



King County

1200 King County
Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Agenda Regional Water Quality Committee

Councilmembers:
Claudia Balducci, Chair
Reagan Dunn, Rhonda Lewis

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

Alternates: *Hanan Amer, Auburn; Melissa Stuart, Redmond*

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, January 7, 2026

Hybrid Meeting

REVISED AGENDA

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

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

3. Approval of Minutes

December 3, 2025 meeting **p. 4**

4. Chair's Report

5. MWPAAC Report

6. Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Report



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Discussion and Possible Action

7. [Briefing No. 2026-B0006](#) **p. 7**

Selection of Vice-Chair

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff

Briefing

8. [Briefing No. 2026-B0007](#) **p. 8**

Introduction to the Regional Water Quality Committee and the Regional Wastewater Treatment System

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff

9. [Briefing No. 2026-B0001](#) **p. 69**

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Policy Framework

Darren Greve, Government Relations Administrator, Wastewater Treatment Division

Janice Johnson, RWSP Update Program Manager, Wastewater Treatment Division

10. [Briefing No. 2026-B0002](#) **p. 85**

Discussion of 2026 Regional Water Quality Committee Work Program

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff

Other Business

Adjournment



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Meeting Minutes Regional Water Quality Committee

Councilmembers:
Claudia Balducci, Chair
Reagan Dunn

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

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Balducci called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Present: 11 - Balducci, Lee, Mork, Moore, Rossman, Warren, Hollingsworth, Kettle,
McClellan, Sweet and Hooshangi

Excused: 2 - Clarke and Dunn

3. **Approval of Minutes**

*Vice Chair Mork moved approval of the October 1, 2025, meeting minutes. There
being no objections, the minutes were approved.*

4. Chair's Report

Chair Balducci commented on changes in committee membership for 2026 and reviewed the meeting topics.

5. MWPAAC Report

John McClellan, Chair, MWPAAC, noted that the October 22nd general meeting included discussions on pollution control and an update on the vision for clean water. More work on the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) is expected in 2026. The Rates and Finance Subcommittee will receive an update on the Council approved budget and have a discussion on options for rate predictability. The Engineering and Planning subcommittee will receive an update on the strategic asset management plan and participate in a virtual exercise to discuss priorities related to I and I. The next general meeting is December 10, 2025.

6. Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Report

Kamuron Gurol, Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, provided updates on ongoing projects, and commented on the Regional Utility Rate Summit.

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

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

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff, briefed the committee and answered questions from the members. Kamuron Gurol, Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, addressed the committee.

This matter was Presented

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

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Policy Framework

Darren Greve, Government Relations Administrator, Wastewater Treatment Division; and Janice Johnson, RWSP Update Program Manager, Wastewater Treatment Division; briefed the committee and answered questions from the members.

This matter was Presented

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.

Jenny Giambattista, Council staff, briefed the committee.

This matter was Presented

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

Discussion of 2025 Regional Water Quality Committee Work Program

Chair Balducci provided an overview of the work the committee had addressed in 2025.

This matter was Presented

Other Business

There was no further business to come before the committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 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.:	2026-B0006	Date:	January 7, 2026

SUBJECT

Selection of a Vice-Chair for the Regional Water Quality Committee.

SUMMARY

This agenda item allows the Committee members who are not County Councilmembers an opportunity to select the Vice-Chair for 2026, as provided in the King County Charter. The Committee may choose at this meeting or a successive meeting to entertain a verbal motion for the appointment of a Vice-chair that will be voted upon – with the outcome reflected in the meeting minutes.

BACKGROUND

A voter-approved change to the King County Charter in 2008 directs that each of the King County Council's regional committees will have a Chair, appointed by the Chair of the County Council and a Vice-chair appointed by a majority vote of those committee members who are not County Councilmembers, in accordance with voting rights that are apportioned as provided in the Charter.

A roll call or voice vote can be taken in committee on the selection of the vice-chair.

ATTACHMENTS: None



King County

Metropolitan King County Council Regional Water Quality Committee

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	8	Name:	Jenny Giambattista
Proposed No.:	2026-B0007	Date:	January 7, 2026

SUBJECT

Briefing on the history of the regional wastewater system, an overview of system operations, and an introduction to the Regional Water Quality Committee.

SUMMARY

King County owns, operates, maintains, and continues to develop a metropolitan sewage treatment and disposal system originally developed and operated by the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle. The Wastewater Treatment Division provides sewage disposal service to 33 local governments (including the City of Seattle), one state park, one privately owned apartment complex, and one Indian Tribe. The Regional Wastewater Services Plan was adopted by the Council in 1999 and provides direction for the operation and development of the wastewater treatment system until 2030. The Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) is one of three regional committees formed by charter when voters approved the merger of Metro and King County. The role of RWQC is to review and recommend countywide policies and plans related to the water pollution control functions formerly provided by Metro.

BACKGROUND

History of the King County Regional Wastewater System. Below are some of the key milestone dates in the creation of the regional wastewater system.

- In the **1950s**, wastewater flowed into Lake Washington and Puget Sound and many rivers and smaller lakes without enough treatment, fouling water and local beaches. The City of Seattle and other cities and districts were responsible for their own wastewater treatment.
- In **1958** the voters created Metro (the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle) and developed a regional wastewater treatment system based on watersheds as opposed to political boundaries.

