



# King County

1200 King County  
Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

## Meeting Agenda Regional Water Quality Committee

**Councilmembers:**

*Claudia Balducci, Chair  
Reagan Dunn, Dave Upthegrove  
Alternate:*

*Sound Cities Association: Conrad Lee, Bellevue, Vice Chair; Sarah Moore, Burien;  
Laura Mork, Shoreline; Jessica Rossman, Medina*

*Alternates: Kelli Curtis, Kirkland; Yolanda Trout Manuel, Auburn*

*Sewer/Water Districts: Chuck Clarke, Woodinville Water District; Lloyd Warren, Sammamish Plateau Water  
District*

*Alternate: Ryika Hooshangi, Sammamish Plateau Water*

*City of Seattle: Joy Hollingsworth, Robert Kettle  
Alternate: Rob Saka*

*Lead Staff: Jenny Giambattista (206-477-0879)  
Committee Clerk: Blake Wells (206-263-1617)*

**3:00 PM**

**Wednesday, September 4, 2024**

**Hybrid Meeting**

### SPECIAL MEETING REVISED AGENDA

**Hybrid Meetings:** Attend the King County Council committee meetings in person in the Southwest Conference Room (Room W1202), 516 3rd Avenue in Seattle, or through remote access. Details on how to attend and/or to provide comment remotely are listed below.

Pursuant to K.C.C. 1.24.035 A. and F., this meeting is also noticed as a meeting of the Metropolitan King County Council, whose agenda is limited to the committee business. In this meeting only the rules and procedures applicable to committees apply and not those applicable to full council meetings.

**HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT:** The Regional Water Quality Committee values community input and looks forward to hearing from you on agenda items.

	<p>Sign language and interpreter services can be arranged given sufficient notice (206-848-0355). TTY Number - TTY 711.</p> <p>Council Chambers is equipped with a hearing loop, which provides a wireless signal that is picked up by a hearing aid when it is set to 'T' (Telecoil) setting.</p>	
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The Committee will accept public comment on items on today’s agenda in writing. You may do so by submitting your written comments to [kcccomitt@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kcccomitt@kingcounty.gov). If your comments are submitted before 1:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, your comments will be distributed to the committee members and appropriate staff prior to the meeting.

Remote attendance at the meeting by phone or computer: You may watch the meeting by connecting via phone or computer using the ZOOM application at <https://zoom.us/join> and entering the Webinar ID number below.

**CONNECTING TO THE WEBINAR**

Dial: 1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 827 1536 1574

If you do not have access to the ZOOM application, you can connect to the meeting by calling 1-253-215-8782 and using the Webinar ID.

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Roll Call**

To show a PDF of the written materials for an agenda item, click on the agenda item below.

3. **Approval of Minutes** p. 4

*July 15, 2024 meeting minutes*

4. **Chair's Report**

5. **MWPAAC Report**

*John McClellan, Chair, MWPAAC*

6. **Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Report**

*Kamuron Gurol, Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks*



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## Briefings

7. [Briefing No. 2024-B0085](#) p. 7

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update

*Jim Simmonds, Supervisor, Comprehensive Planning, Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks*

8. [Briefing No. 2024-B0042](#) p. 27

2024 Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) Work Plan

*Jenny Giambattista, Council staff*

## Adjournment



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TTY Number - TTY 711.  
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## Meeting Minutes Regional Water Quality Committee

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**Claudia Balducci, Chair**  
**Reagan Dunn, Dave Upthegrove**  
**Alternate:**

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**Sarah Moore, Burien;**  
**Laura Mork, Shoreline; Jessica Rossman, Medina**

**Alternates: Kelli Curtis, Kirkland; Yolanda Trout Manuel,**  
**Auburn**

**Sewer/Water Districts: Chuck Clarke, Woodinville Water**  
**District; Lloyd Warren, Sammamish Plateau Water District**  
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**Alternate: Rob Saka**

**Lead Staff: Jenny Giambattista (206-477-0879)**  
**Committee Clerk: Blake Wells (206-263-1617)**

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9:30 AM

Monday, July 15, 2024

Hybrid Meeting

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### SPECIAL MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**

*Chair Balducci called the meeting to order at 9:34 AM.*

2. **Roll Call**

**Present:** 13 - Balducci, Clarke, Dunn, Lee, Mork, Moore, Rossman, Upthegrove, Warren, Hollingsworth, Curtis, Trout-Manuel and Hooshangi

**Excused:** 1 - Kettle

3. **Approval of Minutes**

*Councilmember Warren moved approval of the June 5, 2024 meeting minutes. There being no objections, the minutes were approved.*

4. **Chair's Report**

*Chair Balducci provided an overview of the agenda and updates on upcoming meetings, including an in-person meeting on September 4, 2024.*

**5. MWPAAC Report**

*John McClellan, Chair, MWPAAC, briefed the committee on recent and upcoming MWPAAC meetings and tours.*

**6. Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Report**

*Kamuron Gurol, Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, briefed the committee on WTD's recent receipt of an award from the Washington State Department of Commerce's Clean Energy Grant Fund, loans to be received by the Department of Ecology in fiscal year 2025, agreed modification of the Combined Sewer Overflow Consent Decree, and long-term sewer rate forecasting and answered questions from the members.*

**Briefing****7. [Briefing No. 2024-B0084](#)**

Combined Sewer Overflow Consent Decree Modification

*Jenny Giambattista, Council staff, and Faon O'Connor, CSO Control Manager, Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, briefed the committee via PowerPoint presentation and answered questions from the members.*

*The chair recessed the meeting into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(h) at 10:15 AM for 15 minutes to discuss with legal counsel legal risks of a proposed action when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the county. The executive session was extended until 10:40 AM. The meeting returned to regular session at 10:44 AM.*

**This matter was Presented**

**8. [Briefing No. 2024-B0085](#)**

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update

*Jim Simmonds, Supervisor, Comprehensive Planning, Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, briefed the committee via PowerPoint presentation.*

**This matter was Deferred**

9. [Briefing No. 2024-B0042](#)

2024 Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) Work Plan

*Chair Balducci provided updates on the work program.*

**This matter was Deferred**

**Adjournment**

*The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.*

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk's Signature



**King County**

**Metropolitan King County Council  
Regional Water Quality Committee**

**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	7	<b>Name:</b>	Jenny Giambattista
<b>Proposed No.:</b>	2024-B0085	<b>Date:</b>	September 4, 2024

**SUBJECT**

Discussion on the Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.

