



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**June 13, 2017**

**Motion 14882**

**Proposed No. 2017-0141.2**

**Sponsors Kohl-Welles and Lambert**

1                   A MOTION providing for a half-century evaluation and  
2                   report on the West Point Treatment Plant.

3                   WHEREAS, the West Point Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is the flagship of  
4 the region's wastewater system, serves as the key wastewater treatment facility for a  
5 significant portion of the system's service area, and

6                   WHEREAS, the plant experienced a major system failure in the early morning of  
7 February 9, 2017, with the result that the plant was inundated by major internal flooding  
8 and that the emergency bypass discharge was activated, resulting in the release of high  
9 volumes of untreated, combined flows of wastewater and stormwater directly into Puget  
10 Sound ("the event"), and

11                  WHEREAS, the plant was constructed over fifty years ago, and began operations  
12 in 1966, and

13                  WHEREAS, the operating context of the plant, including the dramatic population  
14 growth in the plant's service area, the substantial regional increase in impermeable cover  
15 over the region's land surface, existing and projected weather-related impacts of climate  
16 change, the county's adoption of a comprehensive plan that concentrates growth and  
17 housing patterns, the development of heightened environmental standards and regulatory  
18 requirements, the increase in the region's industrial base as a contributor to wastewater  
19 flows and similar developments, present a more complex and challenging operating

20 environment for the plant as compared to the period of its initial construction, and

21 WHEREAS, plant managers have indicated that peak storm flows are regularly  
22 reaching and exceeding the four hundred forty million gallons per day capacity limit of  
23 the plant, and

24 WHEREAS, as with any aging, complex capital facility, it is appropriate to  
25 consider any contextual, functional, design and engineering constraints of the facility that  
26 have emerged over the period of its operations, to position it for continued service to the  
27 region, and

28 WHEREAS, the past half-century has provided an opportunity for operating  
29 crews and wastewater treatment division management to identify and characterize  
30 significant vulnerabilities of the plant that could contribute to future operational  
31 challenges, and

32 WHEREAS, the event highlights the need for a half-century review of the plant's  
33 operating context and system status, against current and projected needs and performance  
34 demands;

35 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

36 A. The executive is requested to retain a third-party consultant to undertake a  
37 review and evaluation of the West Point Treatment Plant after a half century of  
38 operations, and prepare a report addressing:

39 1. Changes in operating context, such as increases in service population,  
40 increased impermeable cover over the land base of its service area, current and projected  
41 climate-driven changes in weather patterns and flow demand, changes in regulatory  
42 requirements and increased concern about water quality, concentrated growth patterns

43 associated with the county's Comprehensive Plan, increased industrial contribution to  
44 wastewater flows and how well positioned the plant is to meet these changes in  
45 operational context;

46         2. Current and projected processing capacity demand compared to current  
47 capacity; changes in the state-of-the-art regarding wastewater processing technology;  
48 constraints acting upon the plant including, functional, design and engineering constraints  
49 and land base limitations that constrain capital development;

50         3. The increasing levels of toxics from outdoor urban surfaces, including  
51 automotive chemicals, pesticides and herbicides, chemicals accumulated through air  
52 deposition and other toxics that are directed to the plant and which the plant is not  
53 designed to remove; and

54         4. System vulnerabilities and other plant operations and management concerns  
55 including training and maintenance practices that have emerged over the period of the  
56 plant's operations.

57         B. The report should identify and make recommendations regarding system  
58 improvements or upgrades to position the facility for the coming decades of operations.

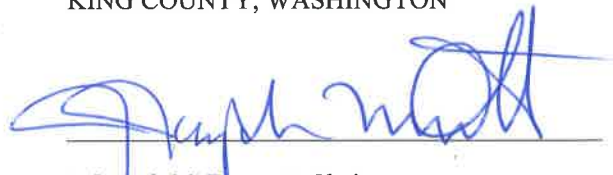
59         C. The evaluation and report should be transmitted by one hundred eighty days  
60 after the report required by Motion 14826 is delivered to the council, in the form of a  
61 paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the

62 original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff  
63 and the lead staff for the regional water quality committee, or its successor.  
64

Motion 14882 was introduced on 3/27/2017 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 6/12/2017, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn,  
Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles  
and Ms. Balducci  
No: 0  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:



Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

**Attachments:** None