- In **1959**, Metro's governing body, the Metropolitan Council, adopted a Comprehensive Water pollution Abatement Plan¹ for the Seattle metropolitan area.
- In **1992**, King County voters approved a ballot resolution to merge Metro and King County. On January 1, 1994, Metro joined King County as the Department of Metropolitan Services.
- In **January 1996**, Metro's old Water Pollution Control Department, including the wastewater treatment function, became part of the county's new Department of Natural Resources.

The basic legal authority under which the system was developed and continues to be operated is RCW Chapter 35.58, which was enacted in 1957 and enables and describes the powers of Metropolitan Municipal Corporations. When Metro and King County merged in 1994, the powers that were exercised by the Metro Council were vested in the King County Council. RCW Chapter 35.58 confers broad powers for the purpose of developing and operating the "metropolitan system."

Local Sewage Disposal Contracts. In 1994, King County assumed authority of Metro and its legal obligation to treat wastewater for 31² local jurisdictions and local sewer agencies that contract with King County. These "local sewer agencies" provide sewer service in most of western King County and a substantial portion of south Snohomish County. Treatment and disposal of sewage collected by these local agencies is accomplished by the county pursuant to long-term agreements entered into in accordance with the broad powers of RCW Chapter 35.58. Most of these agreements were entered into between the individual local governments and Metro in the 1960s and 70s. The initial termination date of the agreements was 2016 but most were extended to 2036 in the late 1980s. Nine will terminate on July 1, 2056.³ The agreements obligate King County to treat the sewage delivered to the county system and establish the basis of payment by the local agencies for this service. The basis of payment is uniform in all agreements, although the agreement with Seattle provides for an additional charge to help offset the costs of the county's program for combined sewer overflow (CSO) control.

Between 2014 and 2019, DNRP, in consultation with the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC) and a negotiation team consisting of staff from DNRP, four cities, and one sewer district, developed an initial draft new contract to address items of interest to the local sewer agencies and King County. To help ensure coordination between the contract update and related long-range wastewater planning work, it was decided that DNRP would complete the necessary staff work on three contract items concurrently with the Clean Water Plan process. Those items are guiding

¹ Metro Resolution Number 43 was adopted on April 22, 1959, by the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle.

² There are now 34 agencies contracting for services. Vashon Sewer District (1999), Carnation (2003), and Muckelshoot joined later.

³ Ordinance 15757 requires specified cities and special districts to continue to discharge sewage into the regional system until such time as construction and financing of the capital projects authorized by the RWSP are complete whether or not they have current contracts with the County for such services.

principles for industrial waste, the capacity charge calculation through 2030, and the capacity charge calculation after its current end date of 2030.⁴

Regional Wastewater Services Plan and King County Code. It is the responsibility of the County (associated with its metropolitan powers) to prepare and implement a comprehensive water pollution abatement plan, including provisions for “waterborne pollutant removal, water quality improvement, sewage disposal, and stormwater drainage for the metropolitan area” pursuant to policies and plans recommended by the RWQC and adopted by the Metropolitan King County Council. In 1995, the King County Council in assuming the legislative powers of Metro, readopted Ordinances 11032 and 12074, the Metro resolutions that comprise the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan for King County.

In 1991 King County also began its own planning process to develop a long-range wastewater plan to amend the 1959 comprehensive water pollution abatement plan and to develop long-term plans for reducing combined sewer overflows and managing biosolids and water reuse. These planning efforts were referred to as the **Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP)**. The RWSP was intended to provide the direction for the operation and further development of wastewater treatment services for the next 30 years. In 1997, the King County Department of Natural Resources released the *RWSP Draft Plan*. Following a public engagement process, the Executive made his recommendation for a long-term wastewater plan in the 1998 Regional Wastewater Services Plan Executive’s Preferred Plan.

Robinswood Agreement. In October 1998, the King County Executive and RWQC held a retreat to discuss financing the implementation of the RWSP. The “Robinswood” retreat resulted in guiding principles (See Attachment 1) for funding the RWSP, and the Committee agreed to final language on the financing plan at its November 1998 meeting. Some of the key principles of the Robinswood Agreement are as follows:

- The wastewater system is a regional system. “All for one and one for all from this day forward.”
- The regional wastewater financing structure should reflect uniform regional rates for existing and new customers and achieve the principle of “growth pays for growth.”
- The RWQC will provide periodic, substantive review of RWSP implementation.
- Establish a uniform capacity charge within the service area to cover growth costs not captured by the monthly sewer rate for new customers.

The principles of the Robinswood Agreement (Attachment 1) were largely incorporated in the RWSP.

In 1999 following review by the Regional Water Quality Committee and King County Council, the Council passed Ordinance 13680 adopting the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) as a supplement to the comprehensive water pollution plan

⁴ Transmittal letter for DNRP-Wastewater Semi-Annual Sewage Disposal Agreement Status Report- Ordinance 15805, Section 4

which had been enacted by Metro. The plan identified capital projects, including a new treatment facility to serve north King County and south Snohomish County.

