the WSBA’s initial proposal, which had recommended a two-year implementation as detailed above.

Indigent defense caseload standards comparison:

Caseloads Per Year	Old Case Standards	2026 Case Standards (meet by 2036)	Mandatory Case Reductions Per Year (2026-2036)
Misdemeanor cases	400 cases or 300 weighted cases	120 case credits	28 fewer per year (18 fewer if weighted)
Felony cases	150 cases	47 case credits	11 fewer per year

For more information on the new indigent defense standards, and the implications for cities, see [AWC’s website](#).

Impact on Cities

According to AWC, these proposed standards could triple the number of public defenders needed in some jurisdictions. Further, there are already hiring shortages, and the standards do not address the underlying concerns about recruitment for new public defenders.

In Washington State, the vast majority of public defense costs are paid out of city and county general fund budgets. The Legislature has not provided any new revenue-generating tools for cities, so to cover costs of compliance with these standards, cities will likely have to cut costs for other essential services.

City Response

The City of Kent has written to the Washington Supreme Court ([Attachment A](#)) requesting a delay in implementing the public defense standards until a Washington-specific study is conducted. Kent emphasized the financial harm these standards pose to cities and urged the Court to commission a study of county and city public defenders, judges, prosecutors, probation officers, defendants, and crime victims. This data would enable the Court to tailor the new standards to Washington's needs.

Other King County cities have similarly sent letters expressing financial concerns about the new standards.

PIC Discussion

How have cities begun to prepare for these changes – in their budget, in the structure or recruiting of public defense, others?

Does the PIC want to consider any collective action in response to these proposed changes, for example, an SCA letter to the Supreme Court and/or incorporating this as part of a state legislative agenda?



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Dana Ralph
Mayor
220 Fourth Avenue South
Kent, WA 98032
Fax: 253-856-6725

PHONE: 253-856-5700

June 25, 2025

Chief Justice Debra Stephens
Associate Chief Justice Charles Johnson
Justice Barbara Madsen
Justice Steven Gonzalez
Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud
Justice Mary Yu
Justice Raquel Montoya-Lewis
Justice Helen Whitener
Justice Salvador Mungia

Address:
Supreme Court
Temple of Justice
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Chief Justice Stephens and esteemed members of the Washington Supreme Court:

The city of Kent strongly encourages and requests the Supreme Court delay for a period of three years the imposition of the new standards for criminal defense related to misdemeanor cases, and in that time, direct the Washington State Bar Association to conduct a Washington-specific study regarding the provision of misdemeanor public defense services. More formally, and although the exact language of the rule has yet to be published, the City requests the Supreme Court amend its proposed rule regarding misdemeanor caseloads pursuant to General Rule 9(J)(1) of the Court Rules by delaying implementation for three years and requiring a State-specific study as referenced herein.

It is anticipated that the imposition of the misdemeanor caseload standards referenced in the Court's Order No. 25700-A-1644 (June 9, 2025) will create an eventual insurmountable financial impact on cities. As I am sure you are aware, the Legislature has not provided municipal entities with any substantial revenue-generating tools for years. Public defense funding comes from a city's general fund, and without new revenue-generating authority, it will be impossible for many cities to fund the new standard without significant reductions in other critical service areas. While financial impacts may not be immediate due to phased implementation, implementation will have a significant budgetary impact on cities across Washington over time. In addition, there are not enough public defenders to meet even the current standards, and there likely will not be enough in 10 years. Too few public defenders will drive up public defense costs for cities even more as demand for their services will be at a premium.

The potential downstream effects of these standards are devastating, and will run counter to the Supreme Court's first stated objective – Protection of the public. GR 12.1(a). Lesser criminal behavior may not be addressed at all. More felonies will be declined due to changing felony caseload limits which means more felonies will be referred to cities for filing as misdemeanors. One need only review crime statistics that showed a drastic increase in crime

during the period in which drug possession enforcement was limited and police pursuits were illegal, or review press articles during that period to realize the impact property crime has on the retail and service industry, which results in a risk to available jobs for residents and the tax base which funds services. To cover the cost of compliance, cities will be forced to cut other programs and services – many of which are specifically targeted at improving the health, safety and welfare of our community or forego filing charges all together. These rules will detrimentally impact businesses and the quality of life of residents and visitors throughout Washington. Public safety in our communities will suffer, with more diverse and poorer communities throughout our state being disproportionately affected.

