



King County

1200 King County
Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Agenda Regional Water Quality Committee

Councilmembers:
Claudia Balducci, Chair
Reagan Dunn, De'Sean Quinn
Alternate:

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

Alternates: Penny Sweet, 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

Non-Voting Member: John McClellan, Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee

Lead Staff: Jenny Giambattista (206-477-0879)
Committee Clerk: Marka Steadman (206-477-0887)

3:00 PM

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Hybrid Meeting

Hybrid Meetings: Attend the King County Council committee meetings in person in Council Chambers (Room 1001), 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.



Sign language and interpreter services can be arranged given sufficient notice (206-848-0355).
TTY Number - TTY 711.
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.



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. If your comments are submitted before 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, your comments will be distributed to the committee members and appropriate staff prior to the meeting.

HOW TO WATCH/LISTEN TO THE MEETING REMOTELY: There are three ways to watch or listen to the meeting:

- 1) Stream online via this link: www.kingcounty.gov/kctv, or input the link web address into your web browser.
- 2) Watch King County TV on Comcast Channel 22 and 322(HD) and Astound Broadband Channels 22 and 711(HD).
- 3) Listen to the meeting by telephone.

Dial: 1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 827 1536 1574

To help us manage the meeting, please use the Livestream or King County TV options listed above, if possible, to watch or listen to the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Minutes**
October 1, 2025 meeting
4. **Chair's Report**
5. **MWPAAC Report**
6. **Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Report**

Briefing

7. [Briefing No. 2025-B0158](#)

Budget Update: Wastewater Treatment Division's 2026-2027 Adopted Biennial Budget

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff



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8. [Briefing No. 2025-B0159](#)

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Policy Framework

Darren Greve, Government Relations Administrator, Wastewater Treatment Division

Janice Johnson, RWSP Update Program Manager, Wastewater Treatment Division

9. [Briefing No. 2025-B0160](#)

Update on Motion 16900: A motion requesting the wastewater treatment division implement a sewer rate and capital work plan to continue to improve engagement, transparency, and accountability.

Sharman Herrin, Government Relations Administrator, Wastewater Treatment Division

John McClellan, General Manager, Alderwood Water and Wastewater District

10. [Briefing No. 2025-B0005](#)

Discussion of 2025 Regional Water Quality Committee Work Program

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff

Other Business

Adjournment



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Meeting Minutes Regional Water Quality Committee

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Alternate:*

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Sarah Moore, Burien*

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Auburn*

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District; Lloyd Warren, Sammamish Plateau Water District
Alternate: Ryika Hooshangi, Sammamish Plateau Water*

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

*Non-Voting Member: John McClellan, Metropolitan Water
Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee*

*Lead Staff: Jenny Giambattista (206-477-0879)
Committee Clerk: Marka Steadman (206-477-0887)*

3:00 PM

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

Hybrid Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Mork called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: 11 - Dunn, Lee, Mork, Moore, Rossman, Warren, Hollingsworth, Kettle, Quinn,
Sweet and Hooshangi

Excused: 2 - Balducci and Clarke

3. Approval of Minutes

*Councilmember Lee moved approval of the September 3, 2025, meeting minutes.
There being no objections, the minutes were approved.*

4. Chair's Report

Vice Chair Mork commented on the start of the King County budget process for consideration of the 2026-2027 County budget and provided an overview of the meeting topics.

5. MWPAAC Report

John McClellan, Chair, MWPAAC, commented on the September 24th MWPAAC meeting where topics included separated system actions and an overview of the portfolio management process. The Engineering and Planning Subcommittee will hear a briefing on the alternative analysis for the Mouth of the Duwamish CSO Project and have a report from members who attended WTD's Capital Readiness Workshop. The Rates and Finance Subcommittee will receive a briefing on the capacity charge methodology study. The next MWPAAC meeting will be October 22, 2025.

6. Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Report

Kamuron Gurol, Director, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD), commented on activity related to the 2026-2027 County budget, and the Capital Readiness workshop; provided updates related to nutrients, and PFAS; reported on penalties, connecting housing to infrastructure program, the Lower Duwamish Cleanup, the raw sewage pump building roof demolition at WestPoint, sewer cleaning truck implementation, and a Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station award.

Discussion and Possible Action**7. [Briefing No. 2025-B0121](#)**

A motion developed and proposed by the Regional Water Quality Committee, requesting the wastewater treatment division implement a work plan to improve transparency and accountability in the sewer rate-setting process.

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff, answered questions from the members.

Vice Chair Mork moved approval of the proposed motion. The motion passed.

The vote was:

Votes: Yes: 8— Lee, Mork, Moore, Rossman, Hollingsworth, Kettle, Warren, Quinn, and Hooshangi (voting as alternate for Clarke)

No: 0

Excused: 4 — Clarke, Dunn, and Balducci (Although excused at the time of voting, an email from Chair Balducci to the Regional Water Quality Committee expressing her support for the motion was entered into the record.)

This matter was Presented

Briefing

8. [Briefing No. 2025-B0145](#)

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update

Darren Greve, WTD, Government Relations; and Faon O'Connor, WTD, Combined Sewer Overflow Program Manager; briefed the committee and answered questions from the members.

This matter was Presented

9. [Briefing No. 2025-B0146](#)

Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Capital Program Update: 2026-2027 Proposed Capital Budget and Program Highlights

Caitlyn Hall, Budget and Contracts Unit Manager, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD); Stan Hummel, PE, Unit Manager, Combined Sewer Overflow Delivery Unit, WTD; and Chad Merrill, Project Planning and Delivery Section, WTD; briefed the committee and answered questions from the members.

This matter was Presented

10. [Briefing No. 2025-B0147](#)

Council Selected 2025 WaterWorks Grants

This matter was Presented

11. [Briefing No. 2025-B0005](#)

Discussion of 2025 Regional Water Quality Committee Work Program

This matter was Deferred

Other Business

There was no further business to come before the committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____

Clerk's Signature



King County

Metropolitan King County Council Regional Water Quality Committee

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	7	Name:	Jenny Giambattista
Proposed No.:	2025-B0158	Date:	December 3, 2025

SUBJECT

Briefing on the 2026-2027 Wastewater Treatment Division Adopted Budget.

SUMMARY

On November 18, 2025, the King County Council adopted the King County 2026-2027 Biennial Budget (Proposed Ordinance 2025-0288). The 2026-2027 adopted operating budget for the Wastewater Treatment Division is \$502.7 million, 6.2% higher than the 2025 annual biennialized budget. The increase reflects inflationary operational costs, additional funding for major maintenance repairs, and additional staffing for operations, capital, and administrative support.

The 2026-2027 adopted capital budget for the Wastewater Treatment Division is \$1.3 billion. Planned expenditures over the six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) spending forecast are increasing significantly, with regulatory compliance and asset management projects representing an increasing share of the capital program.

This staff report discusses budget language added by the King County Council and the adopted operating and capital budgets for Wastewater Treatment Division.

BACKGROUND

How the Annual Sewer Rate Adoption Process Works with WTD's Biennial Budget. As WTD is largely funded by the sewer rate and capacity charge, its projected operating expenditures and FTEs are based on the annual rate adoption, which by contract with local sewer agencies, must occur prior to June 30 each year. WTD budgets only based on adopted rates, not projected rates. Therefore, the adopted 2026-2027 budget only assumes the expenditure level and FTEs for the biennium that are supported at the 2026 adopted sewer rate level.

After the 2027 rate is adopted by June 30, 2026, for the 2027 fiscal year, the Executive will have an opportunity to transmit a supplemental budget ordinance to reflect any changes in expenditures for 2027 based on revenues from the new 2027 adopted rate. Additional staffing and operational needs beyond those supported by the 2026 rate will

be considered based on the 2027 adopted rate. During the 2026 rate adoption, WTD forecasted the rate in 2027 would increase 12.75%. If this rate increase is proposed by the Executive and adopted by the Council, there would likely be a corresponding supplemental budget request in 2027.

ANALYSIS

WTD 2026-2027 Operating Budget. As shown in Table 1, the 2026-2027 adopted operating budget for the Wastewater Treatment Division is \$502.7 million, 6.2% higher than the 2025 annual biennialized budget. The increase reflects inflationary operational costs, additional funding for major maintenance repairs, and additional staffing for operations, capital, and administrative support.

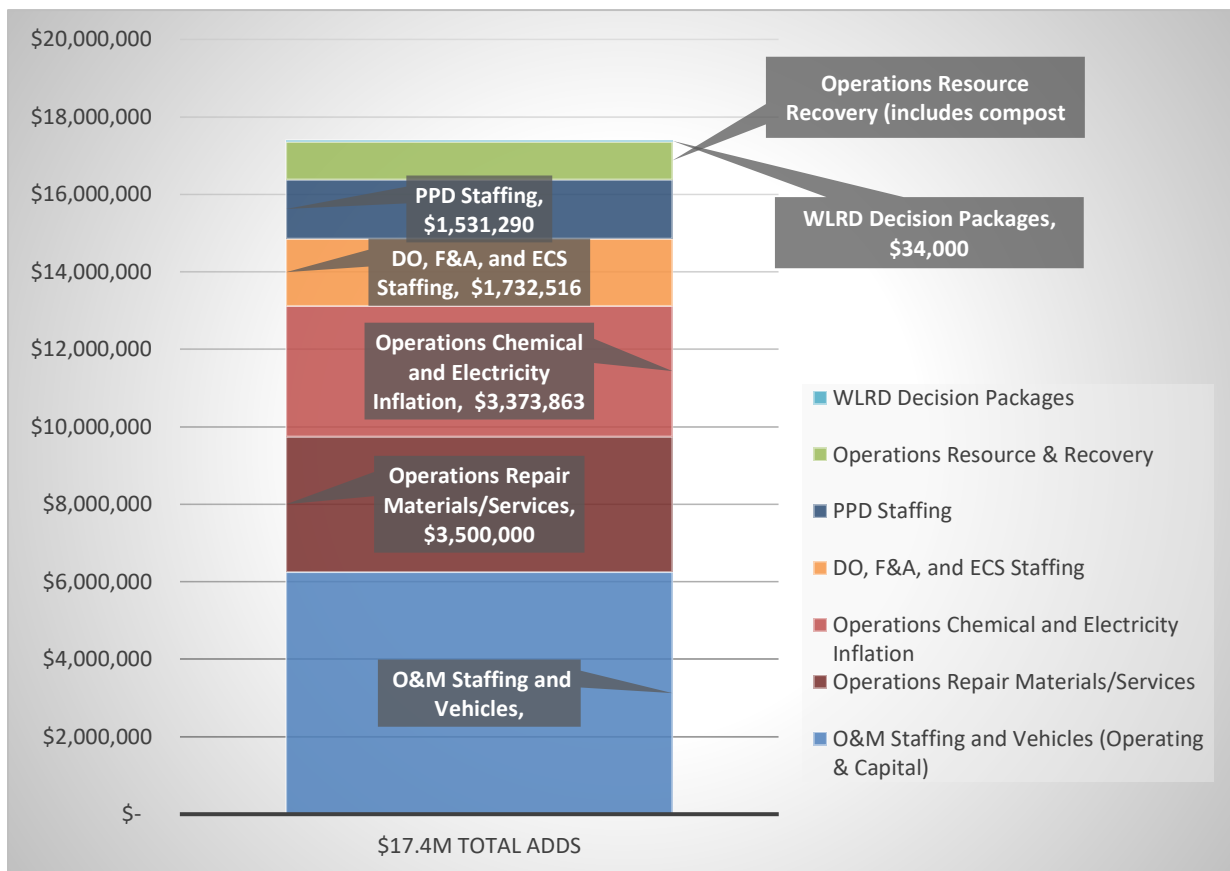
Table 1
2026-2027 WTD Adopted Operating Budget

	Expenditures	Revenues	FTEs	TLTs
2025 Revised Budget Biennialized	\$473,394,808	\$1,387,308,490	946.0	8.0
2026-2027 Base Budget Adjust.	(\$6,815,327)	(\$2,000,000)	0.0	0.0
2026-2027 Decision Packages	\$36,093,460	\$173,606,051	69.0	8.0
2026-2027 Adopted Budget	\$502,673,000	\$1,558,915,000	1015.0	16.0

For the FTE requests related to capital, only the share of the FTE costs related to operations is appropriated in this operating budget. The remaining FTE costs are charged to capital projects.

Figure 1 illustrates the major categories of new operational investments adopted in the 2026-2027 proposed budget.

Figure 1
2026-2027¹ Adopted WTD Operating Adds



Definitions: PPD=Project and Planning; DO=Director's Office; F&A=Finance and Administration; ECS=Environmental and Community Services; O&M = Operations & Maintenance

Significant operational adds are listed below.

Major maintenance repairs, \$6.7 million. This decision package includes funding to address aging assets, failing assets, and unforeseen repairs of assets. WTD reports its current repair budget of \$3 million is insufficient, and it can no longer absorb additional costs to complete this work.

West Point Treatment Plant, \$5.2 million and 13 FTEs. Five decision packages including requests for five mechanics, three instrument technicians, three maintenance electricians, one industrial maintenance specialist, and one process engineer.

Transfer to Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD), \$4.6 million. This decision package increased the transfer to WLRD to reflect inflationary cost increases to approximately \$46 million of biennial operating transfer to WLRD for environmental lab services and other science services. This is in addition to the \$1.5 million increase to

¹ See the discussion above explaining the 2027 portion of WTD's 2026-2027 Adopted budget.

WLRD in the 2025 budget. This transfer supports WLRD's services to WTD for the environmental lab and WLRD's science section.

Project Planning and Delivery, \$2.2 million and 27 FTEs. This decision package added 27 FTEs to support the expanding capital portfolio of programs and projects. Additionally, the 2026-2027 adopted budget includes two Water Quality Planner/Project Manager positions at \$74,201, related to the expanding capital program. An additional \$14.7 million is included in the appropriation for the capital projects to support the capital portion of the FTEs requested in the operating budget.

Increasing Electricity Costs, \$2.9 million. This includes \$2.1 million for South Plant electricity costs and \$799,152 for projected increasing costs at West Point Treatment. The increase at South Plant is due to both increased consumption and Puget Sound Energy rate increases. This is in addition to the \$1.3 million added in 2025 and represents an approximate 18% increase from South Plant's current budget for electricity. The increase at West Point is largely due to expected Seattle City Light rate increases.

South Plant Staffing, \$2.5 million and 7 FTEs. The decision packages would add 5 FTEs for South Plant mechanics with corresponding tools and vehicles, one South Plant industrial procurement specialist and one additional South Plant Treatment Engineer. These 7 FTEs will be added to the existing 130 staff for South Plant.

Administrative, Business and Finance staff, \$1.5 million and 8 FTEs. The 2026-2027 adopted budget added a total of eight FTEs related to administrative, business, and finance support.