The RWSP is codified in King County Code Section 28.86.010 and 28.86.040 through 28.86.150 (Attachment 2). The RWSP outlines programs and projects through 2023 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.⁵ The policies in the RWSP cover the major program elements for wastewater services and are as follows:

- Treatment plant policies (K.C.C. 28.86.050)
- Conveyance policies (K.C.C. 28.86.060)
- I/I (inflow/infiltration) policies (K.C.C. 28.86.070)
- Combined sewer overflow control policies (K.C.C. 28.86.080)
- Biosolids policies (K.C.C. 28.86.090)
- Water reuse policies (K.C.C. 28.86.100)
- Wastewater services policies (K.C.C. 28.86.110)
- Water quality protection policies (K.C.C. 28.86.120)
- Wastewater planning policies (K.C.C. 28.86.130)
- Environmental mitigation policies (K.C.C. 28.86.140)
- Public involvement policies (K.C.C. 28.86.150)

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

Since its adoption in 1999, the RWSP has been amended by ordinance. Table 1 shows the ordinances amending the RWSP by year.

Table 1
Amendments to the Regional Wastewater Services Plan

Year	Ordinance Number	Topic
2003	14712	Added odor control policies
2006	15602	RWSP Update
2006	15384	Reporting Requirements in RWSP
2008	16033	Conveyance system policies
2013	15787	Combined sewer overflow policy updates

Review of RWSP. K.C.C. 28.86.165 requires an annual report to summarize the major elements of the RWSP. WTD reports 2017 was the last year it completed the annual report in anticipation of the broader planning effort.

⁵ Regional Wastewater Services Plan 2017 Annual Report

The requirements for a comprehensive review of the RWSP were amended in 2006 by Ordinance 15384. K.C.C. 28.86.165.B.1 and B.2) now requires the Executive to submit a comprehensive regional services plan review in June 2014 and subsequently every three to five years. The last comprehensive review was completed in June 2013 and detailed the work of WTD to implement the RWSP from 2007 to 2013. An additional review was not completed because systemwide planning was expected to result in a new plan that sets direction for WTD. This planning effort was paused in 2021.

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 resolutions⁶ in support of the scope and charter for the RWSP.

The 2026-2027 adopted budget included \$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 \$32.1 million. PSB reports the project has spent \$19.6 million to date and anticipates spending \$6.6 million in 2025 and an additional \$13.1 million in 2026-2027. The total estimated cost at completion is estimated to be \$51.4 million.

Lastly, the RWSP operational plan that was adopted by the Council in December 1999 is also required by K.C.C. 28.86.165.C.1 to be updated on a regular basis in conjunction with policy revisions to the RWSP.

Current Wastewater System. The Wastewater Treatment Division has prepared the attached slides (Attachment 3) providing an overview of the current wastewater treatment system.

Regional Water Quality Committee. The Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) is one of three regional committees formed⁷ by charter when voters approved the merger of Metro (transit and wastewater treatment services) and King County. The role of the regional committees is to develop, propose, review, and recommend action on regional policies and plans for consideration by the County Council.

King County Code 1.24.065.K states the following on the role of the regional committees.

- 1. A regional committee shall focus on planning and policy setting in program areas where it has been determined that regional service or facility planning is required and in area where it is agreed the opportunity and need for the planning exist. A regional committee is not responsible for routine review and recommendation on operational and administrative matters such as contracts, budgets, appropriations, and fares and rates, formerly performed by the council of metropolitan Seattle. A regional committee may, however, deal with policies to develop fares and rates within the committee's subject matter area.*

⁶Resolution RWQC2025-01 and Resolution RWQC2025-02

⁷ Ordinance 10530

3. *The regional water quality committee shall develop, review and recommend countywide policies and plans related to the water pollution control functions formerly provided by the municipality of metropolitan Seattle. Plans and policies that must be assigned to the committee include, but are not limited to, water quality comprehensive and long-range capital improvement plans, service area and extension policies, rate policies, and the facility siting policy and major facilities siting process.*

Additionally, both the Charter and K.C.C. allow for RWQC to develop and propose legislation directly to the Council.

King County Code 1.24.065.L

“Policies or plans proposed by regional committees. A regional committee may develop and propose directly to the council, an ordinance or motion adopting, amending or repealing a countywide policy or plan regarding regional transit, water quality or other countywide policies and plans within the subject matter area of the committee. The proposals must be approved by a majority of the committee members present and voting, with no fewer than three and one-half affirmative votes...”

Matters Referred to the Regional Water Quality Committee. King County Code (K.C.C.) guides what matters are required to be referred by the Chair of the Council to RWQC.

K.C.C. 1.24.065.D.1.b.

Referral to the regional water quality committee. The chair of the council shall refer to the regional water quality committee countywide policies and plans related to the water quality services formerly provided by the municipality of metropolitan Seattle. If a standing committee of the council is considering an issue that, upon the standing committee's subsequent review, the standing committee believes should be considered as a countywide policy or plan related to water quality, then the standing committee shall so inform the chair of the council. The chair of the council may then determine whether the policy or plan is to be referred to a regional committee.