Cities recognize their constitutional and court-rule obligation to ensure that defendants receive the effective assistance of counsel. That is not being challenged. However, no evidence has been presented to support the notion that reduced caseloads will improve the effectiveness of counsel in the State of Washington. The study relied upon to support the standards being adopted did not have a single Washington State felony or misdemeanor criminal defense attorney, prosecutor, judge, victim or defendant on the panel. That alone begs for a local study, which the study itself indicated is a necessary step before a state upends its existing system.

The City implores this Court pause the imposition of these standards and order a Washington State-specific study - one that includes both county and city public defenders (both municipal employees and contracted), as well as municipal and district court judges, prosecutors, probation officers, defendants and crime victims. The Court could pass the standards for misdemeanor caseload limits now but pause implementation entirely while a study is conducted in order to refine them prior to implementation. A pause in implementation will provide the Supreme Court with State-specific information (noted by the study as a first necessary step) and allow the Court to adjust the standards for Washington based on evidence of the relationship between the number of cases handled in Washington and the effectiveness of counsel. It will also allow the State Legislature to address the manner in which municipal public defense is funded in Washington.

With all due respect, Court Order No. 25700-A-1644 has the potential to be devastating to the quality of life of Washington citizens and visitors. Never before has this Court been poised to exercise such power over the safety and well-being of Washingtonians. We encourage the Court to act with a firm grasp of the state of public defense in Washington, and a solution that takes reasonable steps to solve it.

Thank you for your consideration.


Dana Ralph, City of Kent Mayor

Item 9: Updates & Informational Items

The list below includes updates following previous PIC discussions, and information on various reoccurring agenda items. If you have any questions, please reach out to SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell at andie@soundcities.org or 206-724-4060.

a. Criminal Justice Sales Tax

The King County Budget and Fiscal Management Committee is scheduled to take action on King County Executive Braddock's proposed "Safe and Stable Communities Sales Tax" at their July 9 meeting. If approved by the Council, the 0.1% sales tax change would take effect on January 1, 2026.

Executive Braddock will also convene a public safety roundtable on July 30 or July 31 to discuss public safety issues in our region. SCA will have 3 seats on this roundtable, appointed by the SCA Board based on geographic distribution. A call for nominations will be shared with all SCA members soon.

b. Overview of 2025 County Tax Proposals and Levies to Date

PIC and SCA caucus members discussed various new and changing property and sales tax levies this year. SCA Senior Policy Analyst Aj Foltz prepared [attached memo 9.b](#), summarizing the 2025 county tax proposals and levies to date, highlighting rate changes and impacts on SCA cities. For questions, contact Aj at aj@soundcities.org.

c. Public Issues Committee Revamp

Following the June PIC discussion, SCA staff prepared [attached memo 9.c](#) for SCA appointees outlining changes to the PIC meeting structure. The memo informs SCA appointees about the current SCA Bylaws governing PIC, outlines the new guidelines for PIC meetings, and provides examples of when issues would come to PIC.

d. Revised Attendance Protocols for SCA Caucus Members on Regional Boards & Committees

At the June Board meeting, the SCA Board addressed recent regional board and committee attendance issues and provided guidance to staff on enforcing the SCA Bylaws and Board Policies. The updated attendance protocols, shared with all SCA appointees, are in [attached memo 9.d](#).

Since the Bylaws and Policies lack clarity on enforcement for the SCA Board and PIC, staff are planning to propose a slightly different enforcement approach for these groups, which will be discussed with the Board before presenting to PIC.

e. July Newsletter

SCA Senior Policy Analyst Aj Foltz has taken the lead in drafting SCA's inaugural newsletter. The newsletter will be distributed ahead of the July PIC meeting. If you are interested in receiving monthly updates from SCA staff, please subscribe via the link provided in the initial email. Additionally, each newsletter will highlight city-related news and updates; if you have items to include, reach out to Aj Foltz at aj@soundcities.org. This newsletter is a work in progress, and SCA staff appreciate your feedback and support as we work to refine and improve.

f. Regional Board and Committee Updates

The SCA policy team has included a table of regional board and committee updates in [attached memo 9.f](#). This recurring agenda item aims to inform PIC members of items being discussed by regional boards and committees. If you have any questions, please reach out to the SCA staff assigned to the committee; SCA staff assignments can be found on the [SCA website](#).

g. Levies and Ballot Measures

The upcoming King County and special district levies and ballot measures can be found in [attached memo 9.g](#). PIC members are encouraged to share upcoming or recently approved city and special districts levies and ballot measures with SCA staff.