Biosolids, \$1.9 million. This includes \$1.4 million for increased costs for biosolids hauling and application and \$500,000 (one-time) for the operational costs of the biosolids compost pilot located at South Treatment Plant. The pilot, which began producing a compost in late November of 2024, has provided proof of concept in WTD's ability to produce a high-quality biosolids-derived compost that meets Class A requirements. The pilot is performing as expected and is anticipated to run for a five-year period to allow for testing and evaluation of the product.

Brightwater Treatment Plant Staffing, \$980,693. This decision package includes one gardener and two supervisor FTEs at Brightwater Treatment Plant.

Expand Director's Office, \$905,829 and 3 FTEs. This decision package added one Chief of Staff, one Special Projects Manager, and one Construction Safety Specialist to the Director's Office. The Special Projects Manager will manage politically sensitive, inter-governmental, strategic, regulatory, and confidential projects/programs for the WTD's Director's Office. These staffing adds bring the total FTEs in the Director's Office to 41 FTE.

WaterWorks Grant Program, \$797,450. This decision added an inflationary increase to the WaterWorks Grant Program based on 1.5% of WTD's operating budget.

Operational Staffing Increases. The adopted budget added 69.0 FTEs to the existing 946 FTEs, for an increase of 7.2% in the size of the employee pool. The specific

positions are identified in the summary above, and positions address both operating and capital needs.

As shown in Table 2, the increase reflects the continued growth in WTD staffing beginning in 2023 and is expected to continue as the capital program continues to grow. In addition to the positions added for 2026-2027, WTD anticipates seeking a supplemental appropriation to address staffing needs based on the 2027 sewer rate. Council staff have requested additional information on potential anticipated adjustments to the 2026-2027 budget.

The 2025 budget authorized an additional 78 FTEs, of which 48 are reported vacant as of September 10, 2025. Overall, WTD has 131 vacancies, which is about 14% of WTD's total FTEs and represents a higher vacancy rate than in September 2024.

Table 2
WTD FTE Growth 2013-2025²

FTE Adds	Adopted										Proposed	
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*	Total
Director's Office	-	1	-	0	-	0	-	5	-	5	3	14
Environmental & Community Svcs	-	4	-	2	-	6	-	20	17	1	3	53
Finance & Administration	-	4	-	-	-	1	-	6	-	1	6	18
Operations	-	-	-	15	5	-	-	15	4	25	30	94
Resource Recovery	-	2	1	-	-	4	-	9	5	0		21
Project Planning & Delivery	2	7	-	7	-	4	31	42	47	46	27	213
Total New FTEs	2	18	1	24	5	15	31	97	73	78	69	413
Total FTEs												
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*	Total Change (2016-2026)
Director's Office	26	27	27	27	27	27	27	32	32	37	41	15
Environmental & Community Svcs	52	56	56	58	58	64	64	83	100	101	104	52
Finance & Administration	28	32	32	32	32	33	33	39	39	40	54	26
Operations	304	304	304	319	324	324	324	339	343	368	398	94
Resource Recovery	16	18	19	19	19	23	23	31	36	36	36	20
Project Planning & Delivery	180	187	187	194	194	198	229	271	318	364	382	202
Total Adopted FTEs	606	624	625	649	654	669	700	795	868	946	1015	409
Total Adopted TLTs	3.08	17	17	16.4	8.5	5	3.42	5	5	8	8	4.92

*Includes proposed 2026 FTEs and TLTs

WTD reports additional operating staff are needed because:

- WTD facilities are aging, requiring attention to address hundreds of minor repairs and adjustments.
- With an increasingly large capital portfolio, operations staff are needed to participate in systems planning, construction, start-up, and commissioning process.
- Permit conditions are more complex, requiring more monitoring and adjustment to meet water and air quality requirements.
- Contracts and policy goals require more investments in biosolids, biogas, recycled water, and sewer heat.

² The Total FTE figures are inclusive of new FTE add as well as internal transfers.

For the capital staffing FTE requests, at the request of Council staff, WTD provided a detailed discussion of the division's approach to forecasting additional FTEs to support the expanded capital appropriation request. The discussion describes an informed-decision making process that primarily relies on a qualitative review that is based on the extensive experience WTD has with capital staffing. As part of this approach, WTD assesses the specific staffing needed for each WTD section to staff the projected projects. WTD confirmed the existing approach using a pilot forecasting model that estimates FTE needs for both current projects and new projects in the 2026-2027 capital budget proposal by using historical project labor expenditure data and current and planned capital project labor expenditure forecasts. Both approaches confirmed the request for an additional 27 FTEs for the capital program. As the growth in the capital program and the corresponding hiring rate is unprecedented for WTD, the division will continue to evaluate staffing needs and the capacity to hire and onboard staff.

WTD 2026-2027 Capital Budget. As shown in Table 3, the 2026-2027 adopted capital budget for the Wastewater Treatment Division is \$1.3 billion. Planned expenditures over the six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) spending forecast are increasing significantly, with regulatory compliance and asset management projects representing an increasing share of the capital program.

Table 3
2026-2027 WTD Capital Budget

	2026-2027 Adopted	2028-2029 Projected	2030-2031 Projected
Revenues	\$1,295,305,263	\$1,481,773,150	\$2,147,454,212
Appropriation	\$1,295,305,263	\$1,148,773,150	\$2,147,454,212
Major Revenue Sources: Proceeds from Bond Sales, Revolving Fund/Public Works Fund loans, Commercial Paper, etc.			

The 2026-2027 adopted budget includes 77 capital projects and an appropriation request of \$1.3 billion. The 2026-2027 funded projects reflect a mix of new and continuing projects, with most projects not seeking full appropriation. Planned expenditures over the six-year CIP spending forecast are increasing significantly, with regulatory compliance and asset management projects representing an increasing share of the capital program. Additionally, the adopted capital budget includes budgeting more capital investments as "programmatic capital projects" versus "standalone" projects. In programmatic budgeting, sub-projects are rolled into one "programmatic" project appropriation. In the 2026-2027 budget, there are 27 programmatic projects. WTD reports this creates efficiencies and flexibility in contracting, budgeting, and administrative labor. However, it does reduce transparency in tracking appropriations when compared to budgeting as a standalone project because sub-projects are not appropriated in the budget.

The Water Quality Construction budget is categorized according to major portfolios to delineate the primary functions that the budget addresses. Listed below are the 2026-

2027 adopted appropriations for the largest CIP projects in each of the major WTD capital portfolios:

Asset Management, \$515.4 million. Projects in this portfolio maintain level of service through the rehabilitation or replacement of critical assets. WTD reports the 2026-2027 budget includes an intentional increased investment in minor asset programmatic projects because investments in these types of projects allow for maximum benefits per dollar.

Key proposals include:

- West Point Electrical Improvements: \$142.7 million (Discussed below)
- M Street Trunk Rehabilitation: \$40.6 million (Discussed below)
- South Interceptor Rehabilitation: \$30.6 million
- Interbay Force Main & Odor Control: \$30.6 million
- Mechanical Upgrade & Replacement: \$27.6 million
- West Point PE and RAS Pipe Restoration/Replacement: \$24.8 million
- Electrical / Instrumentation and Control: \$21.1 million
- Odor/Corrosion Control: \$16.2 million
- South Plant Electrical Improvements Program: \$14.3 million
- West Point Treatment Plant Instrument & Service Air Replacement: \$14.2 million
- HVAC Replacements and Refurbishments: \$13.0 million
- Pipeline Replacement: \$12.0 million
- Ovation Lifecycle Controls Lifecycle Program: \$11.0 million
- Lakeland Hills PS Facility Replacement: \$10.9 million

Regulatory, \$525.5 million. Projects in this portfolio respond to permit, regulation, and/or consent decree legal deadlines.

Key proposals include:

- CSO Mouth of Duwamish Wet Weather Treatment Station and Conveyance: \$351.5 million (Discussed below)
- CSO Mouth of Duwamish Chelan Storage Program: \$49.0 million (Discussed below)
- NPDES Elliott West Wet Weather Treatment Station: \$37.4 million (Discussed below)
- CSO East Ship Canal Wet Weather Facilities: \$22.3 million
- CSO Supplemental Compliance and Corrective Action (\$15.9 million)

Capacity Improvement, \$164.9 million. Projects in this portfolio increase capacity in WTD facilities to accommodate future growth.

Key projects include:

- Black Diamond Trunk Capacity Upgrade: \$119.3 million (Discussed below)
- North Mercer Island & Enatai Interceptors Upgrade: \$12.6 million
- Treatment Planning Program: \$9.6 million
- West Point Digestion Capacity Expansion: \$6.4 million
- Sammamish Plateau Diversion: \$6.3 million

Operational Enhancements, \$24.5 million. Projects in this portfolio are intended to reduce/improve operating costs at treatment plants through the delivery of projects that create efficiencies.

Key projects include:

- Process Replacement/Improvement: \$17.2 million
- Alki Permanent Standby Generator: \$4.5 million
- Technology Assessment and Innovation Project: \$2.9 million

Planning and Administration, \$45.3 million. Projects in this portfolio incorporate programs and projects that facilitate execution of the overall capital portfolio through a series of planning and administration-related efforts.

Key projects include:

- WTD CIP Contingency Fund: \$20 million
- Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP): Conveyance System Improvements: \$10.7 million
- RWSP Update: \$7.4 million (Discussed below)

Resiliency - \$4.5 million. Projects in this portfolio improve the survivability and operability of core assets against natural disasters through the delivery of projects that address known deficiencies.

Key proposals include:

- Climate Adaptation Planning Program: \$1.9 million
- West Point Primary Sedimentation Area Roof Structure: \$2.6 million

Resource Recovery, \$15.2 million. Projects in this portfolio support the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan initiative through the delivery of projects that reduce energy or recover resources from wastewater.

Key proposals include:

- Brightwater Space Heating – Heat Pump Installation \$5.5 million
- West Point Biogas Utilization Improvement Program: \$3.8 million
- WTD Electric Vehicle Charging Stations: \$3.4 million

Five Largest WTD 2026-2027 Capital Appropriation Requests. Listed below are the five largest capital appropriations in the 2026-2027 WTD capital budget.

Mouth of Duwamish Wet Weather Treatment Station and Conveyance, \$351.5 million. The Mouth of Duwamish Wet Weather Treatment Station (WWTS) and Conveyance will control pollution from three CSO outfalls at the mouth of the Duwamish River. The Wet Weather Treatment Station (WWTS) is anticipated to provide peak wet weather treatment capacity and significant onsite storage. WTD estimates the new facility will be approximately 3.25 times larger than the Georgetown Wet Weather Station by volume. Building a treatment plant, storage, and pipelines for this volume is a large, complex and expensive project that will require approximately 1,240 linear feet of open trench piping, 360 linear feet of trenchless, a new pump station, marine dredging and shoreline

installation. WTD reports this project will also require the purchase of an estimated 4 to 8 acres in SODO. WTD reports construction for this project will impact community members who live, work, and travel through the SODO neighborhood. This project is to be completed by December 31, 2034, in accordance with the modified consent decree.

This is the initial appropriation for this project and includes \$254.5 million for planning and design, \$37 million for implementation, and \$60 million for acquisition. The early, rough order of magnitude cost estimate at completion for this project is \$2.6 billion. A new cost estimate is anticipated in February 2026.

Mouth of Duwamish Chelan Storage Program, \$49 million. The Mouth of Duwamish Chelan Storage Facility project is a part of the Mouth of Duwamish CSO project. This specific project will control the Chelan Avenue CSO outfall to regulatory requirements by constructing a large storage tank and supporting conveyance to manage peak flows. This will involve mass excavation, deep soil stabilization, installation of a specialized slab, regulator station modifications, a diversion structure, and approximately 1,490 linear feet of tunneled conveyance pipe. This is the initial appropriation for this project and includes \$44.8 million for planning and design and \$4.2 million for implementation. The early, rough order of magnitude cost estimate at completion for this project is \$807.2 million.

West Point Electrical Improvements, \$142.7 million. This project will modernize and enhance electrical infrastructure at the West Point Electrical Plant. WTD reports the electrical assets installed in West Point's original construction in the 1960s and secondary expansion in the 1990s are beyond or near end of expected life and many no longer meet current code requirements, which presents risk of failure and potential safety concerns to staff. The project will replace 330 aged electrical assets to increase system reliability and reduce unplanned downtime, relocate nine flood-prone electrical assets to improve operational resiliency, and integrate significant infrastructure upgrades, including the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, deployment of EV charging stations, fiber optic enhancements, and the construction of an electrical building.

Prior appropriations for this project total \$64.5 million. This appropriation of \$142.7 million includes \$13.5 million for planning and design and \$129.1 million for implementation. The early rough order of magnitude cost estimate at completion for this project is \$409.9 million.

Black Diamond Trunk Capacity Upgrade, \$119.3 million. The Black Diamond Interceptor, built in 1992, is not sufficiently sized to accommodate the projected sewer flows. This project will determine the best available alternative to upgrade the capacity of approximately six miles of 10–16-inch conveyance pipe to provide the needed conveyance capacity for the contributing area, considering future population growth.

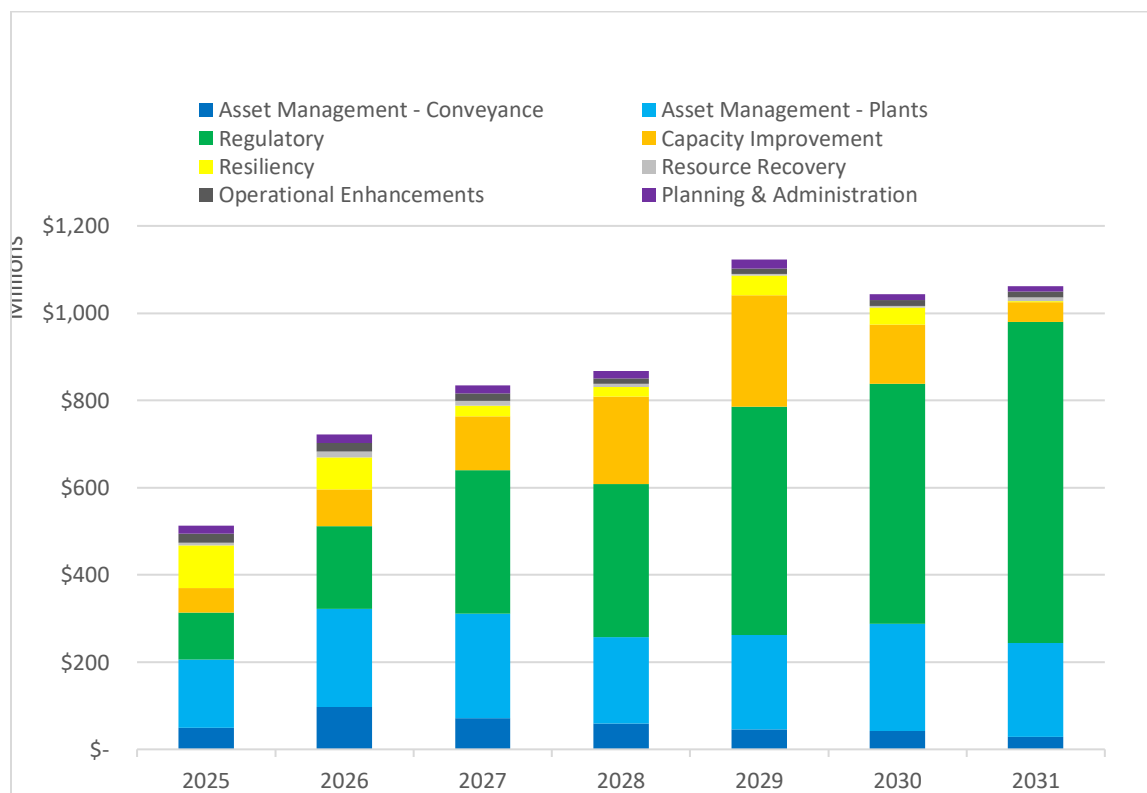
Prior appropriations for this project total \$19.7 million. This appropriation request of \$119.3 million includes \$7 million for final design and \$112 million for implementation and \$5.8 million for closeout. The early, rough order of magnitude cost estimate at completion for this project is \$166.8 million and an estimated completion date of March 2030.