Additionally, K.C.C. 1.24.065.K.3 requires the following referrals to RWQC:

Plans and policies that must be assigned to the committee include, but are not limited to, water quality comprehensive and long-range capital improvement plans, service area and extension policies, rate policies, and the facility siting policy and major facilities siting process.”

Legislation required for referral to a regional committee is referred to as a “mandatory dual” referral. When legislation is referred to the RWQC as a mandatory referral, there are several important procedural requirements that limit the Council’s power to adopt legislation on such policies and plans except through concurrence. For example, mandatory referral legislation cannot be adopted by the Council until either the legislation receives a recommendation from the regional committee or the time for regional committee review has expired. Even after the expiration of time, a supermajority vote of six councilmembers is required to adopt a plan without regional committee recommendation. If RWQC amends legislation, it requires six votes of the

Council to reject those changes and adopt the legislation as transmitted. If a standing committee or the full Council amends the legislation after it has been approved by RWQC, it must be re-referred to RWQC. (K.C.C. 1.24.065.G.1 and G.2)

Other non-mandatory legislation within the committee's subject area that would benefit from interjurisdictional discussion can be referred to RWQC by the Council chair. These are known as "discretionary referrals." Legislation related to these matters is not subject to the procedural requirements that apply to mandatory referrals.

Membership and Voting in RWQC. As specified in K.C.C. 1.24.065.B.1.b, the RWQC membership includes three county councilmembers, one of whom serves as the chair of the RWQC. The remaining members must be local elected officials appointed from and in proportion to the relative populations of the city of Seattle and the other cities and towns in the county. Cities and towns other than the Seattle may appoint two persons for each of their allocated memberships. Additionally, there are two members from water and sewer districts. The vice-chair of the committee is selected by a majority vote of the committee members who are not county councilmembers.

Lastly, Rule 7.B.1.b provides "Special purpose districts located outside of the county that receive sewage treatment services from the county pay jointly designate one nonvoting representative to serve on the committee." On August 4, 2025 the general managers of Olympic View Water and Sewer District, Cross Valley Water District, and Alderwood Water and Wastewater District designated John McClellan to hold the special districts' non-voting seat on the RWQC.

RWQC Membership
11 voting members and 1 non-voting member—12 votes total

DELEGATION	MEMBERS	VOTES EACH	TOTAL VOTES
King County	3	2	6
Seattle	2	1	2
Sound Cities Association	4	.5	2
Special Purpose Districts providing sewer service in King County.	2	1	2
Non-Voting representative of special purpose districts outside King County	1	0	0

Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee. In performing the function of metropolitan water pollution abatement, state law requires that the county also maintain a "metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee." The function of MWPAAC as described in RCW 35.58.210 is: "The function of such advisory committee shall be to advise the metropolitan council in matters relating to the performance of the water pollution abatement function."

MWPAAC is focused on wastewater treatment and provides a forum for discussing a wide range of issues related to regional wastewater treatment services.

RCW 35.58.210

If a metropolitan municipal corporation shall be authorized to perform the function of metropolitan water pollution abatement, the metropolitan council shall, prior to the effective date of the assumption of such function, cause a metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee to be formed by notifying the legislative body of each component city and county which operates a sewer system to appoint one person to serve on such advisory committee and the board of commissioners of each water-sewer district which operates a sewer system, any portion of which lies within the metropolitan area, to appoint one person to serve on such committee. The metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee shall meet at the time and place provided in the notice and elect a chair. The members of such committee shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing bodies and shall receive no compensation other than reimbursement for expenses actually incurred in the performance of their duties. The function of such advisory committee shall be to advise the metropolitan council in matters relating to the performance of the water pollution abatement function.

Recent RWQC and WTD Related Legislation and 2026-2027 Budget Language. The following section summarizes the major legislation and 2026-2027 budget language related to RWQC and WTD.

Capital Forecasting Motion 16410. [Motion 16410](#) (September 2023) was initiated by the Regional Water Quality and adopted by the County Council in 2023. It requests WTD research and identify methodologies for forecasting the long-term costs of its capital improvement needs. This was completed.

Long-term Rate Forecasting Motion 16449. [Motion 16449](#) (October 2023) was initiated by the Regional Water Quality Committee and requests WTD develop a long-term financial and sewer rate forecast. WTD contracted with the firms Consor and Raftelis to provide support for this work. A final report was presented to RWQC in [September 2025](#).

Motion 16900 WTD Sewer Rate and Capital Work Plan to Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Accountability. [Motion 16900](#) (November 2025) requests that WTD implement a work plan to continue to improve engagement, transparency, and accountability in the sewer rate-setting process. The work plan is Attachment A to Motion 16900. The work plan includes tasks associated with each of the major recommendations in the [RWQC comment letter](#) dated May 13, 2025. WTD will provide a monthly status report to RWQC on each task.

Key Topics in the Work Program Include:

- 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.

- 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.
- Independent consultant to review WTD's capital program.
- Evaluate regulatory requirements.
- Significant changes in capital project costs.
- Options for multi-year rate predictability.