ITEM 9.b:
Overview of 2025 County Tax Proposals and Levies to Date

SCA Staff Contact: Aj Foltz, SCA Policy Analyst, Aj@soundcities.org

Summary Table						
	AFIS Levy	Parks Levy	EMS Levy	HB 1590 CJ Sales Tax	KCTD Sales Tax	MIDD Sales Tax
Month & Year	Apr 2025	Aug 2025	Nov 2025	July 2025	July 2025	Late 2025
Require voter approval?	Yes; Approved	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Tax Rate	\$0.02750 per \$1000 AV	\$0.23290 per \$1000 AV	\$0.2500 per \$1000 AV	0.1% Sales	0.1% Sales	0.1% Sales
Change in tax rate	-\$0.0075 per \$1,000 AV	+\$0.0350 per \$1,000 AV	--- ¹	+0.1%	+0.1%	Renewal; no change
Implementation Period	7 years	6 years	6 years	10 years	10 years	8 years

All 6 levies and taxes would: (1) Be imposed countywide and (2) Take effect January 1, 2026

Individual Levies

Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) Levy

Timing: The AFIS Levy was approved by King County voters in April 2025.

- Replaces current AFIS levy expiring at the end of 2025
- The renewed levy maintains status quo of the program, providing fingerprint technology and staffing to support identification and crime-solving efforts
- Projected to raise \$27 million per year; revenue has been intentionally estimated below planned expenditures in order to spend-down existing fund balances

King County Parks Levy Renewal

Timing: The Parks Levy renewal was approved by the King County Council for the August 5th ballot.

- Replaces the current park levy expiring in 2025; increasing rate from about 19 cents to about 24 cents per \$1,000 AV for the 2026-2031 levy period
- Funds operations and maintenance of King County's parks and trails, support growth and connection of regional trails

¹ The current 2020-2025 levy was approved at a rate of 26.5 cents per \$1,000 AV and has lowered to a rate of 22.1 cents for 2025 due to increases in AV (as required by state law annual county levy increases are restricted to 1% plus new construction). Due to budgetary needs, King County must reset the new EMS levy rate from the 22.1 cent levy rate in 2025 to the 25-cent levy rate in 2026 (subject to the 1% plus new construction annual increase restriction). Due to foreseeable increases in AV, the 2026 levy rate is expected to drop to 22.4-cents by 2031.

- *Total budget amounts to \$1.45 billion; with ~10% directly allocated to cities and towns*

Emergency Management Services (EMS) Levy Renewal

Timing: The EMS Levy was approved by the King County Council for the November 2025 ballot.

- This proposal is a reduction from the current levy rate
- Will generate approximately \$1.4 billion to support the King County Medic One/EMS system
- Levy would fund the regional network of services, including 23 fire departments, five paramedic agencies, and four dispatch centers that deliver 24/7 emergency services
- *All proceeds will be deposited into the County EMS Fund benefitting all cities*

HB 1590 Criminal Justice Sales Tax (Safe and Stable Communities Sales Tax)

Timing: The King County Council is considering this 0.1% sales tax currently and is expected to take action at their July 9th meeting.

- Councilmanic sales tax to fund public safety and criminal justice services; does not require voter approval or review by RPC; but the renewal in 10 years will require voter approval.
- New revenue would be included in 2026-2027 county budget and is expected to address the anticipated \$175-\$180M biennial budget shortfalls.
- Executive Braddock is hosting a public safety roundtable at the end of July to discuss implementation, which will include SCA representatives.
- *Cities are still able to impose their own new additional 0.1% sales tax, so long as the city meets eligibility requirements.*

King County Transportation District (KCTD) Sales Tax

Timing: The King County Transportation District (KCTD) has proposed a countywide 10-year, 0.1% sales tax to fund transportation improvements. KCTD may vote on the proposed tax as early as late July.