M Street Trunk Rehabilitation - \$40.6 million. The M Street Trunk Rehabilitation Project will rehabilitate 13,900 linear feet of severely deteriorated reinforced concrete pipe and rehabilitate 45 precast concrete maintenance holes and restore over 100 lateral connections along the M Street Trunk between maintenance holes located in the City of Auburn. The total estimated costs have increased since the last time budget was requested as the project has completed alternatives analysis and has refined design details, updated construction methods.

Prior appropriations for this project total \$36.7 million. This appropriation of \$40.6 million includes \$7.5 million for design and \$33.1 million for implementation. The cost estimate at completion for this project is \$77.3 million and the cost estimate has more certainty as the project is further along in the project development process. This project has an estimated completion date of May 2028.

Capital Project Spending Continues to Increase Significantly. As shown in Figure 2 below, planned expenditures over the six-year CIP spending forecast are increasing significantly. WTD reports these increases are driven by multiple concurrent state and federal regulatory requirements, pressing needs for asset renewal and replacement, and capacity improvement needs to support growth mandated by state Growth Management Act and local comprehensive plans. WTD's capital program is forecasted to triple or more in size in the next five years from \$300 million to \$1 billion per year or more. As shown in Figure 2, much of this increase in cost is related to regulatory requirements, notably the Modified Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Consent Decree to control CSOs discussed below.

Figure 2
Adopted 2026-2027 Budget 6-Year CIP Spending Forecast



Modified Combined Sewer Overflow Consent Decree. WTD has been implementing King County's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) program for over three decades to control the County's CSO outfalls to the Washington State standard of no more than one untreated CSO discharge per year on a 20-year average. This adopted budget includes the largest investments in the modified CSO consent decree to date with significantly more investments expected over the decade. The total cost estimate at completion for the remaining CSO consent decree projects is \$6 billion. This is a rough order of magnitude estimate as most of the projects are still in early in the planning stages. Each project will have updated cost estimates during 2026.

State Nutrient Requirements. In June 2025, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) issued the Draft Voluntary Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit (PSNGP) and a draft Puget Sound Nutrient Reduction Plan for public comment. The draft permit seeks to address adverse impacts from low dissolved oxygen in Puget Sound by regulating the wastewater treatment plants that discharge nutrients (e.g., nitrogen) to Puget Sound. WTD provided written comments on the draft documents by the August 27, 2025, deadline and noted that upgrading King County's wastewater treatment plants to achieve nitrogen removal targets specified in the PSNGP may cost on the order of \$10 to \$20 billion in today's dollars, will require even higher sewer rates, and could take decades to implement. It is important to note that these cost estimates will need to be further updated once Ecology has issued final nutrient control requirements. Ecology has indicated it will issue the PSNGP in early 2026 and issue final facility-specific effluent limits (implemented in future permits) by 2031. The six-year forecast includes \$67.6 million for planning and initial capital projects related to the draft general permit.

Long Term Planning Underway: Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update. 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 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. Many of the major projects outlined in the RWSP have been completed as the plan reaches the end of its intended planning period of 2030. The process to update the RWSP started in 2019 and was paused by WTD at the end of 2021 to consider feedback it had received. WTD re-launched the planning effort in 2024 to update the Regional Wastewater Services Plan.

The Regional Water Quality Committee has been closely following the launch of the RWSP Update and adopted resolutions in support of the RWSP's scope and charter. In early 2025, RWQC adopted resolutions³ in support of the scope and charter for the RWSP. The committee has requested briefings on the RWSP Update each month.

The 2026-2027 adopted budget includes \$7.4 million for the RWSP Update. PSB reports about half of the appropriation will be used for internal staff and half for consultants. Prior appropriations total \$31.9 million. PSB reports the project has spent \$22.1 million to date and anticipates spending \$6.6 million in 2025 and an additional

³Resolution RWQC2025-01 and Resolution RWQC2025-02

\$13.1 million in 2026-2027. The total estimated cost at completion is estimated to be \$51.4 million.

Projects with Significant Changes in Scope or Budget Since 2025. WTD reports notable changes in the scope or budget of the following projects since the 2025 budget.

Elliot West Wet Weather Treatment Station. The 2026-2027 budget includes \$37.4 million for this project to bring the Elliot West Wet Station into full compliance with discharge permit and water quality standards. WTD reports the cost estimates have increased approximately \$75 million, and the scope has expanded. The current cost estimate at project completion is \$568 million, of which \$31 million has been appropriated in prior budgets. WTD anticipates further increases during the 2027 proposed sewer rate process.

Division Wide Offsite Level Controls and Communication Upgrade. The 2026-2027 budget includes \$6.8 million for this programmatic project. This program addresses obsolete wet well level controls at offsite facilities, which help prevent overflows and keep systems running efficiently. The cost estimate has increased between \$320 million to \$500 million upon completion of programmatic alternatives analysis driven by increased scope complexity. There are no direct replacements available for the existing equipment. WTD reports it is phasing this project to reduce near-term impacts on rates.

South Plant Electrical Improvements. The 2026-2027 budget includes \$14.3 million for this project. Programmatic charter level cost estimate has increased between \$170 million to \$240 million versus the initial conceptual cost estimate. These increases are driven by additional identified scope and updated material pricing.

Sammamish Plateau Diversion. The 2026-2027 budget requests \$6.3 million for this project. WTD reports the cost estimate for this project has been updated and has increased between \$160 and \$270 million versus the initial cost estimate.

2026-2027 Adopted Budget Language Added by King County Council. The 2026-2027 adopted budget includes four provisos and one expenditure restriction attached to the Wastewater Treatment Division's budget. Each proviso is listed below.

1) *Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update Policy Analysis*

P1 PROVIDED THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$250,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a plan describing the proposed analysis to be completed for the policy questions identified in the Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update scope document as adopted by regional water quality committee resolution 2025-01, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the plan, and motion acknowledging receipt of the plan is passed by the council. The motion should reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance, ordinance section, and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

A. The plan shall be developed with input from the regional water quality committee and describe how the policy questions identified in the Regional Water

Services Plan Update Scope document as adopted by the regional water quality committee resolution 2025-01 will be analyzed, including but not limited to:

1. A framework for the analysis of the policy questions which identifies the topics that shall be addressed as part of policy analysis;

2. The proposed format for reporting the analysis; specifying whether the analysis will be available as standalone reports presentations, or in other formats;

3. For each policy question, how the policy analysis will inform the RWSP Update;

4. Timelines for the analysis for each policy question;

5. A problem statement corresponding to each policy question; and

6. In instances where the analysis of a policy question is anticipated to occur in more than one section of the Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update, the plan required by this proviso shall identify how the complete analysis for the policy question will be addressed.

B. The plan shall also include policy analysis for at least two policy questions from the RWSP scope document as adopted by the regional water quality committee resolution 2025-01. The analysis of these policy questions is intended to serve as a proof of concept for the level of analysis of the remaining policy questions.

C. The plan may also propose modifications to the list of policy questions identified in the Regional Water Services Plan scope document, and, if modifications are proposed, the topics in subsections A. and B. of this proviso shall be discussed in relation to the alternate proposal.

The executive should electronically file the plan and motion required by this proviso by March 1, 2026, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the transportation, economy, and environment committee or its successor, and the lead staff for the regional water quality committee or its successor.

P3 PROVIDED FURTHER THAT:

Of the appropriation for capital project 1134066, Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) Update, \$7,382,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the council passes the motion required by section 115, Proviso P1, of this ordinance.

2) Reporting on Capital Project Cost Increases

P2 PROVIDED FURTHER THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$1,000,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits quarterly letters of notification, through the third quarter of 2027, identifying those capital projects where the cost estimate at completion has increased by the percentages set forth in this proviso over the cost estimate at completion reported at the time of the most recent appropriation for the project. The appropriation shall not be expended or encumbered until all seven quarterly letters of notification for the biennium required by this proviso have been transmitted. For purposes of this proviso, capital projects exclude those capital projects that are ongoing programs without fixed substantial completion dates.

The letters of notification shall include, but not be limited to:

A. For projects where the most recent appropriation identified a cost estimate at completion of \$50,000,000 or more, an identification of all projects where the new cost

estimate at completion has increased by more than fifteen percent from the previous estimate;

B. For projects where the most recent appropriation identified a cost estimate at completion between \$25,000,000 and \$49,999,999, an identification of all projects where the new cost estimate at completion has increased by more than twenty percent from the previous estimate; and

C. For all projects identified in subsections A. and B. of this proviso, the letter shall include an explanation of why the increases are projected. If there are no projects that meet these criteria in subsections A. and B. of this proviso, the letter shall state that.

The executive should file a letter of notification quarterly, no later than forty-five days after the end of each quarter. Each letter of notifications shall be electronically filed with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the budget and fiscal management committee or its successor and the lead staff for the regional water quality committee or its successor. At least once in each year of the biennium, staff from the wastewater treatment division shall provide a briefing summarizing the information contained in the letters of notifications filed then to date to the budget and fiscal management committee and the regional water quality committee or their successor.

3) Implementation Plan for Expanding Capacity Charge Payment Plan Program

P3 PROVIDED FURTHER THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$500,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits an implementation plan for expanding the eligibility requirements for wastewater treatment division's payment plan program and a motion that should acknowledge receipt of the plan, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the plan is passed by council. The motion should reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance, ordinance section, and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

A. The estimated number of households and people that are eligible under the current payment plan program;

B. The number of households and people assisted annually with payment plans in the years 2023, 2024 and 2025; and

C.1. All of the following:

a. the estimated number of households and people that would be assisted annually with payment plans under the proposed definitions of low-income, assuming the current rate of participation by eligible homeowners;

b. a public outreach strategy to increase awareness of the current and expanded opportunities for payment plans;

c. the estimated number of households that would be eligible for payment plan assistance based on the proposed definitions of low-income and assuming current outreach levels;

d. the estimated number of households and people that would be assisted annually with the proposed definitions of low-income and assuming a new and enhanced outreach strategy to promote awareness about the program;

e. the estimated total delayed revenue and the capacity charge impact of the proposed definitions of low-income and assuming a new and enhanced outreach strategy;

f. proposed guidelines for the length of payment plans and grace periods which provide the maximum flexibility to capacity charge customers;

g. an analysis of administrative costs and staffing requirements to implement an expanded program with the proposed definitions of low-income and that allows for the maximum flexibility; and

h. an analysis of the option to allow customers to set up their own payment plans.

2. The items in subsection C.1. of this proviso shall be considered using two scenarios:

a. a definition of low income as those residents as those with an income at or below fifty percent of the area median income, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

b. a definition of low income as those residents with an income at or below eighty percent of the area median income, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The executive should electronically file the implementation plan and a motion required by this proviso by April 3, 2026, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the budget and fiscal management committee or its successor and the lead staff for the regional water quality committee or its successor.

4) An Analysis of a Range of Policy Choices Resulting in at Least Two Rate Options for 2027

P4 PROVIDED FURTHER THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$1,000,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive includes in the annual report in support of the executive's recommended sewer rate, as required by K.C.C. 28.86.160, an analysis of a range of policy choices resulting in at least two rate options for 2027 in addition to the executive's recommended rate for 2027. At least one of the rates included in the report should be based on identified policy options that should result in a proposed sewer rate that is at least two percent lower than the executive's proposed rate. All identified policy choices and the corresponding rate options shall describe the tradeoffs and associated risks and benefits of each policy choice and identify any adjustments that would be needed in the six-year capital improvement plan or proposed operating budget.

The executive should electronically file the report containing the analysis required by this proviso, applying the provisions of K.C.C. 28.86.160, FP-16 to the additional rate options required by this proviso and as part of the executive's transmittal of the executive's proposed rate sewer for 2027, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the budget and fiscal management committee or its successor.

INVITED

- Caitlyn Hall, Budget and Contracts Unit Manager, Wastewater Treatment Division

ATTACHMENTS

None

Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) Update Policy Framework - *draft*

Presented to the Regional Water Quality Committee
Dec. 3, 2025

RWSP 2026 Budget Proviso:

“WTD shall transmit a plan describing the proposed analysis to be completed for the policy questions identified in the Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update scope document as adopted by regional water quality committee resolution 2025-01”

The plan shall be developed with input from RWQC and will include:

- A **framework** for the analysis of the policy questions which identifies the **topics** that shall be addressed
- A **problem statement** corresponding to each policy question
- **How the policy analysis will inform** the RWSP Update
- **Timelines** for the analysis for each policy question
- Proposed **format** for reporting the analysis
- Plan Due Date: March 1, 2026

Today's Goal:

Gather RWQC's comments on Wastewater Treatment Division's approach to address and integrate the 29 Major Policy Questions from the RWSP Scope Document into RWSP Update planning process.

Questions for RWQC:

1. What seems to work in the draft framework?
2. Is there anything missing?
3. Given the volume of questions, is PPT format sufficient for the analyses as shown in the example in this presentation?
4. The draft framework proposes two-touches with RWQC for each policy question and analysis. Is this sufficient?