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update. The Regional Water Quality Committee has been closely following the launch of the RWSP Update and has adopted resolutions in support of the RWSP's scope and charter. In early 2025, RWQC adopted resolution [RWQC Resolution 2025-01](#) in support of the scope and [RWQC Resolution 2025-02](#) in support of the charter for the RWSP. The committee has requested briefings on the RWSP Update each month. Both documents identify specific policy questions to be addressed in the RWSP Update.

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 budget restriction is summarized below.

Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update Policy Analysis. This language restricts expenditure of the \$7.4 million appropriation for this project 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 the motion acknowledging receipt of the plan is passed by the council.

The plan is due March 1, 2026, and requires input from RWQC. WTD briefed RWQC on December 4, 2025, seeking input, and will provide another briefing to the committee on January 7, 2026.

Reporting on Capital Project Cost Increases. This proviso encumbers \$1 million until the executive transmits quarterly letters of notification, through the third quarter of 2027, identifying capital projects over \$25 million where the cost estimate at completion has increased by a certain percentage over the cost estimate at completion, reported at the time of the most recent appropriation for the project. The notification letter will also include an explanation of why the increases are projected. At least once a year, WTD staff will provide an update briefing to the Council's Budget and Fiscal Management Committee and RWQC on the information contained in the letters.

Implementation Plan for Expanding Capacity Charge Payment Plan Program. This proviso encumbers \$500,000 until the executive transmits an implementation plan for expanding the eligibility requirements for WTD's payment plan program, a motion that acknowledging receipt of the plan, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the plan is passed by council. The plan should include baseline information about the existing program and estimated eligibility and utilization based on revised definitions of low-income. The plan is required to be filed by April 3, 2026.

An Analysis of a Range of Policy Choices Resulting in at Least Two Rate Options for 2027. This proviso encumbers \$1 million until the executive includes 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. The required analysis and corresponding rate options will describe the tradeoffs, associated risks and benefits of each policy choice, and will also identify any adjustments that would be needed in the six-year capital improvement plan or proposed operating budget. The report is to be included as part of the executive's transmittal of the executive's proposed rate sewer for 2027.

PFAS and CECs. In October 2023, the King County Council adopted Motion 16434, jointly introduced by RWQC and Councilmember Kohl-Welles. [Motion 16434](#) requests WTD take a set of specified actions in order to identify, prioritize, reduce, and control sources, exposures, and risk from per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances ("PFAS") and contaminants of concern to people and the environment in King County.

INVITED

- Kamuron Gurol, Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks
- Sharman Herrin, Government Relations Administrator, Department of Natural Resources and Parks

ATTACHMENTS

1. Robinswood Agreement Letter
2. King County Code 28.86.010-28.86.200
3. WTD Overview of the Regional Wastewater Treatment System

"Robinswood Agreement" Letter



Metropolitan King County Council
Regional Water Quality Committee

November 16, 1998

The Honorable Ron Sims
Room 400
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Executive Sims,

This letter is a follow-up to the Regional Water Quality Committee retreat you attended on October 29 at Robinswood House in Bellevue. As you recall, the purpose of the retreat was to discuss outstanding finance issues and come to an agreement on how to finance the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP). The financing policies for the RWSP provide the framework for establishing the funding mechanism necessary to implement the plan.

The Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC), which includes representatives of King County, suburban cities, the City of Seattle, and sewer districts is considering a Regional Wastewater Services Plan to manage wastewater in the Puget Sound through the year 2030. The RWQC will soon make a recommendation to the full King County Council who will adopt the final RWSP.

The following guiding principles framed the discussion at the retreat:

1. The wastewater system is a regional system. As one participant said at the retreat, "All for one and one for all. from this day forward."
2. As a region, we are committed to protecting the water quality of our waterways, lakes, and Puget Sound.
3. The Regional Water Quality Committee shall provide periodic, substantive review of RWSP implementation.
4. The regional wastewater financing structure should reflect uniform regional rates for existing and new customers and achieve the principle of "growth pays for growth."

The principle of growth pays for growth is best implemented at this time through specific policies whereby existing customers pay for existing capacity and new customers pay for excess existing capacity and new capacity.

Listed below are the points of consensus developed at the retreat along with a brief explanation:

Base Rate/Capacity Charge

- Maintain a uniform monthly sewer rate for both existing and new customers such that, in general, existing customers pay for the existing system and new customers pay for growth
- Establish a uniform capacity charge within the service area to cover growth costs not captured by the monthly sewer rate for new customers
- Develop a strategy to increase and restructure the capacity charge and build a coalition for support in the State Legislature
- Maintain the current rate structure until the capacity charge is increased

A capacity charge will be levied against new connections, reconnections, ~~or~~ new services that meet the definition of new growth. This charge and the monthly service rates paid by both existing and new customers is intended to ensure that system capacity built to serve new customers recovers the revenue necessary to pay for system expansion.

King County will achieve this objective by allocating wastewater system costs to new and existing customers. The revenue needed to recover costs allocated to existing customers will be used to establish the monthly rate for all customers. The revenue required to recover costs allocated to new customers not recovered by the monthly rates paid by new customers will become the capacity charge subject to the 15-year term per new connection.

Costs allocated to existing customers will include current treatment plant conveyance and solids capacity, Inflow / Infiltration (I/I) assessment and reduction, and new conveyance for existing customers. Costs allocated to new customers include new treatment, conveyance and solids capacity, and existing excess capacity. Costs allocated proportionally to existing and new customers include CSO control, operations, maintenance and administration for the entire system.