- Councilmanic sales tax, with 50% for Road Services Division high priority bridges and roads projects and 50% for King County Metro transit safety and security projects.
- Would be enacted through the KCTD, comprised of all 9 King County Councilmembers.
- *Does not require voter approval or review by regional committees or local jurisdictions.*
- Would be in addition to the TBD taxes and fees in the 19 jurisdictions with their own TBDs.
- SCA has a draft letter in opposition, up for discussion and possible action at the July 9th PIC.

Mental Illness & Drug Dependency (MIDD) Sales Tax Renewal

Timing: The MIDD Sales Tax is set to expire at the end of 2025. The King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) is engaging in a renewal process; approval of the renewal will go through the Budget & Fiscal Management (BFM) Committee and the RPC, before King County Council approves it later this year.

- Generates about \$180 million per biennium to fund countywide behavioral health services.
- MIDD is managed and operated by the DCHS Behavioral Health and Recovery Division (BHRD).
- Has yet to be reviewed by the RPC, but the MIDD renewal team will speak to the Public Issues Committee before, or parallel to, RPC discussions.
- RPC and the County Council will review and take action on the MIDD Implementation Plan in 2026.



Item 9.c: Public Issues Committee Revamp

General guidelines for new PIC structure and examples of when issues would come to PIC

At the June PIC meeting, members agreed to shift the focus from external presentations to staff-led discussions on regional issues affecting our cities. External presentations will now mostly be scheduled at Pre-PIC meetings or via SCA venues like Lunch and Learns. PIC members also expressed a desire for SCA to take more proactive action on items before issues reach regional committees or other bodies. In most cases, discussion will inform SCA caucuses on how to navigate/address the issue at their regional committees, not requiring the PIC to take formal action. The new PIC structure echoes pre-pandemic operations and incorporates feedback from the 2025 SCA Membership Survey and member-staff conversations.

This memo informs SCA caucus members about the current SCA Bylaws governing PIC, outlines the new guidelines for PIC meetings, and provides examples of when issues would come to PIC.

SCA Bylaws: PIC Manner of Acting (paraphrased)

- Fifty-one percent of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum;
- Needs vote of two thirds (2/3) for the advancement of a policy position to the Board;
- Votes are in the name of the member city;
- Issues will be discussed at one meeting and any action will be at the next meeting;
- If necessary, 85% of those present may declare an issue an emergency, and the issue may be voted upon at the same meeting.

New Guidelines for PIC meetings

- **Focus on fewer presentations from external entities and more PIC member-centered conversations**
- **Move most longer, external presentations to before the PIC meeting** (either in the form of Pre-PIC or SCA Lunch and Learns)
- **Identify issues earlier:**
 - Goal of 2 PIC meetings *before issue is acted upon* by a regional committee (as possible)
 - 1st PIC: Discuss amongst PIC members; raise major themes and questions.
 - 2nd PIC: Members bring back input from their respective cities, and PIC will possibly take action on the issue in the form of an SCA “policy position” or formal response letter

- OR, if action is not scheduled in committee, the goal is for PIC to discuss issues alongside the regional boards and committees to inform the possible next steps
- **Follow-up after PIC meetings**
 - **No formal action:** In most cases, PIC discussion will inform SCA caucuses on how to navigate/address the issue at their regional committees.
 - **Formal action:** In some cases, the PIC may want SCA to take formal action. Per SCA bylaws, the PIC recommendation would then go to the SCA Board (the following week) for approval.

Examples of when issues would come to PIC:

- Situation 1: There is pending action in a regional committee.
Purpose: Ensure consensus or no unintended harm before SCA votes.
- Situation 2: Disagreement between SCA and other regional committee members.
Purpose: To identify new solutions and/or gather further support for their position.
- Situation 3: Disagreement among SCA Caucus members.
Purpose: Bring the issue to the larger PIC for a healthy debate and the sentiments of the full membership.
- Situation 4: Completion of a large body of work or major report.
Purpose: Ensure members are informed of new & important work and how cities can engage (e.g., a new report, toolkit, or action plan).
- Situation 5: Interest from cities in a PIC discussion about addressing a challenge or opportunity impacting SCA cities (could be outside of any regional committee work).
Purpose: Share best practices, commiseration, and identify steps forward or areas of collaboration.
- Situation 6: Concern about a policy or action, (e.g., by Seattle, County, or State).
Purpose: For cities to raise awareness and gauge interest in collective action or response.