Outline of RWSP Policy Approach - *draft*

1. **Framework & Topics for the Analyses:** Major Policy Questions will be analyzed by providing the following information:

- Step 1 {
- a. Problem Statement
 - b. Contextual and baseline information:
 - i. What we know about the topic and current conditions
 - ii. Current policies in code, contract or in-practice
 - iii. The system “must-dos”
 - iv. Current and budgeted expenditures
 - v. Summary of science/data if applicable
 - c. Example practices from other jurisdictions/industry
 - d. Policy issues, challenges and opportunities related to the policy question
 - e. Range of policy options with associated actions and considerations
 - f. Interested and affected parties WTD will engage to gather input

Outline of RWSP Policy Approach - *draft*

1. Framework & Topics for the Analyses [continued]

- Step 2 {
- g. Planning level cost estimates of the options and actions
 - h. Evaluation of outcomes – alongside cost estimates identify impacts and outcomes of each option
 - i. Other?

Outline of RWSP Policy Approach - *draft*

2. How Analyses will Inform the RWSP Update: The Draft RWSP Update will include a full range of alternatives for a SEPA process in 2027. Analyses of the policy questions will inform development of the Draft RWSP Update in the following specific ways:

- I. WTD will ensure all policy issues associated with the major policy questions are included and addressed in the Draft RWSP Update;
- II. Analyses will intentionally guide and specifically inform development of RWSP policy options (see slides 14 and 15).
- III. RWQC can use analyses to identify any additional policy options for further analysis inclusion in the Draft RWSP Update; **options not meeting legal requirements will be identified and reviewed by legal counsel before including in the Draft Plan.**
 - *A parallel effort outside the formal RWSP process will explore alternate regulatory strategies that may be less costly to achieve water quality outcomes. If a change results from this effort, options and actions will be revised as appropriate.*
- IV. Analyses will be used in the decision-making, following the SEPA process, for the Executive's Preferred Plan and can be used for decision-making with Council's adopted Plan.

Outline of RWSP Policy Approach - *draft*

2. How Analyses will Inform RWSP Update [Continued]:

- v. **Three-step process** for RWQC to evaluate and consider the analyses and provide feedback to influence WTD's development of the Draft RWSP Update in the planning and development stages of the work:

Step 1: RWQC can share its initial and general direction with WTD during Committee discussion on **parts a-f** of the analysis for a given policy question (*note: this initial discussion would occur before cost estimates of the options are available*);

Step 2: Upon **completion of cost estimates for the options**, WTD will provide a **follow-up analyses** to **include costs and evaluation of impacts and outcomes** for all options, inclusive of those RWQC expressed desire to see evaluated. Equipped with this additional information **RWQC will have a 2nd opportunity to identify its policy preferences** to WTD;

Step 3: WTD will integrate RWQC's direction into development of a full range of policy options to include in the Draft RWSP Update.

Outline of RWSP Policy Approach - *draft*

Following the SEPA process for the Draft RWSP Update, WTD will begin to evaluate and consider tradeoffs for a full range of options to develop the “Executive’s Preferred Alternative” RWSP Update in 2028.

This will be followed by transmittal to Council and anticipated referral to RWQC in 2029 for consideration and Council approval.

Outline of RWSP Policy Approach - *draft*

3. Timeline of analyses: WTD will cluster each of the policy questions by topic and sequence completion of the analyses and subsequent RWQC briefings in time to ensure a Draft RWSP is produced in 2027.

- Example schedule for the analyses is shown in Table on next slide
- For policy questions that cover multiple topics WTD will make connections across topics in Step 1 of the analyses and create opportunities for RWQC in Step 2 to holistically evaluate questions and options that cover multiple topics.

Policy Analysis Schedule – *draft example*

Number (of 29)	Major Policy Questions from Scoping Document	Topic	Timeline (RWQC Discussions)
1	Given the uncertainties in future growth rates reported by Washington State and the Puget Sound Regional Council, how aggressively beyond legal requirements should WTD expand capacity to account for future population growth?	Separated System Conveyance (including infiltration/inflow) & Treatment	Step #1: February 2026 Step #2: TBD
2	How should I/I be managed and how can costs be fairly apportioned? Should system capacity be expanded to account for increases in I/I? Should I/I policies change to support reducing the capacity needed for I/I?	Separated System Conveyance (including infiltration/inflow)	
3	How should the conversion of on-site septic systems to sewers in the service area be managed and should WTD implement programs to encourage conversion within the service area?	Separated System Conveyance (including infiltration/inflow)	
4	What upstream or source control actions should the region undertake to prevent contaminants and reduce costs?	Pollution (Source Control and Legacy)	Step #1: March 2026 Step #2: TBD
5	How proactive vs. reactive should WTD be when deciding to refurbish or replace aging infrastructure?	Asset Renewal and Replacement	Step #1: April 2026 Step #2: TBD
6	What level of redundancy of critical systems should WTD have?	Asset Renewal and Replacement & Climate Impact Preparedness and Natural Disaster Resiliency	

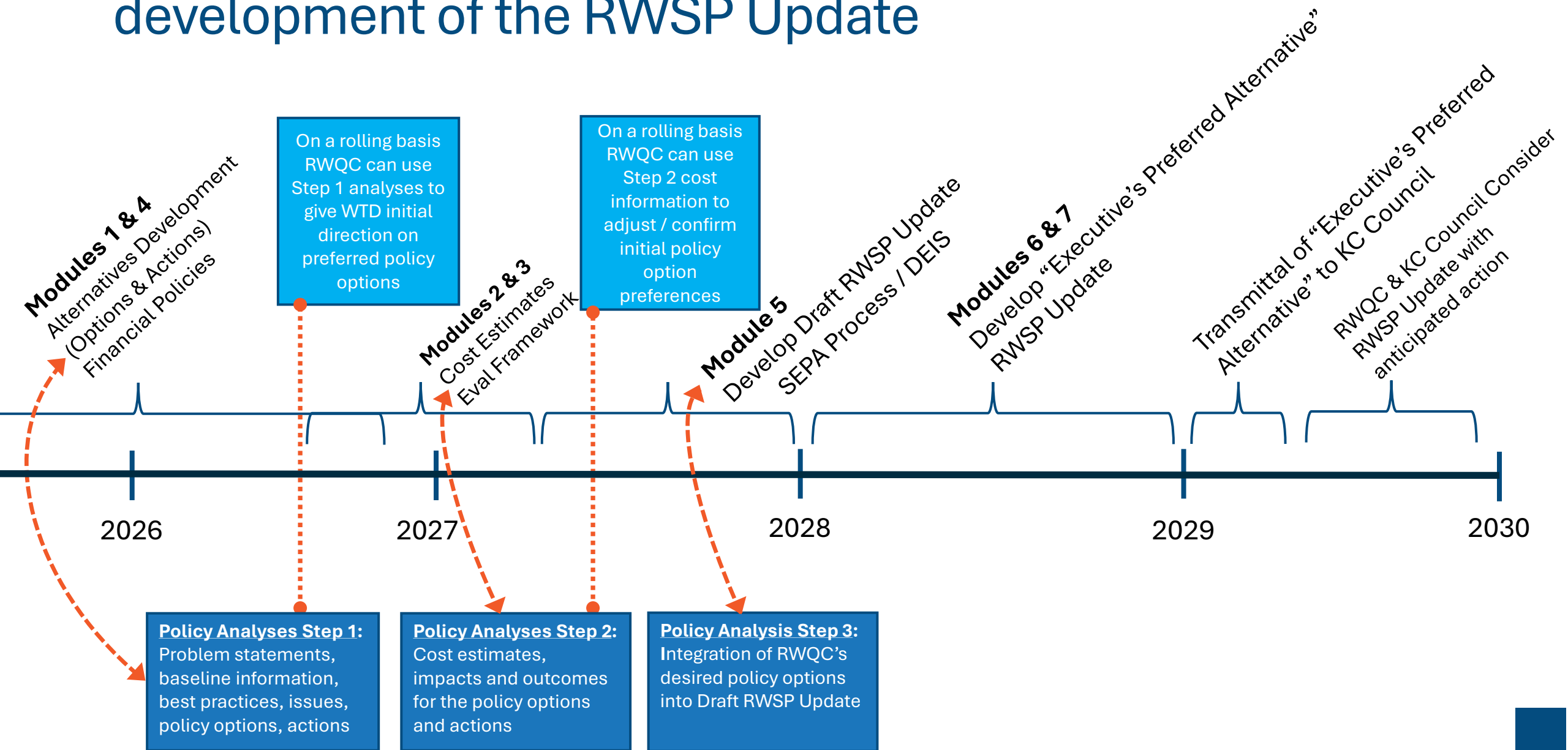
Outline of RWSP Policy Approach - *draft*

- 4. Format of Analyses:** given the volume of questions, we intend for the format for reporting-out the analyses on all major policy questions to be PPT slides for ease and efficiency of conveying the information (see example starting on slide 15).

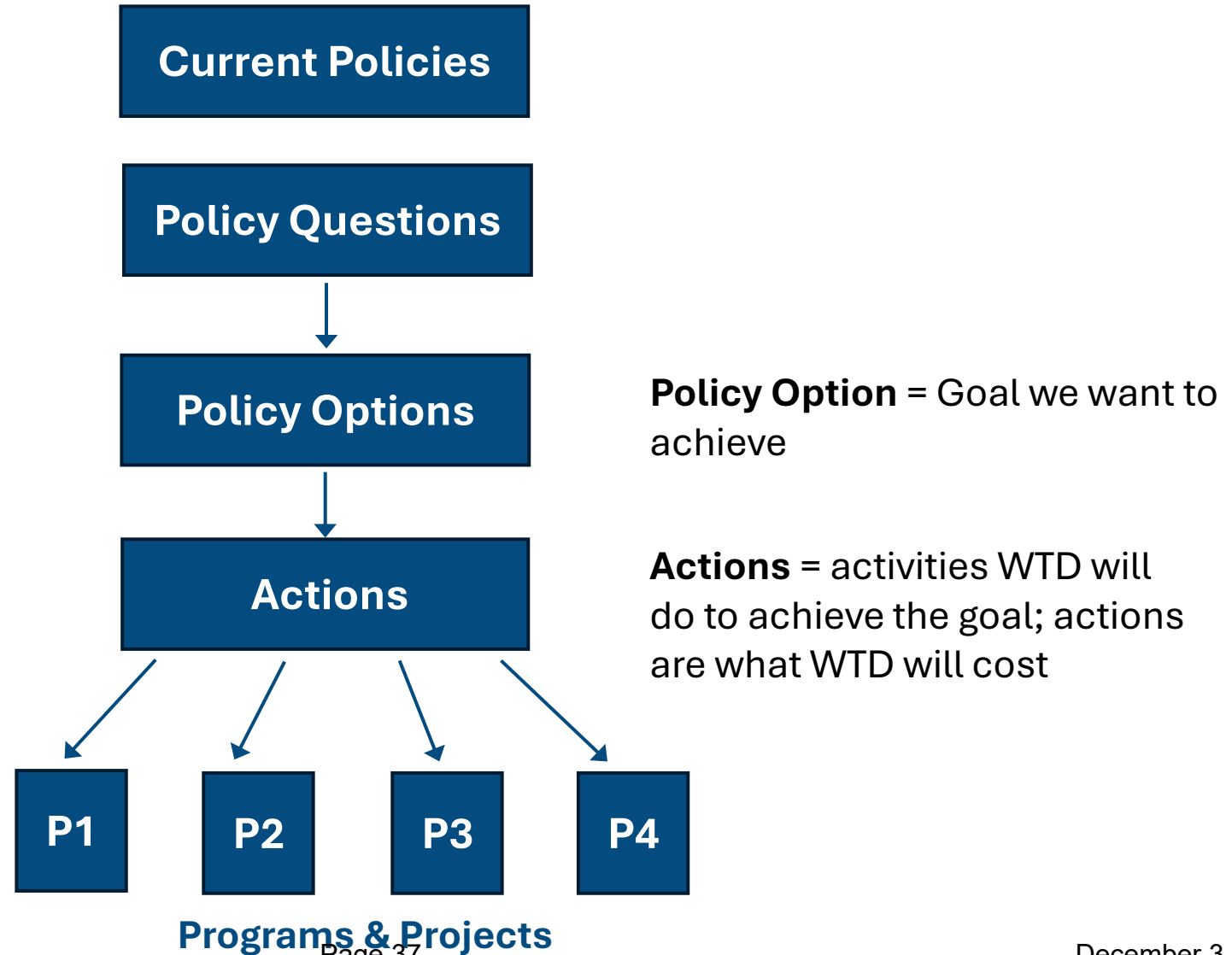
RWSP Road Map - *Tentative*

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Module #1: Alternatives Development - “Actions” for 8 categories of capital investments for 3 Conceptual Approaches | Q2 2025 – Q1 2026 |
| • Module #2: Evaluation Framework and Affordability Metrics to compare Approaches and evaluate tradeoffs to inform selection of Final Proposal | Q2 2026 – Q3 2026 |
| • Module #3: Planning level cost estimation for the 24 sets of detailed Actions | Q2 2026 – Q1 2027 |
| • Module #4: Phase 1 Financial Policies | Q1 2026 – Q4 2026 |
| • Module #5: <i>Draft</i> RWSP with 3 Conceptual Approaches with associated cost estimates (and DEIS, if needed) | 2027 |
| • Module #6: Apply Evaluation Framework from Module #2 to determine <i>which</i> sets of Actions | 2027/28 |
| • Module #7: Final Proposed Plan (may be a hybrid set of actions from the 3 Approaches) with RWSP Policies and Phase 2 Financial Policies (and FEIS, if needed) | 2028/29 |

How and When the Policy Analyses will inform development of the RWSP Update



Policy Options and Actions



Example



King County | Wastewater Treatment

Policy Questions on Infiltration/Inflow (I/I)

1. How should I/I be managed and how can costs be fairly apportioned?
2. Should system capacity be expanded to account for increases in I/I?
3. Should I/I policies change to support reducing the capacity needed for I/I?



1a. Problem Statement(s) for the I/I policy questions

- I/I contributes large and increasing amounts of flow to the separated conveyance system during wet weather.
- This results in the need to expand system capacity, including larger conveyance pipes, sending more flow to the treatment plants.
- The region is paying to convey and treat extraneous water.
- I/I contribution is uneven across the regional system.



1b. What is infiltration and inflow (I/I)?

I/I is excess water that flows into sanitary sewer pipes from groundwater and stormwater.

Infiltration refers to groundwater that infiltrates or leaks into pipes.