**SUMMARY**

The Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) has begun the process to update the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP). Today’s discussion will focus on providing input on the major policy questions to be addressed in the RWSP, guiding principles, and the initial draft scope of work for the RWSP.

**BACKGROUND**

The Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) was adopted by Ordinance 13680 in November 1999 to ensure the continuation of high-quality wastewater treatment services through 2030. The RWSP is codified in King County Code Section 28.86.010 and 28.86.040 through 28.86.150. The RWSP outlines programs and projects through 2030 to increase wastewater system capacity and function; gives guidance on recovering and recycling beneficial resources from the wastewater treatment process; and provides direction on protecting and monitoring water quality and meeting permit conditions.<sup>1</sup> The policies in the RWSP cover the major program elements for wastewater services and are as follows:

- Treatment plant policies (K.C.C. 28.86.050)
- Conveyance policies (K.C.C. 28.86.060)
- I/I (inflow/infiltration) policies (K.C.C. 28.86.070)
- Combined sewer overflow control policies (K.C.C. 28.86.080)
- Biosolids policies (K.C.C. 28.86.090)
- Water reuse policies (K.C.C. 28.86.100)
- Wastewater services policies (K.C.C. 28.86)
- Water quality protection policies (K.C.C. 28.86.120)
- Wastewater planning policies (K.C.C. 28.86.130)
- Environmental mitigation policies (K.C.C. 28.86.140)

<sup>1</sup> Regional Wastewater Services Plan 2017 Annual Report

- Public involvement policies (K.C.C. 28.86.150)

Ordinance 13680 also includes financial policies (K.C.C. 28.86.160), and implementation policies (K.C.C. 28.86.180) that are not within the sections of code defined as the RWSP. In December 1999, the Council adopted the RWSP Operational Master Plan.

In late 2018 the Department of Natural Resources and Parks launched a planning effort titled, “Clean Water Plan (CWP).” This plan was intended to serve as a wastewater comprehensive plan that would ultimately result in an update or replacement of the RWSP. During the CWP process, RWQC received many briefings on the actions and strategies under consideration for the CWP. Additionally, some RWQC members served in advisory roles during the CWP process.

In November 2021, after hearing dissatisfaction with and frustration with both the substance of the Clean Water Plan and the planning process, and the lack of regulatory certainty related to the pending nutrients permit and negotiations on the CSO consent decree, WTD paused the development of the Clean Water Plan to fully consider the feedback received and to develop improvements that respond to that feedback.

In December 2023, the Regional Water Quality Committee sent a letter to Executive Constantine noting the complex challenges facing the system and the need to resume planning now for the future of the regional wastewater system. Executive Constantine responded in February 2024. WTD has relaunched its planning effort in 2024 and it is now titled the RWSP Update.

Today’s discussion will focus on providing input on the major policy questions to be addressed in the RWSP, guiding principles, and the initial draft scope of work for the RWSP. WTD has prepared three documents to help guide the discussion during the RWQC meeting: 1) listing of policy questions to be analyzed as part of the RWSP Update, 2) a draft scope of work for the RWSP Update, and 3) Guiding Principles.

## **INVITED**

- Janice Johnson, RWSP Update Program Manager, WTD
- Jim Simmonds, Supervisor, Comprehensive Planning, WTD

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Draft RWSP Major Policy Questions
2. Draft RWSP Major Policy Questions—Comments from John McClellan
3. Draft RWSP Scoping Document
4. Draft RWSP Guiding Principles



## Major Policy Questions for Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update

### *Draft Prepared by WTD for Discussion at RWQC Workshop 9/4/24*

King County has identified several major decisions regarding the future of our regional wastewater system that will need to be made in this process of updating the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP). To build, maintain and operate our large regional wastewater system, WTD has a long and growing capital project list in the coming decades, with significant forecasted costs. In making these investments, King County needs to consider many issues like the age of our wastewater system, population growth, future regulations, water quality goals, energy and resource conservation and recovery, affordability, and climate change. The update to the RWSP does not include stormwater planning for the region but will instead include how to address stormwater entering the wastewater system.

The proposed policy questions shown in the table below have been grouped into major topics/themes that WTD has identified as known challenges and opportunities for the wastewater sector. Though a question is identified under one topic, it may also intersect with other topics in the table.

<b>Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes</b>	<b>Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update</b>
<p><b>Regulatory Landscape</b></p> <p>CSO, nutrients, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other contaminants of emerging concern (CECs), current and existing requirements, new and anticipated requirements, opportunities for larger regional partnerships to address water concerns, requirement to comply with future Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs)</p>	<p>What types and levels of treatment should be planned for?</p> <p>What assumptions should be made about future nutrient permit requirements, regulations related to CECs such as PFAS, or other future regulatory changes?</p> <p>What upstream or source control actions should the region undertake to prevent contaminants and reduce cost?</p>
<p><b>Capacity Demands</b></p> <p>Infiltration and Inflow (I/I), population growth, conveyance and treatment capacity demand, including onsite septic systems in urban areas,</p>	<p>What is the future capacity needed for growth and when, where and how should we address that need?</p> <p>Beyond the required capacity needed to meet current regulatory and contractual obligations, what level of capacity should be planned for?</p> <p>When addressing capacity, should capacity increases within existing facilities be maximized over acquiring new sites, where possible? Should the region continue to provide a centralized approach or consider decentralized options?</p> <p>How should I/I be managed? How much of the additional projected flow is coming from I/I versus population growth? Should I/I policy change to reduce the capacity needed for I/I?</p> <p>How should the conversion of onsite septic systems to sewers in the service area be managed and what planning assumption should WTD</p>