Regional Inflow / Infiltration (I/I) Assessment & Pilots; and CSO Control

- King County pays 100 percent of the cost of I/I assessments and any pilot projects that are done to demonstrate I/I effectiveness
- Discontinue CSO benefit charge when changes in state legislation authorizing the capacity charge increases are passed by the Washington State Legislature (Seattle CSO payment)

- Over the next five years, perform a substantive technical and financial review of the I/I assessments & pilot projects and the CSO control efforts for potential adjustments

The RWQC will review and consider the I / I and CSO program elements over the next five years, following the King County Council's adoption of the plan. The RWQC may make recommendations for modifying or amending the plan to the King County Council after the five-year program reviews. These program reviews may include:

- compliance with federal and state laws affecting water quality (e.g., ESA and the RWSP Habitat Conservation Plan);
- legal decisions impacting the implementation of the RWSP;
- scientific and economic evaluations of the methodologies for addressing water quality protection; and
- integration of the wastewater system with other water quality programs for the region.

Uniform Interceptor Policy

- Establish uniform financing, construction, operation, maintenance, and replacement policies for all interceptors in its service area
- Assume responsibility for interceptors under this policy at the time the RWSP is adopted

RWQC members will continue to review the financial implications of this policy as it is developed.

RWQC involvement in RWSP implementation

The RWQC expects to review the RWSP during implementation at key decision points and wants to ensure that there is language in the plan that ensures these reviews are done on a regular basis.

Liability Protection

In developing its response to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings, the King County Wastewater Treatment Division could evaluate the opportunity and feasibility to include the programs of its component agency customers in any permits or agreements that may include local sewer operations, maintenance and construction activities. The feasibility analysis could include identifying the responsibilities for component agency participation in a King County Wastewater Treatment Division Habitat Conservation Plans or other ESA response and any protection to be obtained from participating.

In order to implement these points of consensus, the RWQC will be considering and incorporating amendments to the policies in the Executive' Preferred Plan and will vote on these amendments when the RWQC votes on the RWSP.

Sincerely,

Members, Regional Water Quality Committee

<u>David P. F.</u>	<u>Larry Pullen</u>
<u>William A. Fager</u>	<u>Louise Miller</u>
<u>James D. Quake</u>	<u>Richard Conlin</u>
<u>Connie King</u>	<u>Margaret Rogers</u>
<u>Patrick H. Hawkins</u>	
<u>Brian D. Dinkowich</u>	

CC: Regional Water Quality Committee Members

King County Code 28.86.010-28.86.200

28.86.010 Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

A. “Biosolids” means a primarily organic product produced by wastewater treatment processes that can be beneficially recycled. The product may contain water, sand, organic matter, microorganisms, trace metals and other chemicals.

B. “Capacity” and “rated capacity” mean the average wet weather flows that the treatment plant or conveyance system is designed to handle. Average wet weather flows are wastewater flows that occur during wet months but not during storms.

C. “Capacity charge” means a charge levied on a new customer to recover capital costs needed to serve new customers.

D. “Community treatment system” means a treatment device or drainfield, or both, that is shared by two or more property owners.

E. “Component agencies” means the cities, towns, counties and sewer districts that retail wastewater treatment services, that dispose of any portions of their sanitary sewage into the wastewater system and that have entered into a contract with the county for providing for wastewater treatment.

F. “Comprehensive Water Pollution Abatement Plan” means a plan developed pursuant to RCW 35.58.200.

G. “CSO” means a combined sewer overflow, which is an overflow from a combined sewer that is designed to collect both sanitary sewage and stormwater runoff. The overflows occur during storms when flows in the system exceed the capacity of the wastewater collection system.

H. “ESA” means the federal Endangered Species Act.

I. “Existing customer” means a customer who connects, reconnects, or establishes a new service on sewers tributary to the county's metropolitan sewerage service before January 1, 2003.

J. “I/I” means inflow/infiltration, which is the total quantity of water from both inflow and infiltration without distinguishing the source.

K. “Indirect potable use” means discharging reclaimed water to surface or groundwater and withdrawing water for treatment prior to use as a drinking water source from another location in the same watershed.

L. “Infiltration” means the water entering a wastewater system, including sewer service connections, from the ground through such means as, but not limited to, defective pipes, pipe joints, connections or maintenance hole walls.

M. “Inflow” means the water discharged into a wastewater system, including service connections from such sources as, but not limited to, roof leaders, cellar, yard and area drains, foundation drains, cooling water discharges, drains from springs and swampy areas, maintenance hole covers, cross-connections from storm sewers and combined sewers, catch basins, storm waters, surface runoff, street wash waters or drainage. “Inflow” does not include, and is distinguished from, infiltration.

N. “Mgd” means million gallons per day, a measure of wastewater treatment capacity,

O. "New customer" means a customer who connects, reconnects, or establishes a new service on sewers tributary to the county's metropolitan sewage system on or after January 1, 2003. This includes:

1. New connections to the existing collection system, including:
 - a. flows from new single family and multiple unit residential connections; and
 - b. new commercial or industrial connections;
2. Expansions in activity from existing connections, including:
 - a. conversion of residential units (single or multiple) to include additional customers or equivalents, or both; and
 - b. expansions in commercial or industrial activity;
3. Septic to sewer conversions; and
4. I/I flows from the new connections and newly constructed conveyance systems.