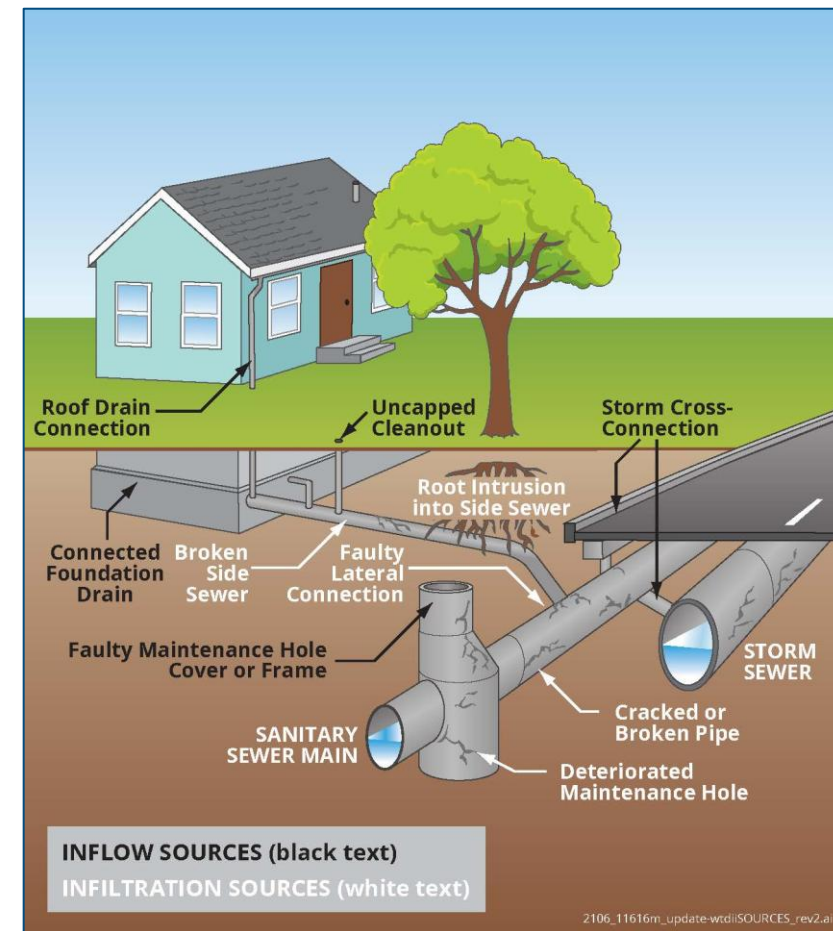
Inflow refers to storm or surface water that enters pipes from sources other than infiltration.



Infiltration

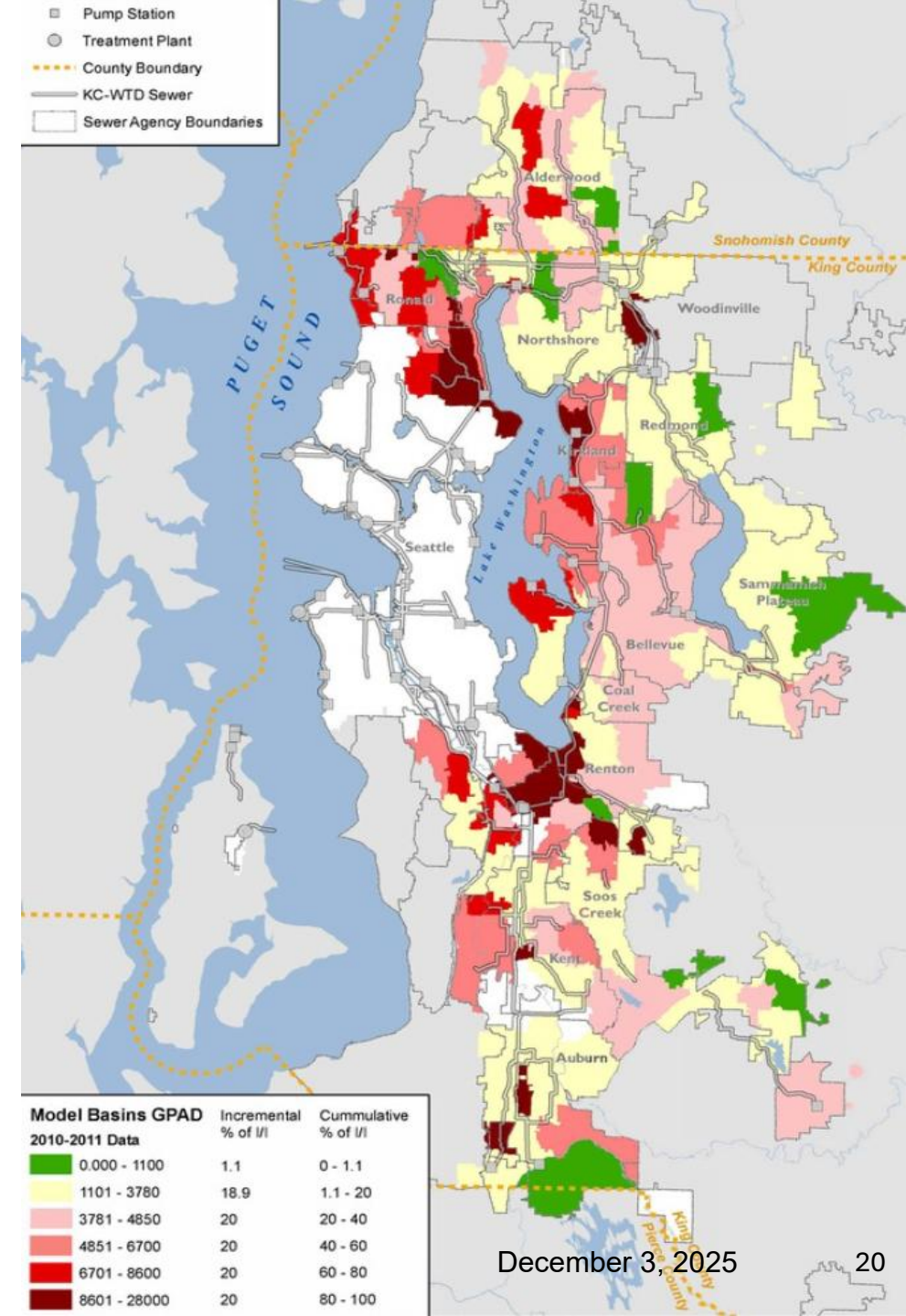


Inflow



1b. Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) in the Regional Separated System

- On average during wet weather, as much as three-quarters of peak flow is I/I
- About one-quarter of the annual separated wastewater system flow is I/I
- WTD estimates a majority of I/I originates from side sewer pipes on private property
- I/I contributes heavily to Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) risk during wet weather

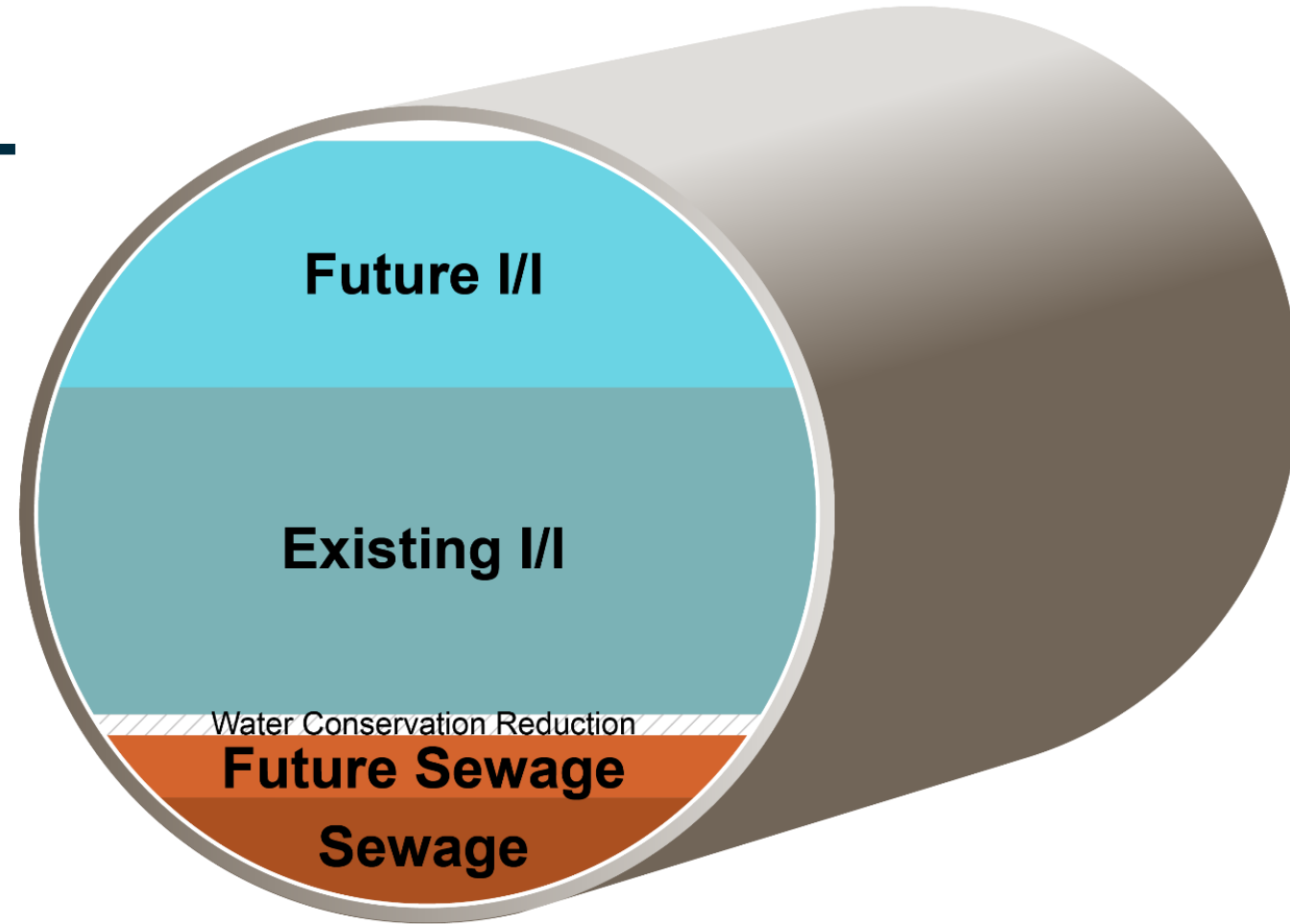


1b. I/I in the Regional Separated System

I/I drives conveyance capacity needs
in the regional system

I/I results in approximately \$1.7 billion (2016\$) in Conveyance System Improvement (CSI) Projects through 2060

I/I results in approximately \$16M-\$40M per year in conveyance and treatment costs



1b. Current I/I related policies and their interpretation

Relevant Policies in K.C.C.	Description
I/IP – 1	King County shall reduce I/I when cost effective
I/IP – 2	King County shall work cooperatively with component agencies to reduce I/I in local conveyance systems
I/IP – 3	King County shall consider an I/I surcharge, no later than June 30, 2006
CP – 3 (2)	Decennial Flow Monitoring (DFM) to correspond with the Federal Census conducted every 10 years.

Current Implementation:

- WTD evaluates every conveyance project to determine if I/I reduction is cost effective. Based on current methodology, no I/I reduction projects have been found to be cost effective.
- I/I reduction pilot projects were completed in early 2000's.
- Surcharge was not implemented due to cost of administering.
- DFM completed alongside 2020 Federal Census to update flow projections, including I/I.

1b. Current I/I language in Some Sewage Disposal Contracts

- “... the City will undertake continual rehabilitation and replacement of its local sewage facilities for **purposes of preventing, reducing and eliminating the entry of extraneous water** into such facilities and will **expend annually**, averaged over five (5) years, an amount equal to **two (2) cents per inch of diameter per foot of its local sewage facilities**, excluding combined sewers and force mains, for said rehabilitation and replacement.” – City of Bellevue contract
- “An additional charge may be made for quantities of storm or ground waters entering those Local Sewerage Facilities which are constructed after January 1, 1961 in excess of the minimum standard established by the general rules and regulations of Metro.” – City of Black Diamond contract
- The County has not enforced these provisions since the language is not consistent across all contracts.

1b. System “must-dos”

WAC 173-240-050

The General sewer plan shall include the following information...

- (g) A discussion of any infiltration and inflow problems and a discussion of actions that will alleviate these problems in the future.

1c. Example practices from other jurisdictions/industry

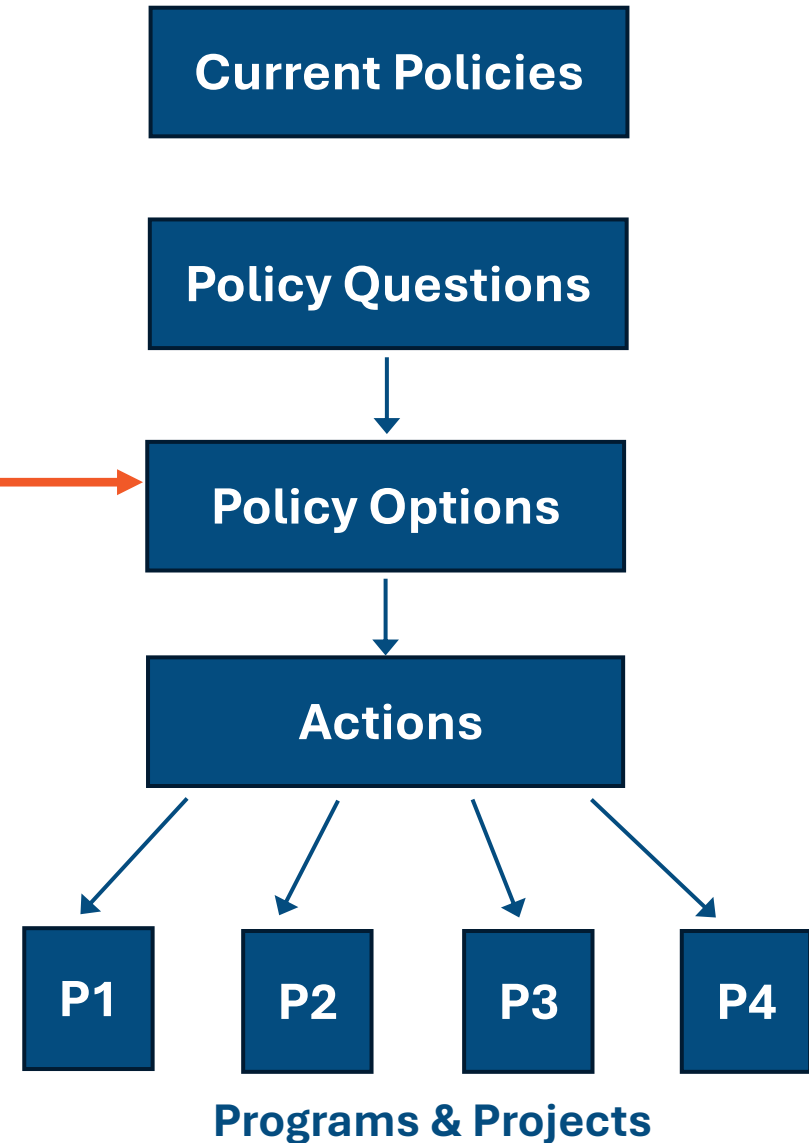
I/I Reduction Option/Action	Examples of agencies using the option/action
Targeted or Comprehensive Rehabilitation or Replacement of Sewer System Components	• Clackamas County (OR) • Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (OH) • Hampton Roads Sanitation District (VA) • Miami Dade County (FL)
Private Side Sewer Inspection and/or Certification Programs	• East Bay Municipal Utility District (CA) • Pinellas County (FL)
Peak Flow Limitation Program	• Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (OH) • Miami Dade County (FL) • Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MN-WI)

1d. Policy issues, challenges and opportunities

- WTD's authority as a wholesaler is limited (e.g., WTD lacks authority to mandate actions for private property owners)
- There is not a quick fix to removing I/I from the system because sources of I/I are diffuse and spread across the WTD service area. I/I reduction requires multiple approaches that affect private side sewers and public sewer systems.
- The benefits of I/I rehabilitation work are most apparent close to where the work is performed in the local system. Benefits are sometimes more difficult to see downstream in the regional system.
- As a regional provider at the downstream end of the sewer system, WTD accepts and ratepayers pay the costs of all I/I from local agencies and their customers.