<b>Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes</b>	<b>Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update</b>
	use about the conversion rate?
<p><b>Infrastructure Resiliency</b></p> <p>Asset management, maintenance, improvements, renewal, replacement, labor and supply chain disruptions, natural hazard resiliency.</p>	<p>How and when should WTD decide to refurbish or replace aging infrastructure?</p> <p>What level of resiliency should WTD plan for regarding seismic and other natural hazards? What level of risk tolerance should WTD accept?</p> <p>What level of redundancy of critical systems should WTD have?</p>
<p><b>Equity and Social Justice</b></p> <p>Distributional equity, WTD role in safeguarding public health</p>	<p>What actions should WTD take to increase equity and social justice for the regional wastewater system (Should include definition of equity and social justice).</p>
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>Mitigation - green building, eliminating/reducing fossil fuel use, energy and water efficiency, renewable energy, materials management, tree planting, etc. Adaptation – sea level rise, more extreme heat, increased storm intensities, wildfire smoke, increased river flooding, etc.</p>	<p>What climate experts and data should WTD use to inform planning?</p> <p>How should WTD reduce energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?</p> <p>How should WTD prepare and adapt to climate impacts in line with the Strategic Climate Action Plan? What level of climate impact risk tolerance should WTD plan for?</p>
<p><b>Resource Recovery</b></p> <p>Recycled water, biosolids, energy capture</p>	<p>Energy production and heat recovery – Should WTD be expanding its efforts to capture energy and heat? If so, at what level of effort?</p> <p>Biosolids – Should WTD further expand its efforts to develop Class A biosolids? What changes are needed to biosolid recovery policies and processes?</p> <p>Recycled water – Under what circumstances should the region expand the use of reclaimed water? Which uses (e.g., environmental benefits, groundwater recharge, industrial uses, irrigation) are most appropriate?</p>
<p><b>Finance / Affordability</b></p> <p>Cost structure and equity, capital financing and debt management, financial planning and revenue sufficiency</p>	<p>Is there a better rate structure for the sewer rate? <i>(Note WTD has identified a work plan to further evaluate the residential customer equivalent conversion factor of 750 cubic feet per month.)</i></p> <p>Will WTD maintain a single uniform sewer rate per RCE (Robinswood “one for all, all for one”), or consider alternative cost recovery rate structures to reflect other system impacts?</p>

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
	<p>Should WTD update the rate structure for the capacity charge to align with current industry standards? <i>(Note the capacity charge rate structure was updated in 2021. A capacity charge methodology study is in progress.)</i></p> <p>What other rate relief approaches should WTD implement to improve affordability for those who may struggle to pay their sewer bill?</p>

DRAFT

**From:** [John McClellan](#)  
**To:** [Giambattista, Jennifer](#)  
**Subject:** Major Policy Questions for the RWSP Update  
**Date:** Friday, August 30, 2024 3:00:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [Policy priorities.pdf](#)

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Jenny,

Attached is a markup of WTD's document with the table of 'challenges and opportunities' and 'major policy questions.' I've highlighted the 'MPQ's' according to whether I view them as a high level policy question for RWQC (pink) or an operational policy question more appropriate for WMPAAC (orange). I also took a stab at marking my top 5 that I would hope RWQC review first.

Have a great weekend and holiday!

John

**John McClellan, PE**  
General Manager  
Alderwood Water & Wastewater District  
3626 156th St SW, Lynnwood WA 98087  
(425) 743-4605 | [www.awwd.com](http://www.awwd.com)

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## Major Policy Questions for Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update

***Draft Prepared by WTD for Discussion at RWQC Workshop 9/4/24***

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<p><b>Resource Recovery</b></p> <p>Recycled water, biosolids, energy capture</p> <p><i>MOTION 14383 - X</i></p>	<p>Energy production and heat recovery – Should WTD be expanding its efforts to capture energy and heat? If so, at what level of effort?</p> <p>Biosolids – Should WTD further expand its efforts to develop Class A biosolids? What changes are needed to biosolid recovery policies and processes?</p> <p>Recycled water – Under what circumstances should the region expand the use of reclaimed water? Which uses (e.g., environmental benefits, groundwater recharge, industrial uses, irrigation) are most appropriate?</p>
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1

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
<p>ALREADY CODIFIED</p> 	<p>Should WTD update the rate structure for the capacity charge to align with current industry standards? (Note the capacity charge rate structure was updated in 2021. A capacity charge methodology study is in progress.)</p> <p>What other rate relief approaches should WTD implement to improve affordability for those who may struggle to pay their sewer bill?</p>

DRAFT

# DRAFT Scoping Document for Updating the Regional Wastewater Services Plan

*Draft Prepared by WTD for Discussion at RWQC Workshop 9/4/24*

## A. Introduction

This draft scoping document describes the overall approach that will be used and some of the major policy issues that will be analyzed to update King County's Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP).

This draft document was produced to solicit input and feedback on the scope of the RWSP Update from members of the Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) and members of the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC). This scoping document will be discussed at the August 28 MWPAAC general meeting and the September 4 RWQC workshop, and possibly at future meetings and workshops. WTD is interested in hearing about the scope elements and major policy issues that RWQC and MWPAAC would like analyzed as part of the RWSP Update. WTD drafted this document based on initial verbal and written input heard to date from RWQC members and staff, MWPAAC members, and based on feedback obtained during and after the Clean Water Plan process. The draft document is designed to spark discussion and conversation. A revised version of this document will be presented after receiving feedback from MWPAAC and RWQC.

More detailed scopes of work for specific tasks will be developed as needed.