P. "Nonpotable use" means using reclaimed water for nondrinking water applications that may include but are not limited to irrigation, industrial processing, agricultural uses and stream augmentation.

Q. "Operational master plan" means a comprehensive plan for an agency setting forth how the organization will operate now and in the future. An operational master plan shall include the analysis of alternatives and their life cycle costs to accomplish defined goals and objectives, performance measures, projected workload, needed resources, implementation schedules and general cost estimates. The operational master plan shall also address how the organization would respond in the future to changed conditions.

R. "Reclaimed water" means wastewater that is treated to a sufficiently high level that it can be safely used for intended purposes.

S. "Residential customer equivalent" means the factor in cubic feet of water used to describe the discharge from a single-family residence. Commercial and industrial customers are converted to residential customer equivalents based on the volume of water consumption.

T. "RWQC" means the regional water quality committee, which is a regional committee as defined by Section 270 of the King County Charter, with powers and duties to "develop, review and recommend ordinances and motions adopting, repealing, or amending countywide policies and plans relating to the subject matter area for which a regional committee has been established."

U. "RWSP" means the regional wastewater services plan.

V. "Sewer rate" means the amount in dollars, charged to a residential customer equivalent each month for use of the wastewater system.

W. "Shall" and "will" in a policy mean that it is mandatory to carry out the policy. "Should" in a policy provides noncompulsory guidance and establishes some discretion in making decisions. "May" in a policy means that it is in the interest of the county or other named entity to carry out the policy but there is total discretion in making decisions.

X. "Wastewater revenues" means revenues from the monthly sewer rate, capacity charge, grants and other revenues, such as interest income and charges for services, available for the wastewater system.

Y. "Wastewater system" means all the county's water pollution abatement facilities, together with all lands, property rights, equipment and accessories necessary for those facilities, and any other infrastructure, and all operations and programs provided by the county under chapter 35.58 RCW, including but not limited to:

1. Conveyance of influent from component agencies;
2. Treatment of sewage;
3. Disposal of treated effluent;
4. Production and recycling of biosolids;
5. Regulation of I/I;
6. Control of combined sewer overflows; and
7. Production of reclaimed water.

Z. "Water reuse" means using reclaimed water. (Ord. 18670 § 86, 2018: Ord. 17929 § 75, 2014: Ord. 14219 § 2, 2001: Ord. 13680 § 1, 1999).

28.86.020 Comprehensive water pollution abatement plan – readoption and ratification. Resolution No. 23 and all subsequent resolutions that amended and implemented the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan, duly enacted by the council of the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (Metro) and not expressly repealed by that body effective not later than midnight, December 31, 1993, and that are not inconsistent with the King County Charter or county ordinances, are hereby readopted and ratified as the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan for King County. (Ord. 13680 § 2, 1999).

28.86.030 Regional wastewater services plan as supplement to comprehensive water pollution abatement plan. Under the provisions of the King County Charter and RCW 35.58.200, the RWSP, set forth in K.C.C. 28.86.010 and 28.86.040 through 28.86.150, is hereby adopted as a supplement to the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan for King County. The RWSP provides policy guidance for the wastewater system through the year 2030. (Ord. 13680 § 3, 1999).

28.86.040 Regional wastewater services plan policies and explanatory material, financial policies for comprehensive water pollution abatement plan - application.

A. The RWSP policies, as set forth in this chapter, shall provide direction for the operation and further development of the wastewater system, its capital improvement program and, as necessary, the development of subsequent policies.

B. The RWSP explanatory material, as set forth in this chapter, provides background information and generally describes the objectives of the RWSP policies.

C. Financial policies for the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan and its supplement, the RWSP, are separately adopted in K.C.C. 28.86.160. (Ord. 13680 § 4, 1999).

28.86.050 Treatment plant policies (TPP).

A. Explanatory material. The treatment plant policies are intended to guide the county in providing treatment at its existing plants and in expanding treatment capacity through the year 2030. The policies direct that secondary treatment will be provided to all base sanitary flows. The county will investigate possible tertiary treatment with a

freshwater outfall to facilitate water reuse. The policies also direct how the county will provide the expanded treatment capacity necessary to handle the projected increases in wastewater flows resulting from population and employment growth. The policies provide for the construction of a new treatment plant (the Brightwater treatment plant) to handle flows in a new north service area, expansion of the south treatment plant to handle additional south and east King County flows and the reservation of capacity at the west treatment plant to handle Seattle flows and CSOs. The potential for expansion at the west and south treatment plants will be retained for unanticipated circumstances such as changes in regulations. The policies address goals for odor control at treatment plants and direct that water reuse is to continue and potentially expand at treatment plants.

B. Policies.

TPP-1: King County shall provide secondary treatment to all base sanitary flow delivered to its treatment plants. Treatment beyond the secondary level may be provided to meet water quality standards and achieve other goals such as furthering the water reuse program or benefiting species listed under the ESA.