1e. Range of Options

- Keep current policies
 1. **Reduce I/I only when cost effective**
- Amend I/IP-1, I/IP-2, I/IP-3 and/or add new policies
 2. **Reduce I/I system wide**
 3. **Reduce I/I where it is the greatest problem**
 4. **Don't worry about I/I and just build bigger pipes and more treatment plant capacity**
 5. **Other ?**



1e. “Actions” for Policy Option #2

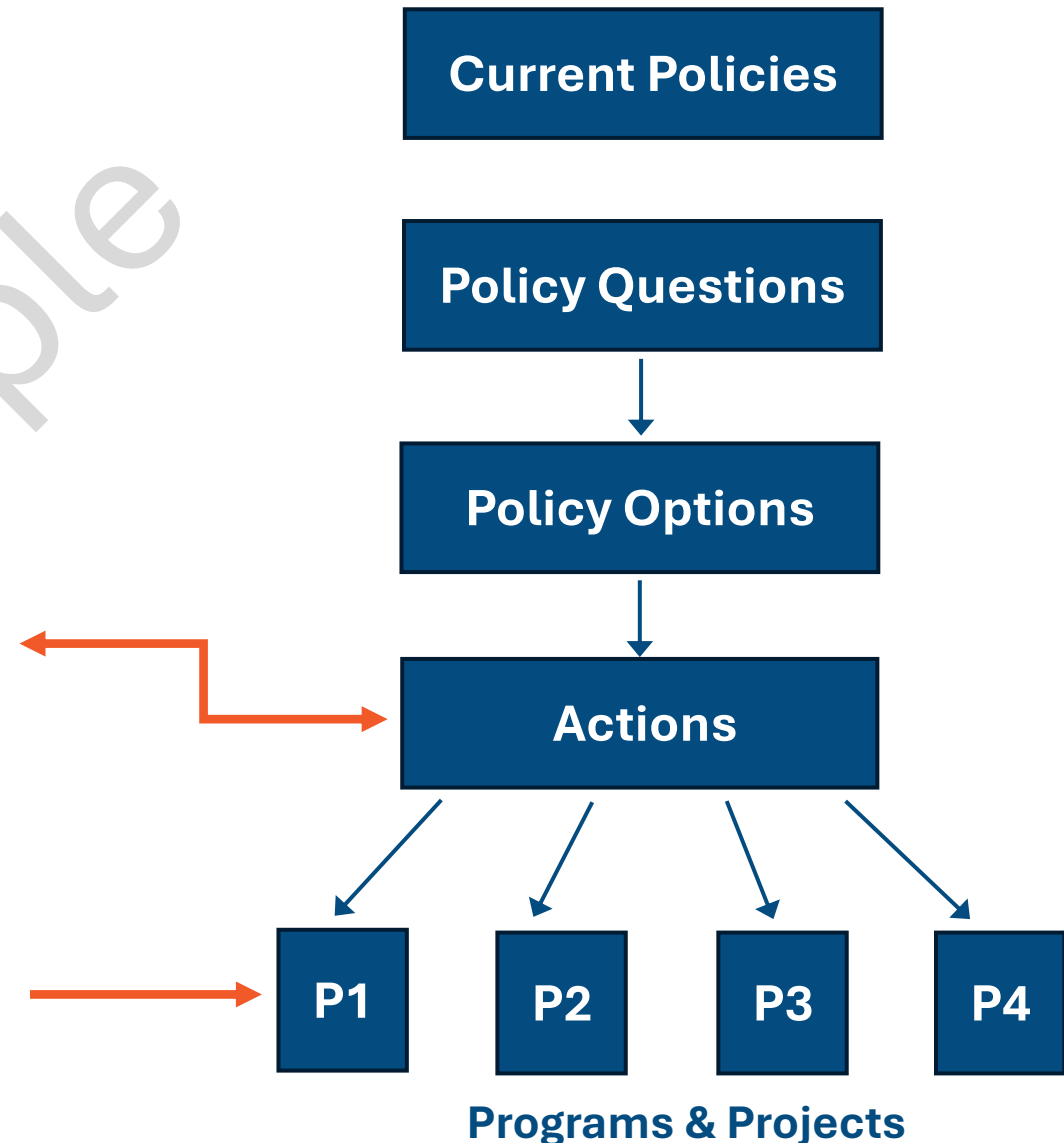
Policy Option #2: Reduce I/I system wide

- **Example Actions:**

- i. Required service area wide I/I **reduction** to eliminate need for capacity upgrades and reduce peak flows conveyed and treated
- ii. Expanded **permanent regional and temporary local flow monitoring** to identify sources and quantify levels of I/I

- **Example Programs & Projects**

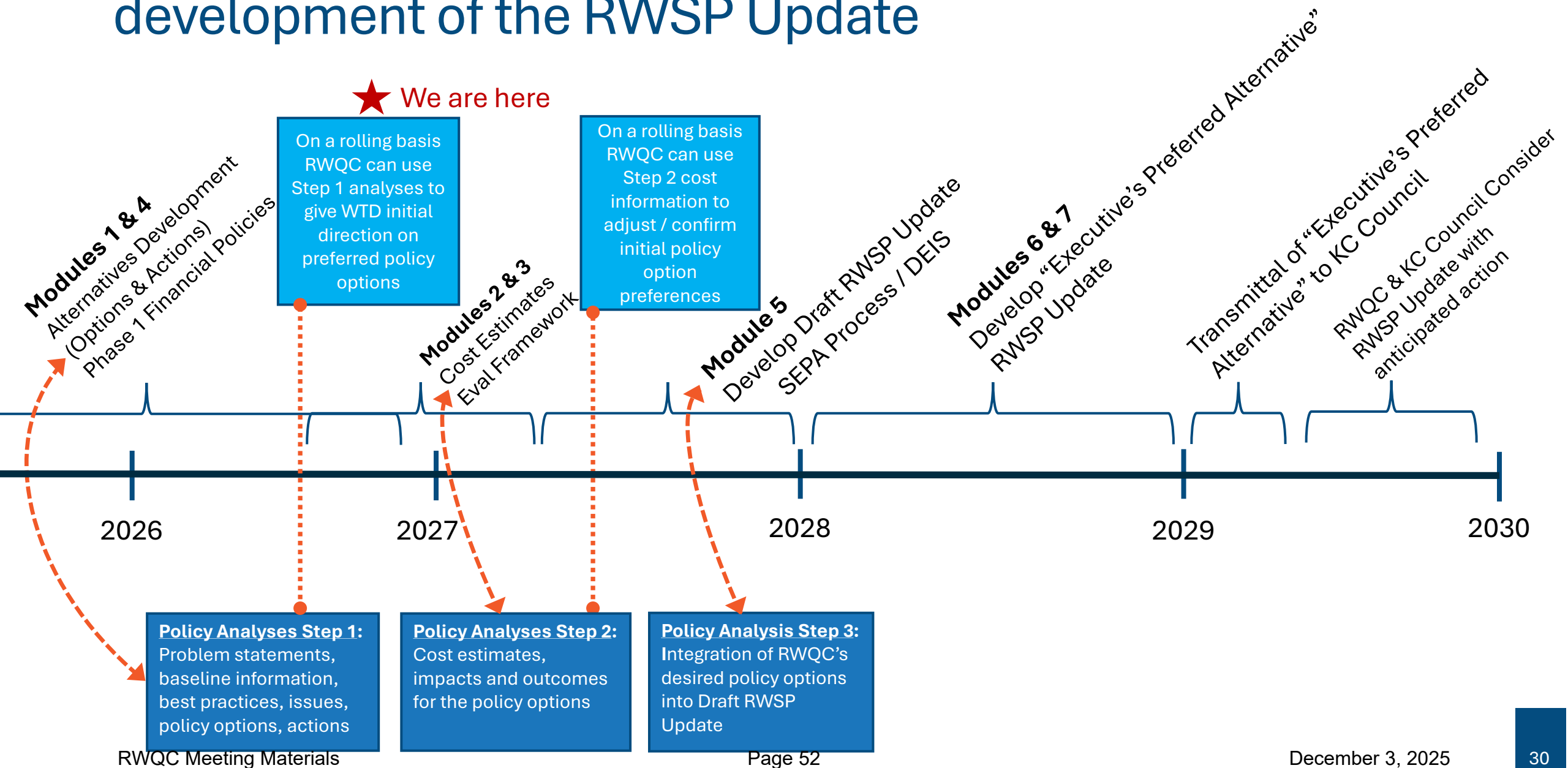
- i. Peak Flow Limitation Program



1f. Interested and affected parties WTD will engage to gather input

- Engagement may include the following:
 - RWQC, MWPAAC, RWSP Working Group
 - Tribes
 - Regulators
 - Academia
 - Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
 - Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
 - General Public
 - WTD Employees

How and When the Policy Analyses will inform development of the RWSP Update



Step 2 Analysis

- Costs of actions for policy options 1 - 4
- Impacts of options 1-4
- Outcomes of options 1-4

Questions for RWQC:

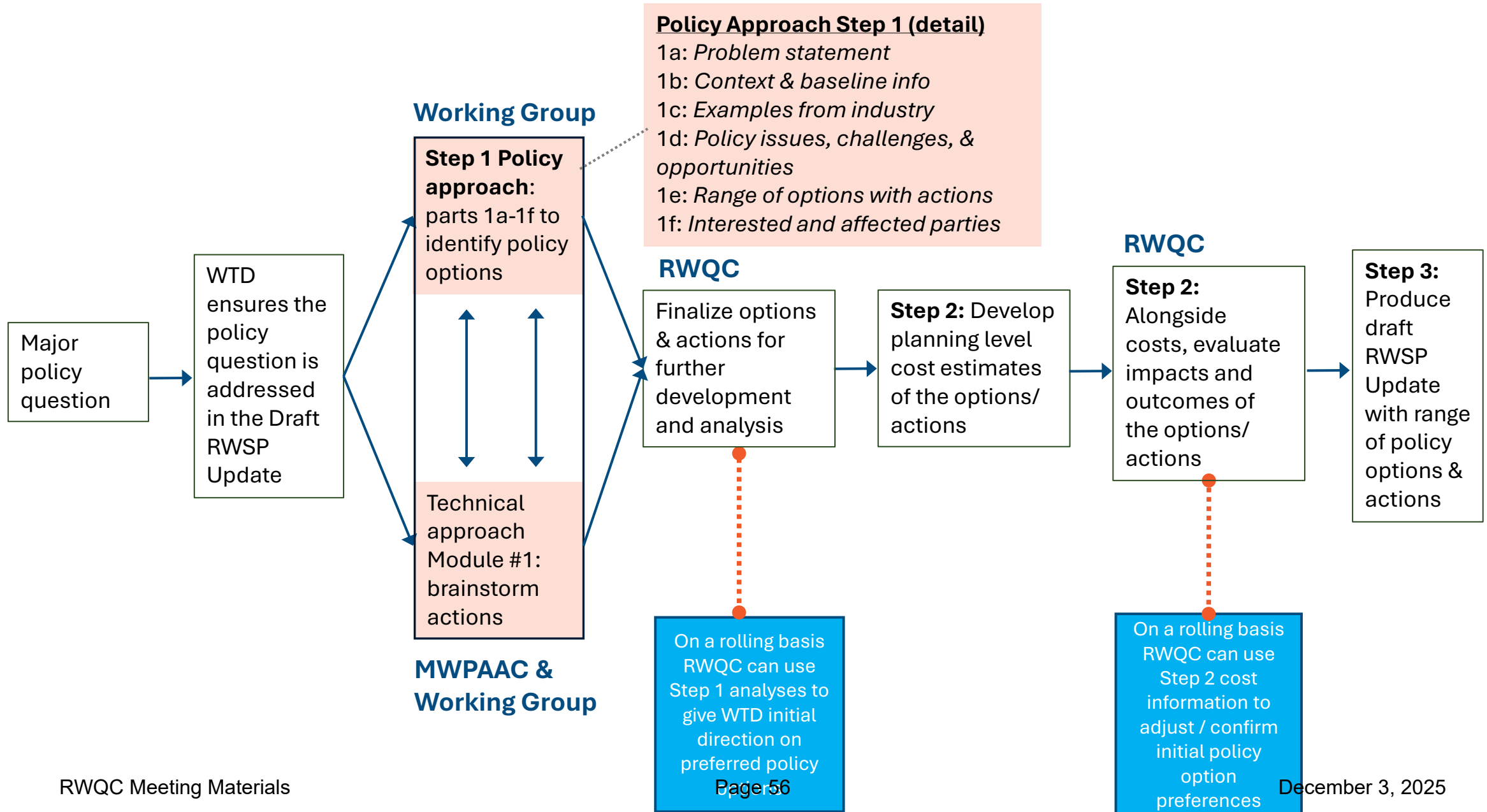
1. What seems to work in the draft framework?
2. Is there anything missing?
3. Given the volume of questions, is PPT format sufficient for the analyses as shown in the example in this presentation?
4. The draft framework proposes two-touches with RWQC for each policy question and analysis. Is this sufficient?

Q & A



King County | Wastewater Treatment

Policy Analysis and the Draft RWSP Update





Signature Report

RWQC Resolution

Proposed No. RWQC2025-01.2

Sponsors

1 A RESOLUTION declaring the regional water quality
2 committee's support of the wastewater treatment division's
3 scoping document for updating the regional wastewater
4 services plan update.