## Background

The RWSP, a supplement to the King County Comprehensive Water Pollution Abatement Plan, was adopted by the King County Council in November 1999 by Ordinance 13680, and the RWSP policies were subsequently codified in King County Code (KCC) chapter 28.86. The RWSP identifies projects and programs needed to provide wastewater capacity for homes and businesses in the wastewater service area through 2030 and provides policy direction for the operation and continued development of the wastewater system. The RWSP has largely been implemented, and it is now time to update the plan to guide future investments and actions. Changed conditions also justify another major update, including population growth, climate change, aging assets, regulatory requirements, and rate affordability.

An update to the RWSP will support the extension of local agency sewage disposal contracts, many of which expire in 2036, and continue to strengthen King County Wastewater Treatment Division's (WTD) relationship with local agencies. An update to the RWSP will also help make the case for additional state and federal funding and meet the requirements for a General Sewer Plan update for approval by Ecology.

The planning process started in 2019 as the Clean Water Plan and was paused at the end of 2021 to fully consider and address feedback received during the planning process. The pause in the Clean Water Plan process also provided an opportunity for more regulatory certainty regarding Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) obligations and nutrient reduction obligations. The planning process restarted in 2024 as the RWSP Update planning effort and includes important adjustments intended to address feedback received



during the Clean Water Plan process. The current RWSP update planning process is generally similar to the process used to develop the 1999 RWSP.

## Project Objectives

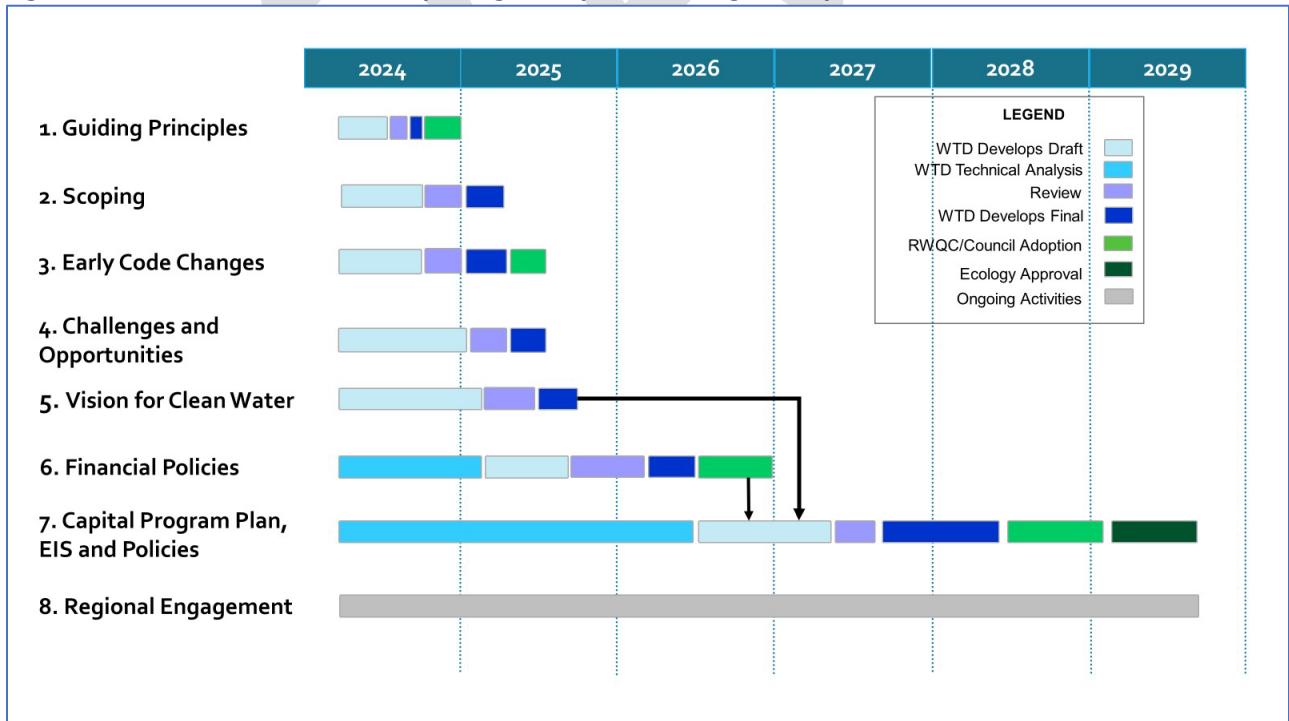
The overall project objectives are to develop a vision for WTD’s future, to develop an update to the RWSP, and to update the policies in King County Code 28.86. The project will define a future vision for the utility that is consistent with WTD’s mission – “We protect public health and the environment by collecting and cleaning wastewater while recovering valuable resources for a healthy and resilient Puget Sound.” The vision will inform policies and investments that are included in the final RWSP Update. The planning process will produce an RWSP update that will guide future investments, ensures the core mission to protect water quality; seeks to achieve affordable wastewater utility rates into the future; meets regulatory and legal obligations; and reflects County initiatives including equity, race and social justice; strategic climate action planning; and clean water, healthy habitat.

The resulting RWSP Update document will include the Vision for clean water, a capital investment plan, and policy updates to King County Code for Council review and approval. Once adopted by the Council, the document will be transmitted to the Washington State Department of Ecology for review and approval.

## Scope for the Effort

The planning process tasks are shown in Figure 1 and described below with the associated deliverables.