What this means for you:

- **As an SCA representative on a regional board or committee:**
 - Work with your caucus colleagues and chair and the SCA staff to identify issues from regional committees that are potential or ready for PIC discussion.
 - When an issue from your committee has been discussed at PIC, if you attended the PIC meeting or discussed with your PIC representative, help convey the sentiments of PIC at regional committee meetings; SCA staff to your committees can also convey the sentiments of PIC and discuss potential next steps for committee members.
- **Generally, as an elected official and SCA member:**
 - Work with your city's PIC representative to learn about what issues are coming out of PIC, where your input is needed, and what actions SCA is taking.
 - Help identify issues (Situation 5&6) that might be of common interest and should be brought to PIC. For these, please reach out to the SCA policy staff supporting your

respective board or committee or, if uncertain, Senior Policy Analyst Aj Foltz at aj@soundcities.org.



Item 9.d:

Revised Attendance Protocols for SCA Caucus Members on Regional Boards & Committees

Approved by the SCA Board of Directors

Guided by SCA Bylaws and Board Policies

SCA Bylaws and Board Policies on Attendance: SCA Caucus Members

The responsibility of serving on an SCA seat of a regional board or committee is a commitment to both the colleagues in your city and to your colleagues in all SCA cities. SCA staff, caucus chairs, and colleagues prepare for committees to bring an informed and unified voice – that is amplified by our full representation – to shape regional policy.

The SCA Bylaws and Board Policies, as presently written, are clear on attendance expectations for SCA caucus members on regional boards and committees. In recognition of the importance of SCA's voice at regional committees, the SCA Board of Directors gave direction at their June Board meeting to begin applying these attendance policies. As such, SCA staff will implement the attendance policies based on the proposed protocol below.

SCA Board Policies

The SCA Board Policies outline attendance requirements of appointees to regional boards and committees in *Section 701.5 SCA Caucuses- Manner of Acting*. Caucus Chair responsibilities pertaining to meeting attendance are outlined in *701.5(a)*, as below:

- *Attend regional forum meetings*
- *Seventy-five percent attendance at both caucus and regional committee meetings is expected*
- *After an SCA appointee misses 30% of the caucus and/or committee meetings SCA shall inquire about the intent of the appointee to fulfill his/her responsibilities. At 50% absence, the Board of Directors may ask for the resignation of the appointee.*

Caucus Member/Alternate responsibilities as pertaining to meeting attendance are outlined in *701.5(b)*, as below:

- *Attend Caucus meetings and briefings*
- *Attend regional committee meetings*
- *Seventy-five percent attendance at both caucus and regional committee meetings is expected*
- *After an SCA appointee misses 30% of the caucus and/or committee meetings SCA shall inquire about the intent of the appointee to fulfill his/her responsibilities. At 50% absence, the Board of Directors may ask for the resignation of the appointee.*

SCA Bylaws

The SCA Bylaws also outline attendance requirements of appointees to regional boards and committees in *Section 4.16.7(g) Regional Committee Appointments*, as below:

- *Any Appointee absent for three consecutive meetings, or for any other reason deemed detrimental to the association, may be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors at any time during their term at any meeting of the Board.*

Revised Attendance Protocols: SCA Caucus Members on Regional Boards and Committees

These protocols align with the SCA Bylaws and Board Policies regarding caucus member attendance.

Excused Absences

- If a committee member provides at least 24-hour notice to the SCA staff member for that committee that they will be absent, the absence may be considered “excused.”
- When caucus materials are sent, the SCA policy staff member assigned to the committee will include a request to members to notify them in advance if they will be unable to attend any upcoming meeting(s).

Unexcused Absences

After each unexcused absence of a committee member, the SCA policy staff member for that committee will send an email (and call, if that is the preferred communication method of the member) to inquire about the member’s absence and remind the member of the attendance policy.