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

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

11 WHEREAS, the council adopted the Regional Wastewater Services Plan ("the
12 RWSP") in November 1999 through Ordinance 13680, subsequently codified as part of
13 K.C.C. chapter 28.86, and

14 WHEREAS, the RWSP identifies projects and programs needed to provide
15 wastewater treatment capacity for homes and businesses in the wastewater treatment
16 division service area through 2030, and

17 WHEREAS, the RWSP provides policy direction for the operation and continued
18 development of the wastewater system, the wastewater treatment division capital
19 improvement program, financial policies to guide forecasting, budgeting, and debt
20 financing, and revenue to support the implementation of the RWSP, and

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

25 WHEREAS, the RWSP should be updated and the associated policies in K.C.C.
26 chapter 28.84, Water Pollution Abatement, and K.C.C. chapter 28.86, Wastewater
27 Treatment, should be examined to ensure investments in the wastewater system continue
28 to improve water quality, ensure system performance, and to mitigate the impact of
29 increasing sewer rates over the long term, and

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

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

34 WHEREAS, the plan update will benefit from a scope of work to describe the
35 overall approach that will be used, and some of the major policy issues that will be
36 analyzed, and

37 WHEREAS, the wastewater treatment division has developed a scoping document
38 informed by comments and input received from the metropolitan water pollution
39 abatement advisory committee, members of the regional water quality committee, and
40 interested parties, and

41 WHEREAS, the scoping document prepared by the wastewater treatment division
42 will support engagement with interested and affected parties by ensuring that diverse
43 perspectives are considered in the planning process, and

44 WHEREAS, the regional water quality committee has reviewed and concurs with
45 the approach proposed in the scoping document, Attachment A to this resolution, that
46 will be used by the division to guide the development and content of the long-range
47 regional wastewater services plan update;

48 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the King County Regional Water
49 Quality Committee:

50 A. The regional water quality committee declares its support of the wastewater
51 treatment division's Scoping Document for Updating the Regional Wastewater Services
52 Plan, Attachment A to this resolution, which the division shall use to guide the
53 development and content of the long-range Regional Wastewater Services Plan update.

54 B. The regional water quality committee requests the wastewater treatment

- 55 division brief the regional water quality committee before proposing any substantive
56 changes to the scoping document.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ATTEST:

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, ____.

Attachments: A. Scoping Document for Updating the Regional Wastewater Services Plan Revised 1-16-2025

Scoping Document for Updating the Regional Wastewater Services Plan

Prepared by the Wastewater Treatment Division – January 2025

Introduction

This 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). The 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 the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC).

The King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) drafted this scoping document based on initial verbal and written input from RWQC and MWPAAC members and staff as well as feedback obtained during and after the Clean Water Plan process. The scoping document was discussed at the August 28 MWPAAC general meeting, the September 4 RWQC workshop, the September 5 MWPAAC Engineering and Planning (E&P) subcommittee meeting, the October 2 RWQC meeting, and the November 7 joint meeting of the MWPAAC E&P and Rates and Finance subcommittees. WTD revised the document based on feedback from MWPAAC and RWQC and an updated version was then discussed at the December 4 RWQC meeting. Additional edits were received and incorporated into this final version. More detailed scopes of work for specific tasks under the RWSP Update will be developed as needed.

Key Terms

The following key terms are used throughout the scoping document. Because these terms can have different meanings depending on the context, the following definitions apply for purposes of the RWSP and associated materials unless otherwise noted.

Term	Definition
Equity and Social Justice	<i>Equity</i> is defined as full and equal access to opportunities, power, and resources so that all people achieve their full potential and thrive. <i>Social justice</i> refers to all aspects of justice – including legal, political, economic, and environmental – and requires the fair distribution of and access to public goods, institutional resources, and life opportunities for all people (source: King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016-2022).
Rate Equity and Fairness	“Rates should be designed to distribute the cost of service equitably among each type and class of service. Non-cost of service rates that achieve certain other objectives such as affordability and water conservation may be considered in some situations.” (source: Revised:

	AWWA Policy Statement: Financing, Accounting, and Rates – American Water Works Association, November 5, 2024). The AWWA Principles of Water Rates, Fees, and Charges Manual states “Rate-making endeavors to assign costs to classes of customers in a nondiscriminatory, cost-responsive manner so that rates can be designed to closely meet the cost of providing service to such customer classes.”
Customer Affordability	“The National Coalition for Legislation on Water Affordability defined water affordability as the cost of provision that does not impede people from meeting other basic needs or human rights. There is, however, currently no one generally accepted definition of water affordability. It varies depending on the purpose of the water affordability assessment... Affordability researchers generally agree that no one single metric can or should be used in measuring water affordability, rather, a variety of quantitative and qualitative data should be considered.” (source: Schneemann, M., 2019, Defining & Measuring Water Affordability: A Literature Review; Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant). The measure of customer affordability will need to be further quantified and defined during the RSWP update process.

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 King County’s 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, including population growth, climate change, aging assets, regulatory requirements, and customer affordability, also justify another major update to the RWSP.

The updated plan, along with the analytical work (e.g., review of the capacity charge) performed as part of the RWSP Update planning process, will support the extension of local agency sewage disposal contracts, many of which expire in 2036, and continue to strengthen WTD’s 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 the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology).

The planning process to update the RWSP started in 2019 as the Clean Water Plan; it 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. The renewed process 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 an update to the RWSP, and to update the policies in King County Code 28.86. The project will also define a future 75-year vision (“Vision for Clean Water”), beyond the scope of the RWSP, 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.”

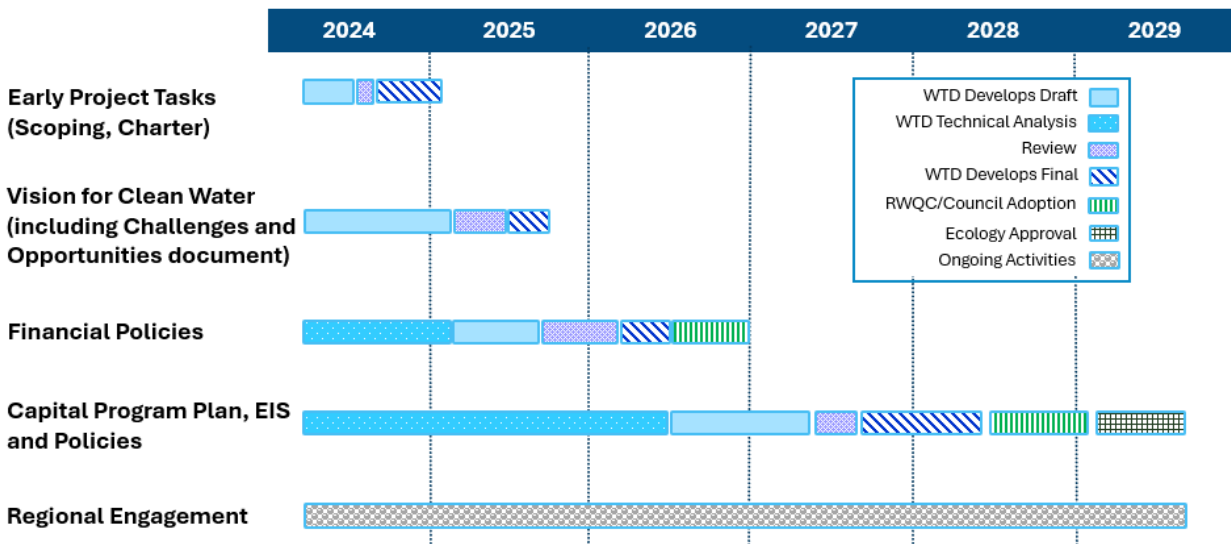
The Vision for Clean Water will inform but not constrain policies and investments that are included in the final RWSP Update. The planning process will produce an RWSP Update that will guide future investments; support the core mission to protect water quality; seek to achieve affordable wastewater utility rates into the future; meet regulatory and legal obligations; and reflect County initiatives including equity and social justice, strategic climate action planning, and Clean Water Healthy Habitat.

The resulting RWSP Update document will include the 75-year Vision for Clean Water, a capital investment plan, and policy updates to King County Code for King County Council review and approval. The RWSP Update will reflect the County’s and WTD’s commitment to transparency and accountability in implementing the RWSP. Once adopted by the Council, the document will be transmitted to Ecology for review and approval.

Scope for the Effort

Figure 1 shows the planning process for the RWSP Update. The tasks are also described below with the associated deliverables.

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



Tasks/Deliverables

Early Project Tasks – The early project tasks are designed to inform the RWQC and MWPAAC of the scope and objectives of the project and the major policy issues to be addressed as part of the update to the RWSP.

Scoping – Scoping will identify the major issues that will be addressed and the process to address those issues. The work will include the following:

- Developing a draft scoping document.
- Soliciting feedback on the draft scoping document.
- Finalizing the scoping document.

Timeline: Final completed in 1st quarter 2025.

RWSP Working Group – The Working Group will serve as a forum for MWPAAC and RWQC member staff to collaborate with WTD’s RWSP project team through development and successful adoption of the RWSP update. The Working Group will help guide, shape and influence RWSP work products; it will serve as one channel for clear communication across key groups and will report out and receive feedback from MWPAAC and RWQC. The work will include the following:

- Convening a RWSP Working group with members from MWPAAC, RWQC staff, and Sound Cities Association (SCA) and WTD’s RWSP planning staff

Timeline: Formation of Working Group in 4th quarter 2024.

Charter – The charter will serve as a framework for collaboration, partnership, and process between WTD, MWPAAC, and RWQC to update the RWSP. The process will include identifying how WTD will ensure transparency and accountability during the RWSP update to the partners. The work will include the following:

- Developing the draft sections of the charter in partnership with the RWSP Working Group
- MWPAAC and RWQC review and input to the charter language
- Finalizing the charter
- Chairs of RWQC and MWPAAC, and WTD Director approve the charter as a commitment to collaboration and process to guide the RWSP update effort.

Timeline: Final completed in 1st quarter 2025.

Vision for Clean Water for Wastewater Services – The Vision for Clean Water for Wastewater Services will articulate the 75-year future of WTD and will inform but not constrain policies and investments that are included in the final RWSP Update. A document describing the challenges and opportunities facing the wastewater industry will be used to shape the vision. RWQC and MWPAAC members will have multiple opportunities to comment on challenges, opportunities, and provide feedback on the proposed final Vision components.

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 but not constrain the

scope of work, policy analysis, investment plans, and financial strategies. The work will include the following:

- 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.

Vision – The Vision for Clean Water will articulate the future of WTD over the next 75 years. The work will occur in the first stages of the RWSP update process and will include the following:

- 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.

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 consider cost structure and rate equity and fairness (including the capacity charge), capital financing and debt management, and financial planning and revenue sufficiency. The work will include the following:

- Studying peer utility agency financial policy structures and evaluating them within a WTD specific context.
- Developing draft policy revisions and seeking review from the RWSP Working Group with members from MWPAAC, RWQC staff, and SCA.
- Finalizing financial policy revisions and developing a proposed ordinance for Council review and approval.

Timeline: Final completed in 4th quarter 2026.

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 the following:

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. Note that the approaches below should not be construed to mean least costly, more costly, and most costly, and that the recommended option may be a combination of the 3 below.
 - **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) to 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 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 RWSP Update and draft 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.

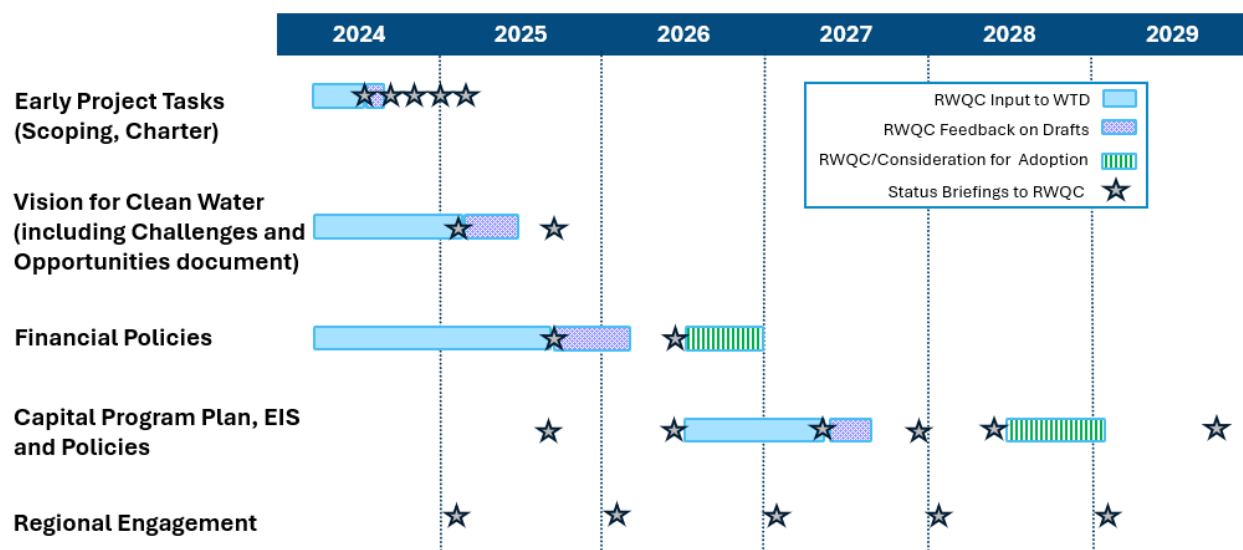
Timeline: Final completed in 3rd quarter 2029.

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 MWPAAC, the following categories of interested and potentially affected parties may be engaged in the process (note: more detailed audience lists will be developed along with work plans and supporting outreach or event plans during each phase):

- Local Jurisdictions and Local Sewer Utilities
- Sound Cities Association
- Wastewater Professionals and industry peers
- Community-Based Organizations (Equity and Social Justice, Immigrant and Refugee, Environmental Justice)
- Communities that have/are experiencing the greatest environmental and health burdens
- Environmental Organizations /Nongovernmental Organizations
- Regulators and Resource Managers
- Neighborhood Groups
- Public Health Community-Based Organizations
- Water Resource Organizations
- Ratepayers
- Youth and Students
- Business community
- Agricultural 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 shows RWQC engagement during the RWSP Update planning effort. RWQC will have an opportunity to provide input before drafts are produced and feedback once drafts are available; WTD will provide status briefings along the way before RWQC is asked to take action.

Figure 2. Draft 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 list of capital projects in the coming decades, with significant forecasted costs. In making these investments, King County needs to consider many issues like our aging wastewater system, capacity drivers like population growth and infiltration and inflow, future regulations, water quality goals, energy and resource conservation and recovery, customer affordability, and climate change.

The update to the RWSP will not include stormwater planning for the region but will instead include how to address stormwater entering the wastewater system. Similarly, the update to the RWSP will not include water supply planning, but will include water reuse, which has a nexus between wastewater and water.

The policy questions 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.