**Figure 1. Overall Schedule for Completing the Update to King County’s Wastewater Plan**



Tasks/Deliverables

1. Guiding Principles – The guiding principles will direct the process to update the RWSP and associated policies. The work includes:
  - Reviewing feedback from RWQC, component agencies, and interested parties received during the Clean Water Plan outreach process.
  - Developing draft guiding principles.
  - Soliciting feedback on draft guiding principles.
  - Finalizing guiding principles in the form of a resolution for RWQC consideration
  - Timeline: Final Completed in 4th Quarter 2024
  
2. Scoping – Scoping will identify the major issues that will be addressed and the process to address those issues in the effort. The work will include:
  - Developing a draft scoping document.
  - Soliciting feedback on the draft scoping document.
  - Finalizing the scoping document.
  - Timeline: Final Completed in 1st Quarter 2025
  
3. Early Code Changes – There are a small number of policies that are outdated because the work is complete. The early code changes will update the policies to reflect completed work. The early code changes are anticipated to be straightforward and do not require extensive analysis. The work will include:
  - Developing a list of policies for early code changes.
  - Drafting redline/strikeout edits to the identified policies.
  - Having MWPAAC review the redline/strikeout edits.
  - Finalizing the edits.
  - Developing and transmitting to Council an ordinance proposing the early code changes for adoption.
  - Timeline: Final Completed in 2nd Quarter 2025
  
4. Challenges and opportunities – This document will summarize the status of major challenges affecting the future of WTD’s wastewater system, projected trends for those challenges in the coming decades, emerging trends and potential opportunities for the future of water-sector utilities, and key questions to be explored in future regional discussions. Challenges and opportunities will inform the scope of work, policy analysis, investment plans and financial strategies. The work will include:
  - Reviewing relevant materials developed during the previous Clean Water Plan process.
  - Reviewing industry research on drivers and trends.
  - Updating information on the regional wastewater system.
  - Interviewing national water utility experts and thought leaders.
  - Listening sessions with interested and potentially affected parties.
  - Developing a draft challenges and opportunities document.
  - Soliciting feedback on the draft challenges and opportunities document.
  - Finalizing the challenges and opportunities document.
  - Timeline: Final Completed in 1st Quarter 2025.

5. Vision for Clean Water – The Vision for clean water will articulate the future of wastewater services and will inform policies and investments that are included in the final RWSP Update. The work will include:
  - Reviewing existing documentation of regional priorities and feedback.
  - Conducting interviews and listening sessions to confirm and refresh feedback as well as hear new ideas.
  - Drafting several initial vision concepts.
  - Conducting broad outreach and engagement to gather feedback on the initial vision concepts and the accompanying challenges and opportunities document.
  - Finalizing the vision to be adopted with the RWSP Update.
  - Timeline: Final Completed in 3rd Quarter 2025.
  
6. Financial Policies – Technical analysis will be performed to provide information to support proposed changes to the financial policies in King County Code 28.86.160. The analysis will look at cost structure and equity (including the capacity charge); capital financing and debt management; and financial planning and revenue sufficiency. The work will include:
  - Studying peer utility agency financial policy structures and evaluating them within a WTD specific context.
  - Developing draft policy revisions and seeking review from MWPAAC and stakeholders.
  - Finalizing financial policy revisions and developing a proposed ordinance for Council review and approval.
  - Timeline: Final Completed in 4th Quarter 2026
  
7. Capital Program Plan, Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and Policies – Technical analysis will provide the information to support proposed policy changes and WTD’s future capital program. The information will be used to develop a draft and final RWSP Update, draft and final EIS, and draft and final policy revisions. The work will include:  
Technical analysis
  - Identifying current/existing conditions in our service area in terms of demographics, the economy, water quality, and wastewater infrastructure.
  - Gathering background information on current policies.
  - Developing a range of options/strategies for policy questions. All options/strategies will meet legal obligations.
    - **Stay the Course:** Under this strategy, WTD would largely maintain current policies while investing as needed to meet current and future regulatory obligations with as little disruption as possible.
    - **Strategic Enhancement:** Under this strategy, WTD would largely maintain current policies but look to enhance or proactively invest in key areas that may include asset management, resource recovery (biosolids, recycled water), and additional treatment capacity.
    - **Pioneering Utility:** Under this strategy, WTD would shift to an even more innovative, future-focused utility, including but not limited to investing earlier in upgraded treatment levels to meet all future legal obligations, eliminating Puget Sound

discharges, maximizing resource recovery, proactively managing assets, and actively managing infiltration/inflow (I/I) into the system.

- Evaluating possible policy revisions.
- Identifying the capital projects, including timelines, costs, and rate impacts, associated with the options/strategies.

#### Draft Plan and EIS

- Conducting State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) scoping.
- Writing a Draft RWSP Update that includes draft projects and policies, along with a draft EIS that describes the environmental impacts associated with the Draft RWSP Update.
- Conducting broad outreach and engagement to gather feedback on the Draft Plan and EIS.

#### Final Plan and EIS

- Responding to comments and feedback on the draft RWSP Update and draft EIS.
- Selecting among the options/strategies to create a proposed strategy that includes a list of capital projects, timelines, and policy revisions.
- Identifying outcome measures to evaluate progress and measure success.
- Identifying future update schedules and/or triggers.
- Preparing a Proposed RWSP Update and final EIS.
- Developing and transmitting to Council an ordinance to adopt the Proposed RWSP Update.
- Developing and submitting to Ecology the adopted RWSP Update as a proposed amendment to King County's General Sewer Plan.