SCA staff will then follow protocols outlined below to address consecutive absences:

Missed 30% of planned meetings	SCA policy staff member will send an email (and call, if that is the preferred communication method of the member) to inform them that they have missed 30% of meetings, remind the member of the attendance policy, and inquire about the member’s absence.
Second consecutive unexcused absence OR member missed 40% of planned meetings	SCA Executive Director will send an email (and call if that is the preferred communication method of the member) to inquire about the member’s absence and remind the member of the attendance policy.
Third consecutive unexcused absence OR member missed 50% of planned meetings	SCA policy staff member for that committee will notify the Board of Directors of the occurrence. The SCA Staff member will send an email to the committee member, copying to the SCA Executive Director, informing them of their attendance status, the notification

	provided to the Board, and the possibility that the Board may recommend their removal from the committee.
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If you have any questions about the bylaws, the policy, or its implementation, feel free to reach out to Robert Feldstein, SCA Executive Director, robert@soundcities.org or (206) 499-4238.



July 9 2025
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 9.f:
Regional Boards & Committees Update

This recurring agenda item aims to inform PIC members of items being discussed by regional boards and committees. If you have any questions, please reach out to the SCA staff assigned to the committee; SCA staff assignments can be found on the [SCA website](#).

Committee	SCA Caucus	Last Meeting	Summary	Next Meeting
Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Advisory Committee (MIDD)	Councilmember Paul Charbonneau, Newcastle	Thurs., June 5	Transmittal of the MIDD Behavioral Health Sales Tax Renewal Ordinance is expected July 10. Reviewed the 2024 MIDD Annual Report and the structure of the MIDD Advisory Committee.	Thurs., July 24
Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)	Deputy Mayor Amy Lam, Sammamish; Deputy Mayor Laura Mork, Shoreline	Fri., June 13	A rate response letter to the Executive was approved by the committee. Reviewed Comprehensive Plan Chapters 5&7.	Fri., July 11
King Conservation District (KCD) Advisory Committee	Chair: Councilmember Amy Falcone, Kirkland Vice Chair: Councilmember Sid Gupta, Sammamish Councilmember Brenda Fincher, Kent; Councilmember Annette Ademasu, Shoreline; Councilmember Tracy Furutani, Lake Forest Park; Councilmember Carston Curd, Bothell	Tues., June 10	The KCD recently released their 2024 Annual Report. Received a briefing on the KCD's Farm Programs and KCD's Project Implementation efforts. Discussed a tour for August.	A tour on Mon., Aug. 11 will be held in place of a meeting.
Board of Health (BOH)	Deputy Mayor Cheryl Rakes, Auburn; Deputy Mayor Amy Lam, Sammamish; Councilmember Amy Falcone, Kirkland; Deputy Council President Barbara de Michele, Issaquah	Weds., June 18	Repealed a Rule and Regulation regarding dishonored check fees to align with King County fees. Received briefings on infant health outcomes and board membership and recruitment for 2026.	Thurs., July 17

Item 9.g:
Levies and Ballot Measures

The upcoming King County and special district 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	Proposal	Status Update
2025	August	Parks Levy renewal	\$0.2329 per \$1000 of assessed value (increase from current \$0.1973 levy rate)	King County Council approved placing on the August 5 ballot
2025	November	Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy renewal	\$0.250 per \$1000 of assessed value	The Regional Policy Committee is scheduled to take action on the EMS Levy Ordinance and Medic One/EMS 2026-2031 Strategic Plan at the RPC meeting on June 11
2026	TBD	King County Library System levy lid lift	TBD	KCLS staff are exploring options for a possible levy lid lift

Upcoming Ballot Measures - Special Districts			
Election	Special District	Measure	Proposal
August 2025 Primary (for voters in King County Public Hospital District #2)	EvergreenHealth	Levy Lid Lift	\$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value (increase from \$0.14 per \$1,000 assessed value)
November 2025 General Election	Lake Washington School District	Education Programs & Operations Levy	TBD
November 2025 General Election	Lake Washington School District	Capital Project Levy for	TBD

		Technology and Facilities	
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Other Renewals – King County		
Year	Renewal	Status Update
2026	Mental Illness & Drug Dependency (MIDD) 0.1% sales tax renewal	DCHS is has completed community engagement sessions and working with the Executive’s Office to finalize the remainder of the steps and dates for transmittal to King County Council