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
Regulatory Landscape CSO, nutrients, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other contaminants of emerging concern (CECs), current and existing requirements, new and anticipated	Should the County evaluate costs and plan for levels of treatment beyond current legal requirements? How should the County anticipate, engage with, and plan for future nutrient permit requirements, regulations related to CECs such as PFAS, or other future regulatory changes?

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
requirements, opportunities for larger regional partnerships to address water concerns, requirement to comply with future total maximum daily loads	What upstream or source control actions should the region undertake to prevent contaminants and reduce costs? How should WTD efforts support the water quality of Puget Sound and applicable inland waterways?
Capacity Demands I/I, population growth, conveyance and treatment capacity demand, including on-site septic systems in urban areas	Given the uncertainties in future growth rates reported by Washington State and the Puget Sound Regional Council, how aggressively beyond legal requirements should WTD expand capacity to account for future population growth? To what extent should WTD prioritize use of existing facility sites vs. acquiring new property to accommodate future treatment needs (including capacity)? Should the region continue to provide a centralized approach for regional wastewater treatment, or should the region move towards a more decentralized approach? How should I/I be managed and how can costs be fairly apportioned? Should system capacity be expanded to account for increases in I/I? Should I/I policies change to support reducing the capacity needed for I/I? How should the conversion of on-site septic systems to sewers in the service area be managed and should WTD implement programs to encourage conversion within the service area?
Infrastructure Resiliency Asset management, maintenance, improvements, renewal, replacement, labor and supply chain disruptions, natural hazard resiliency	How proactive vs. reactive should WTD be when deciding to refurbish or replace aging infrastructure? What level of resiliency should WTD plan for regarding seismic and other natural hazards to avoid or minimize risks? What level of risk tolerance should WTD accept? How can these considerations be best informed by the long-term capital motion work in progress? What level of redundancy of critical systems should WTD have?
Equity and Social Justice Distributional equity, WTD role in safeguarding public health	What actions should WTD take to increase equity and social justice for the regional wastewater system? How will equity and social justice be interwoven in the update: community engagement, rate structure analysis, etc.?

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
	How should the regional wastewater system address environmental justice concerns as described in the 2021 Healthy Environment for All Act¹, such as addressing the disproportionate environmental health impacts of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities?
Climate Change 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.	Should existing wastewater policy language (KCC 28.86) be revised to specifically call out planning for future climate conditions in addition to population growth and other environmental factors? How much should WTD reduce energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions? How should WTD prepare and adapt to climate impacts (e.g., precipitation/storm intensities, sea level rise, river flooding, etc.) in line with the Strategic Climate Action Plan? What level of climate impact risk tolerance should WTD plan for to avoid or minimize risks to the system?
Resource Recovery Recycled water, biosolids, energy capture	Energy production and heat recovery – Should WTD be expanding its efforts to capture energy and heat? If so, at what level of effort? Biosolids – Should WTD further expand its efforts to develop Class A biosolids? What changes are needed to biosolid recovery policies to get to Class A? 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? How can WTD best support environmental benefits while instituting safeguards to protect against environmental risks of contamination? How should cost considerations be weighed?
Finance / Customer Affordability Rate equity, fairness, and structure, capital financing and debt management, financial planning and revenue sufficiency	How will WTD measure customer affordability for contract agencies and ratepayers? Is there a better rate structure for the sewer rate? (Note: WTD has identified a work plan to further evaluate the residential customer equivalent conversion factor of 750 cubic feet per month.)

¹ RCW 70.A.02

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
	Will WTD maintain a single uniform sewer rate per residential customer equivalent (Robinswood “one for all, all for one”), or consider alternative cost recovery rate structures to reflect other system impacts? 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.) What other rate relief approaches should WTD implement to improve customer affordability for those who may struggle to pay their sewer bill?
Relationship to Contracts and Functional Plans	How will policies embedded in the current component agency contracts and WTD Functional Plans be evaluated for consideration of a) inclusion in the RWSP as currently implemented, b) inclusion in the RWSP but modified from current implementation, or c) not included in the RWSP at this time but recommended for further study and analysis? How will WTD implement the RWSP Update consistent with direction and requirements expected of contract agencies?

Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD's) Sewer Rate and Capital Work Plan to Continue to Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Accountability – December 3, 2025, Status Update

Major Recommendations from RWQC Letter	Wastewater Treatment Division Tasks	Working Timeline	Status
1. Meaningful and Timely Engagement in Development of Sewer Rate. For the 2027 rate process and on-going, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) should implement an updated rate process that includes: a. Regular discussions throughout the year with the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC), Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC), and King County Council at the relevant level of detail for each body on key factors and assumptions affecting the rate and forecast. This includes transparency on capital improvement program assumptions. b. Time for more in-depth review and understanding of costs, discussion of specific rate scenarios/options, and effects during rate discussions with MWPAAC, RWQC, and other stakeholders, at the relevant level of detail for each body. c. Ensure that the long-term rate forecast methodology requested by Motion 16449 is used to develop scenarios to evaluate options.	- To promote meaningful and timely engagement, WTD will host regular meetings with MWPAAC and/or its subcommittees to review: 10-year Capital Improvement Program. - Project prioritization, including transparency on how decisions are made and policy drivers of capital prioritization. - Timely updates on changes in large project costs that may impact rates as information becomes available. - Expenditure forecast assumptions and impacts to different types of projects across the capital program. - Work with King County Executive's Office to schedule early 'look ahead' presentations on known and potential factors affecting the 2027 rate proposal and forecast. - As part of the 2027 rate proposal, include options for multiple rate scenarios, including those that offer various capital portfolio options. Scenarios should detail tradeoffs and associated risks and benefits. This should include a discussion about the level of service WTD is able to deliver under each option. - The report on long-term forecasting model required by Motion 16449 was presented to RWQC in September 2025. To increase transparency and credibility in the long-term forecasting model, WTD will work with a MWPAAC work group to identify the model details that should be shared and further refined in order to improve understanding of the assumptions, formulas, data sets, and policy implications embedded in the long-term rate model and allow for informed questions. The MWPAAC work group should identify areas of improvement to continue to align with industry best practices to inform suggestions for improvements. - Work with MWPAAC Executive Board member(s) to develop a process for members to observe WTD Capital Portfolio management staff meetings while not hampering WTD's process and progress.	Q4 2025 and ongoing	Briefing provided on WTD's capital project prioritization process and key capital projects impacting the rate in Q3/Q4 2025.
		Q1/Q2 2026	"Look Ahead" briefings to MWPAAC scheduled for Q4 2025 and Q1 2026.
		Q2 2026	Work is underway for WTD to provide multiple rate scenarios in Q2 2026 as part of the 2027 rate adoption process.
		Q3 2025 and ongoing	An independent consultant has reviewed the model and will brief MWPAAC in Q1 2026. Further briefings on implementation of the long-term forecasting model will be provided to MWPAAC with an opportunity to suggest improvements to align with industry standards.
		Q1/Q2 2026	WTD is engaged with MWPAAC's Executive Board to provide an opportunity to observe the Definition and/or Delivery Board meetings in the Portfolio Management process beginning in Q1 2026.

Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD's) Sewer Rate and Capital Work Plan to Continue to Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Accountability – December 3, 2025, Status Update

Major Recommendations from RWQC Letter	Wastewater Treatment Division Tasks	Working Timeline	Status
2. Early visibility and transparency on large project planning. Develop mechanisms for MWPAAC and RWQC to engage in the planning and development process for large capital projects prior to decision-making to improve knowledge and confidence.	Develop and implement a process for MWPAAC and RWQC (as requested) to review a limited number of large capital projects selected by MWPAAC that substantively affect the rate. These reviews will happen at key phases in the development of these selected projects, including concept definition, alternatives analysis, alternative selection, and final design. Each engagement will create an opportunity to influence outcomes by collaboratively discussing comments and questions with WTD before a decision in each phase identified above is finalized.	Q1 2026	WTD will engage with MWPAAC's Executive Board to select capital projects for review as part of the Board's January 2026 retreat.
3. Improve multi-year rate predictability. Develop options and implement a mechanism to improve rate predictability to help partner agencies better plan and lessen large changes in rate proposals, especially for the first three years of the rate. A multi-year rate would provide more time for an in-depth review and understanding of costs and how investments are prioritized, and discussion of options and tradeoffs.	Prepare and deliver options for multi-year rate predictability, including options for a multi-year rate commitment. Options should be prepared in discussion with MWPAAC's Executive Board and partner agencies and in coordination with King County Executive's Office and county budget process. Any multi-year option should include a process for WTD to update the rate if there are significant changes that impact the rate forecast.	Q3 2025 – Q2 2026 (Options identified by end 2025 and multi-year rate implementation by end of Q2 2027 for 2028 and 2029 rates)	WTD began discussions with MWPAAC's Executive Board and King County's budget office in Q3/Q4 2025 on options for rate predictability. MWPAAC will receive an initial briefing and discuss potential options in December 2025.
4. Evaluate regulatory requirements and develop options to address financial sustainability. Evaluate consent decree and permit deadlines for major projects and investments associated with multiple and concurrent requirements and identify options to address financial sustainability while optimizing water quality benefits and maintaining permit compliance.	- Evaluate the costs/benefits of seeking regulatory changes to improve the environmental and financial sustainability of the regional system. - Coordinate on outreach plan with local agency partners, to state and federal government. The outreach plan should address regulatory issues and funding availability from state and federal agencies.	Q3 2025 – 2026 Q3 2025 – 2026	WTD will coordinate with the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office to evaluate potential regulatory changes. WTD is initiating outreach with its local agency partners on a federal/state outreach strategy.
5. Independent, third-party oversight. Provide for independent third-party review for WTD's capital program, including <i>mega</i> capital projects such as the Mouth of Duwamish Combined Sewer Overflow Program.	Develop a proposal in coordination with MWPAAC's Executive Board for review by the Executive's Office to procure an independent consultant to review WTD's capital program, including large capital projects.	Q4 2025 – Q2 2026	WTD provided an opportunity for MWPAAC's Executive Board to review the scope of work to procure an independent third-party consultant. The King County Auditor's Office has agreed to serve as the Project Representative for the contract.

Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD’s) Sewer Rate and Capital Work Plan to Continue to Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Accountability – December 3, 2025, Status Update

Major Recommendations from RWQC Letter	Wastewater Treatment Division Tasks	Working Timeline	Status
6. Regional Utility Affordability Summit. In partnership with local municipal leaders, prepare a multi-jurisdictional summit to address affordability and access to essential utilities.	• Work with RWQC, Sound Cities Association, Seattle, and sewer districts to bring a wastewater perspective to the development and planning of the regional utility affordability summit.	Q3 2025 – Q1 2026	WTD participated in the Staff Committee and Steering Committee for planning the November 14, 2025, Utility Rate Summit and as a participant presenting at the Summit.
	• Identify and implement resources to execute follow-up steps agreed upon at the summit.	Q4 2025-Q1 2026	Follow-up to the November 2025 summit will be coordinated with participants, including a potential second summit in 2026.
	• Develop public engagement strategy for rate payers in coordination with local contract agencies to explain why wholesale WTD rates are increasing and provide opportunities for public engagement.	Q1 2026	WTD is coordinating initial discussions with local agencies in anticipation of engagement and communications strategy development in Q1 2026.

RWQC Monthly Work Program for 2025 December 3, 2025

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–Special Meeting January 16, 2025

- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (45 minutes):
 - Resolution Supporting Scope
 - Charter briefing
- ✓ 2025 Work Program (45 minutes)

February 5, 2025

- ✓ **Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (35 minutes):**
 - **Charter**
 - **Vision for Clean Water Plan**
- ✓ Mouth of Duwamish CSO Briefing (35 minutes)
- ✓ A Look Back at the Robinswood Agreement (20 minutes)

March 5, 2025

- ✓ Wastewater Treatment Division’s Preliminary 2026 Sewer Rate (20 minutes)
- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (20 minutes):
 - Briefing: WTD’s framing of Challenges and Opportunities which are informing development of the Options for the Vision for Clean Water
- ✓ Briefing on Selected Capital Projects and Common themes in Capital program Delivery (25 minutes)
- ✓ Briefing only Lower Duwamish Waterway Consent Decree (25 minutes)

Optional March 7, 2025 Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station Site Visit. This is not a RWQC meeting.

April 2, 2025

- ✓ WTD’s 2026 Rate Recommendations and Status Update on Long Term Rate Motion 16449 (75 minutes)
- Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (15 minutes)
 - Briefing on Emerging Options for the Vision for Clean Water (Deferred)

May 7, 2025

- ✓ Executive's Proposed 2026 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge (45 minutes)
- Status Update on Long-Term Rate Motion 16449 (10 minutes) (Deferred)
- Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (25 minutes):
 - Input on Vision Options for Clean Water (Deferred)
- PFAS Briefing: Update on Voluntary Testing for PFAS in Wastewater and Landfills (15 minutes) (Deferred)

Optional May 30th Site Visit West Point Available to members and staff. This is not a RWQC meeting.

June 4, 2025

- ✓ Executive's Proposed 2026 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge (15 minutes)
- ✓ Status Update on Long-Term Rate Motion 16449 (15 minutes)
- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (25 minutes)
 - Discussion on Vision Options for Clean Water
- ✓ PFAS Briefing: Update on Voluntary Testing for PFAS in Wastewater and Landfills (15 minutes)

July 2, 2025

- ✓ Follow-Up on 2026 10-Year Sewer Rate Forecast (25 minutes)
- ✓ Update on Puget Sound Nutrient Issue (25 minutes)
- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (20 minutes)
RWSP Roadmap and Module #1
- ✓ Capital Projects in 2026 10-Year Sewer Forecast (25 minutes)

August 6, 2025 (Council Recess)**August 28th Optional Forest Biosolids Tour.****September 3, 2025**

- ✓ Long-Term Rate Forecasting Final Briefing per Motion 16449 (45 minutes)
- ✓ RWQC Requesting WTD implement a sewer rate and capital work plan to continue to improve engagement, transparency, and accountability (35 minutes)
- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (15 minutes)

October 1, 2025

- ✓ RWQC Motion Requesting WTD implement a sewer rate and capital work plan to continue to improve engagement, transparency, and accountability. (25 minutes)
- ✓ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (50 minutes)
 - Update on Vision for Clean Water
 - Briefing on Module #1 Topic 1: Combined System / CSO Actions
- ✓ Capital Program Update: 2026-2027 Capital Budget and Program Highlights (30 minutes)

- ☐ Council Selected 2025 WaterWorks Grants

November 5, 2025 (Meeting cancelled)

December 3, 2025

- ☐ Budget Update: Wastewater Treatment Division's 2026-2027 Adopted Biennial Budget
- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (60 minutes)
- ☐ Update on Motion 16900: A motion requesting the Wastewater Treatment Division implement a sewer rate and capital work plan to continue to improve engagement, transparency, and accountability.

DRAFT