#### Approvals

- Council adopting the RWSP Update.
- Ecology approving the RWSP Update satisfying WTD's regulatory obligation for an amended general sewer plan.
- Timeline: Final Completed in 3rd Quarter 2029

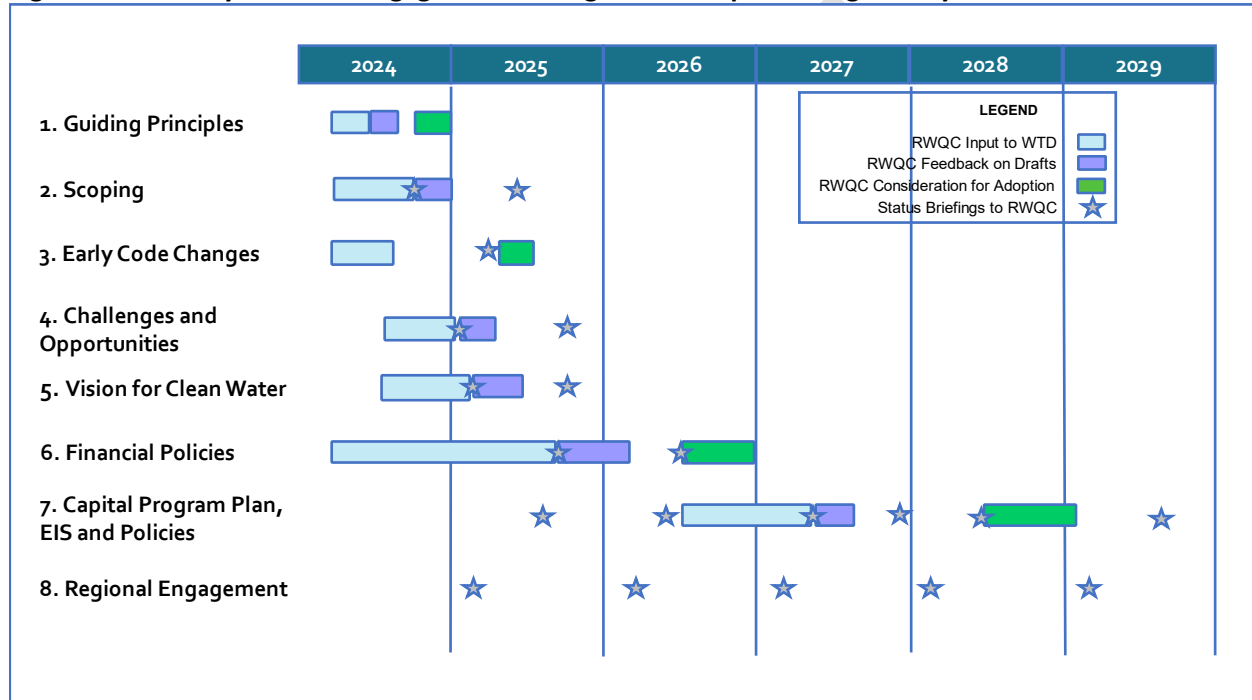
8. Regional Engagement – Regional engagement throughout the planning process ensures that interested and affected parties are informed and involved with the project. In addition to RWQC and the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC), the following categories of interested and potentially affected parties may be engaged in the process. More detailed audience lists will be developed along with work plans and supporting outreach or event plans in each phase.

- Local Jurisdictions and Local Sewer Utilities
- Wastewater Professionals and industry peers
- Community-Based Organizations (ESJ, Immigrant and Refugee, Environmental Justice)
- Environmental Organizations /Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Regulators and Resource Managers
- Neighborhood Groups
- Public Health Community-Based Organizations
- Ratepayers
- Youth and Students
- Business community
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Homeowner Associations

- Labor Unions
- Thought leaders and experts from inside and outside the region.
- Timeline: Final Completed in 3rd Quarter 2029

A specific plan and approach will be developed to engage with Tribal Governments. Figure 2 below shows RWQC engagement during the RWSP Update planning effort. RWQC will have an opportunity to give input before drafts are produced, to provide feedback once drafts are available, and to receive status briefings along the way before they are asked to take action.

**Figure 2. Summary of RWQC Engagement During Effort to Update King County’s Wastewater Plan.**



## Major Policy Issues and Questions

King County has identified several major decisions regarding the future of our regional wastewater system that will need to be made in this process. To build and operate the large regional system, WTD has a long and growing capital project list in the coming decades, with significant forecasted costs. In making these investments, King County needs to consider many issues like our aging wastewater system, population growth, future regulations, water quality goals, energy and resource conservation and recovery, affordability, and climate change. The update to the RWSP does not include stormwater planning for the region but will instead include how to address stormwater entering the wastewater system.

The policy questions shown in the table below have been grouped into major topics/themes that WTD has identified as known challenges and opportunities for the wastewater sector. Though a question is identified under one topic, it may also intersect with other topics in the table.

<b>Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes</b>	<b>Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update</b>
<p><b>Regulatory Landscape</b></p> <p>CSO, nutrients, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other contaminants of emerging concern (CECs), current and existing requirements, new and anticipated requirements, opportunities for larger regional partnerships to address water concerns, requirement to comply with future Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs)</p>	<p>What types and levels of treatment should be planned for?</p> <p>What assumptions should be made about future nutrient permit requirements, regulations related to CECs such as PFAS, or other future regulatory changes?</p> <p>What upstream or source control actions should the region undertake to prevent contaminants and reduce cost?</p>
<p><b>Capacity Demands</b></p> <p>Infiltration and Inflow (I/I), population growth, conveyance and treatment capacity demand, including onsite septic systems in urban areas,</p>	<p>What is the future capacity needed for growth and when, where and how should we address that need?</p> <p>Beyond the required capacity needed to meet current regulatory and contractual obligations, what level of capacity should be planned for?</p> <p>When addressing capacity, should capacity increases within existing facilities be maximized over acquiring new sites, where possible? Should the region continue to provide a centralized approach or consider decentralized options?</p> <p>How should I/I be managed? How much of the additional projected flow is coming from I/I versus population growth? Should I/I policy change to reduce the capacity needed for I/I?</p> <p>How should the conversion of onsite septic systems to sewers in the service area be managed and what planning assumption should WTD use about the conversion rate?</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure Resiliency</b></p> <p>Asset management, maintenance, improvements, renewal, replacement, labor and supply chain disruptions, natural hazard resiliency.</p>	<p>How and when should WTD decide to refurbish or replace aging infrastructure?</p> <p>What level of resiliency should WTD plan for regarding seismic and other natural hazards? What level of risk tolerance should WTD accept?</p> <p>What level of redundancy of critical systems should WTD have?</p>
<p><b>Equity and Social Justice</b></p> <p>Distributional equity, WTD role in safeguarding public health</p>	<p>What actions should WTD take to increase equity and social justice for the regional wastewater system (Should include definition of equity and social justice).</p>
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>Mitigation - green building, eliminating/reducing fossil fuel use, energy and</p>	<p>What climate experts and data should WTD use to inform planning?</p> <p>How should WTD reduce energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?</p>

<b>Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes</b>	<b>Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update</b>
<p>water efficiency, renewable energy, materials management, tree planting, etc.                      Adaptation – sea level rise, more extreme heat, increased storm intensities, wildfire smoke, increased river flooding, etc.</p>	<p>How should WTD prepare and adapt to climate impacts in line with the Strategic Climate Action Plan? What level of climate impact risk tolerance should WTD plan for?</p>
<p><b>Resource Recovery</b></p> <p>Recycled water, biosolids, energy capture</p>	<p>Energy production and heat recovery – Should WTD be expanding its efforts to capture energy and heat? If so, at what level of effort?</p> <p>Biosolids – Should WTD further expand its efforts to develop Class A biosolids? What changes are needed to biosolid recovery policies and processes?</p> <p>Recycled water – Under what circumstances should the region expand the use of reclaimed water? Which uses (e.g., environmental benefits, groundwater recharge, industrial uses, irrigation) are most appropriate?</p>
<p><b>Finance / Affordability</b></p> <p>Cost structure and equity, capital financing and debt management, financial planning and revenue sufficiency</p>	<p>Is there a better rate structure for the sewer rate? <i>(Note WTD has identified a work plan to further evaluate the residential customer equivalent conversion factor of 750 cubic feet per month.)</i></p> <p>Will WTD maintain a single uniform sewer rate per RCE (Robinswood “one for all, all for one”), or consider alternative cost recovery rate structures to reflect other system impacts?</p> <p>Should WTD update the rate structure for the capacity charge to align with current industry standards? <i>(Note the capacity charge rate structure was updated in 2021. A capacity charge methodology study is in progress.)</i></p> <p>What other rate relief approaches should WTD implement to improve affordability for those who may struggle to pay their sewer bill?</p>

## Guiding Principles – DRAFT RWQC RESOLUTION

### *Draft Prepared by WTD for Discussion at RWQC Workshop 9/4/24*

**A RESOLUTION adopting guiding principles for the update to the Regional Wastewater Services Plan and associated policies.**

WHEREAS, the regional water quality committee recognizes the critical importance of maintaining and enhancing its wastewater utility services to ensure public health, environmental protection and operational efficiency, and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive long-range plan for wastewater services is essential to effectively address current and future needs, including infrastructure improvements, regulatory compliance, affordability of long-term rates and sustainable practices, and

WHEREAS, the council adopted the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (“RWSP”) in November 1999 through Ordinance 13680, subsequently codified in K.C.C. chapter 28.86, and

WHEREAS, the RWSP, a supplement to the King County Comprehensive Water Pollution Abatement Plan originally adopted by the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle, serves as the primary framework for guiding the future of the county’s wastewater utility and regional infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, the RWSP identifies projects and programs needed to provide wastewater treatment capacity for homes and businesses in the wastewater treatment division (WTD) service area through 2030, and

WHEREAS, the RWSP provides policy direction for the operation and continued development of the wastewater system and its capital improvement program, including financial policies to guide financial forecasting and budgeting, debt financing and borrowing and collection of revenue to support the implementation of the RWSP, and

WHEREAS, the RWSP must be updated and the associated policies in KCC 28.84 (Water Pollution Abatement) and 28.86 (Wastewater Treatment) must be examined to ensure investments in the wastewater system continue to improve water quality, ensure system performance, and to mitigate the impact of increasing sewer rates over the long term, and

WHEREAS, the wastewater treatment division has initiated the process to update the RWSP and review associated policies, and

WHEREAS, the regional water quality committee has a strong interest in ensuring the steps taken to update the plan are well coordinated and effective, and

WHEREAS, the plan update will benefit from guiding principles to ensure alignment with the community’s values, legal requirements and best practices in wastewater management, transparency and accountability in the planning process, and a clear basis for evaluating decisions and actions, and

WHEREAS, guiding principles will support engagement with interested and affected parties by ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered in the planning process, and

WHEREAS, wastewater treatment division has developed these guiding principles in consultation with the regional water quality committee, and



WHEREAS, these guiding principles were also informed by comments and input received from component agencies and interested parties during the Clean Water Plan outreach process, and

WHEREAS, these principles will help ensure that King County updates the plan in a collaborative and responsive way to guide future investments for decades, and

WHEREAS, the regional water quality committee has reviewed and considered the proposed guiding principles to steer the development and content of the long-range plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the King County Regional Water Quality Committee that the following Guiding Principles are adopted as follows:

**1. The process to update the RWSP and associated policies should:**

**1.1. Establish clear and transparent processes, roles, and decision-making responsibilities and authority.** The RWSP update process will establish and clearly communicate roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority for all steps of the process. Roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *RWQC* will review and provide input on proposed RWSP policy changes and provide recommendations on policy amendments to the council.
- *The Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee* should review technical analyses, provide feedback on WTD work products and proposals and may present their recommendations for the Executive, WTD, and regional water quality committee's consideration.
- *WTD* will lead the RWSP Update planning effort, using these guiding principles and input from interested or affected parties to develop a vision, policies, and a plan to guide the future of the Division.
- *The King County Executive* will propose the vision, policies, and plan.

**1.2. Engage diverse voices and foster inclusive participation:** The process will ensure that community members have equitable opportunities to contribute to and inform the wastewater utility planning process. WTD will actively reach out to underrepresented groups and consider their needs and perspectives when creating the plan. Engagement will be guided by King County's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan.

**1.3. Listen to and respect all input:** The process will meaningfully reflect the input, ideas and feedback heard from participants throughout the wastewater planning process. This includes revisiting and re-engaging with individuals and groups who previously contributed to the Clean Water Plan, as well as reaching new interested parties. WTD will regularly solicit community feedback and integrate it into decision-making. The process will work to ensure that voices are heard and report back how input is considered and used.

**1.4. Understand the challenges and opportunities facing the regional wastewater system.** The process will develop a shared understanding of the key challenges or "drivers" for the planning process and the opportunities or range of possible future directions for the regional wastewater system over the next several decades. Having this common understanding will be an important foundation for developing a vision, and will inform the scope of work, policy analysis, investment plans and financial strategies.

- 1.5. **Develop a shared vision for the future.** The process will engage regional audiences to develop a long-term vision for future wastewater services, as well as identify high-level goals to achieve that vision, both of which will be included in the final RWSP update. The vision will be consistent with WTD's mission to protect public health and the environment by collecting and cleaning wastewater while recovering valuable resources for a healthy and resilient Puget Sound.
- 1.6. **Develop policy updates and a plan that aligns with the vision.** Guided by the vision and high-level goals, WTD will develop, evaluate, and select strategies that will guide WTD's investments into the future. WTD will collaborate with RWQC and MWPAAC to review and refine policies. WTD will also engage with interested and affected parties to collect feedback on the draft plan and ensure that proposed strategies are aligned with the high-level regional vision.
2. **The content of the update to the RWSP and associated policies should:**
  - 2.1. **Focus on wastewater services.** Focus on wastewater system issues and policies. Coordinate with and describe the relationship to the region's investments in stormwater, drinking water, and other water quality programs.
  - 2.2. **Protect and promote equity and social justice.** In 2010, King County Council adopted ordinance 16948, requiring the principles of equity and social justice to be included in all strategic planning, comprehensive planning and policy decisions at King County. These principles are outlined in the King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan and will be embedded as an element of the plan.
  - 2.3. **Address affordability.** Evaluate trade-offs and investment sequencing to mitigate the impact of increasing sewer rates in the region. Evaluate and consider rate-relief approaches to improve affordability for those who struggle to pay their sewer bill.
  - 2.4. **Commit to meet regulatory obligations.** The plan will meet current and anticipated future regulatory obligations.
3. **Implementation and review:** The regional water quality committee shall periodically review and update these guiding principles to reflect evolving needs, conditions and best practices during the update of the RWSP and associated policies.

## **RWQC Monthly Work Program for 2024**

### *Updated September 4, 2024*

The suggested topics are based on the latest scheduling information available. The committee will adjust the schedule throughout the year to accommodate any necessary changes.

#### **January–No meeting**

#### **February 7, 2024 (In-person)**

- ✓ Election of Vice-Chair.
- ✓ Introduction to the Regional Water Quality Committee and the Regional Wastewater Treatment System.
- ✓ Status update on the long-term forecasting work requested by Motions 16410 and 16449.
- ✓ Regional Water Quality Committee 2024 Work Program development and priority setting.
- ✓ Rates: High level briefing on major policy issues and cost drivers likely to impact 2025 rates.

#### **March 6, 2024**

- ✓ Discussion of resolution expressing RWQC's interest in sewer rate and capacity charge and requesting MWPAAC continue performing a technical review of rates.
- ✓ Wastewater Treatment Division 2025 rate recommendation.
- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
- Report from WTD as requested by Motion 16410 on recommended methodology for forecasting long term costs of its capital improvement needs. (Deferred until April)

#### **April 3, 2024**

- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
- ✓ Report from WTD as requested by Motion 16410 on recommended methodology for forecasting long term costs of its capital improvement needs.
- ✓ Overview of the policies that determine how regional wastewater system costs are shared and the sewer and capacity charge are structured.
- ✓ Discussion of resolution expressing RWQC's interest in sewer rate and capacity charge and requesting MWPAAC continue performing a technical review of rates.

#### **May 1, 2024– CANCELLED**

#### **June 5, 2024**

- ✓ Briefing Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
  - Policy topics for discussion: Policy application K.C.C. 28.86.030 and Treatment Plant Policies K.C.C. 28.86.050
- ✓ Briefing on 2025 Proposed Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge.

- ✓ John Taylor, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks

**July 3, 2024—July 15, 9:30 a.m. SPECIAL MEETING**

- ✓ Briefing Modified Combined Sewer Overflow Consent Decree.
- ✓ Briefing Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
  - Guiding principles for RWSP Update
  - Policy topics for review from prior meeting: Policy application K.C.C. 28.86.030 and Treatment Plant Policies K.C.C. 28.86.050
  - RWSP Scope
- ✓ Status briefing on the progress in developing a long-term financial and sewer rate forecast per Motion 16449. Written update.

**August 7, 2024 CANCELLED DUE TO RECESS**

**September 4, 2024 (In-PERSON)**

- Briefing Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
  - RWSP scope and input on policy issues to be addressed
  - Resolution on Guiding Principles for RWSP Update

**October 2, 2024**

- 2025 Proposed WTD Capital Improvement Program
- Briefing Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
- Stormwater Study Session Part 1: Understanding the problem.
  - Threat to Puget Sound and relationship to wastewater.
  - Existing regulatory stormwater framework, including the role of King County and cities.
  - Existing funding framework.
- Briefing Contaminants of Emerging Concern

**November 6, 2024**

- Briefing Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
- Executive's 2025 WTD Budget proposal
- Stormwater Study Session Part 2: Focusing on solutions.
  - Priorities for regional action.
  - A model for collaborative stormwater action.
  - Next steps/near term opportunities.

**December 4, 2024**

- Briefing Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update.
- Briefing Lower Duwamish Waterway Consent Decree. (Timing contingent on referral status.)

RWQC staff will work throughout the year to coordinate with MWPAAC staff to align work programs of both committees.