TPP-2: King County shall provide additional wastewater treatment capacity to serve growing wastewater needs by constructing the [Brightwater]* treatment plant [at the Route 9 site north of the city of Woodinville]* and then expanding the treatment capacity at the south treatment plant. The west treatment plant shall be maintained at its rated capacity of one hundred thirty-three mgd. The south treatment plant capacity shall be limited to that needed to serve the eastside and south King County, except for flows from the North Creek Diversion project and the planned six-million-gallon storage tank, or minor rerouting to facilitate south or east county growth. The potential for expansion at the west treatment plant and south treatment plant should be retained for unexpected circumstances which shall include, but not be limited to, higher than anticipated population growth, new facilities to implement the CSO reduction program or new regulatory requirements.

TPP-3: Any changes in facilities of the west treatment plant shall comply with the terms of the West Point settlement agreement.

TPP-4: King County's goal is to prevent and control nuisance odor occurrences at all treatment plants and associated conveyance facilities and will carry out an odor prevention program that goes beyond traditional odor control. To achieve these goals, the following policies shall be implemented:

1. Existing treatment facilities shall be retrofit in a phased manner up to the High/Existing Plant Retrofit odor prevention level as defined in Table 1 of Attachment A to Ordinance 14712**, the odor prevention policy recommendations dated March 18, 2003. This level reflects what is currently defined as the best in the country for retrofit treatment facilities of a similar size. Odor prevention systems will be employed as required to meet the goal of preventing and controlling nuisance odor occurrences;

2. Existing conveyance facilities that pose nuisance odor problems shall be retrofitted with odor prevention systems as soon as such odors occur, subject to technical and financial feasibility. All other existing conveyance facilities shall be retrofitted with odor control systems during the next facility upgrade;

3. The executive shall phase odor prevention systems implementing the tasks that generate the greatest improvements first, balancing benefit gained with cost, and report to the council on the status of the odor prevention program in the annual RWSP report as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165;

4. New regional treatment facilities shall be constructed with odor control systems that are designed to meet the High/New Plant odor prevention level as defined in Table 1 of Attachment A to Ordinance 14712**, the odor prevention policy recommendations dated March 18, 2003. This level reflects what is currently defined as the best in the country for new treatment facilities of a similar size;

5. New conveyance facilities serving these new regional treatment facilities shall also be constructed with odor control systems as an integral part of their design;

6. Design standards will be developed and maintained for odor control systems to meet the county's odor prevention and control goals;

7. A comprehensive odor control and prevention monitoring program for the county's wastewater treatment and conveyance facilities will be developed. This program shall include the use of near facility neighbor surveys and tracking of odor complaints and responses to complaints and shall consider development of an odor prevention benchmarking and audit program with peer utilities; and

8. New odor prevention and measurement technologies will be assessed and methods for pilot testing new technologies identified when determined by the executive to be necessary and appropriate for achieving the goals of this policy.

TPP-5: King County shall undertake studies to determine whether it is economically and environmentally feasible to discharge reclaimed water to systems such as the Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish watersheds including the Ballard Locks.

TPP-6: The county shall evaluate opportunities in collaboration with adjacent utilities regarding the transfer of flows between the county's treatment facilities and treatment facilities owned and operated by other wastewater utilities in the region. The evaluation shall include, but not be limited to, cost environmental and community impacts, liability, engineering feasibility, flexibility, impacts to contractual and regulatory obligations and consistency with the level of service provided at the county owned and operated facilities.

TPP-7: King County may explore the possibility of constructing one or more satellite treatment plants in order to produce reclaimed water. The county may build these plants in cooperation with a local community and provide the community with reclaimed water through a regional water supply agency. In order to ensure integrated water resource planning, in the interim period prior to the development of a regional water supply plan, King County shall consult and coordinate with regional water suppliers to ensure that water reuse decisions are consistent with regional water supply plans. To ensure costs and benefits are shared equally throughout the region, all reclaimed water used in the community shall be distributed through a municipal water supply or regional water supply agency consistent with a regional water supply plan.

TPP-8: King County shall continue water reuse and explore opportunities for expanded use at existing plants, and shall explore water reuse opportunities at all new treatment facilities. (Ord. 15602 § 1, 2006: Ord. 15384 § 1, 2006: Ord. 14712 § 2, 2003: Ord. 13680 § 5, 1999).

***Reviser's note: Language was added in Ordinance 15602 but not underlined as required by K.C.C. 1.24.075.**

****Available in the King County Archives.**

28.86.060 Conveyance policies (CP).

A. Explanatory material. The conveyance policies are intended to guide how major improvements to the wastewater conveyance system, including building and upgrading the pipes and pump stations needed to convey wastewater to the Brightwater treatment plant and building the outfall pipe from the Brightwater treatment plant, will be accomplished. The policies also include guidance for other major and minor conveyance improvements to accommodate increased flows in other parts of the service area and to prevent improper discharges from the sanitary system.

B. Policies.

CP-1: To protect public health and water quality, King County shall plan, design and construct county wastewater facilities to avoid sanitary sewer overflows.

1. The twenty-year peak flow storm shall be used as the design standard for the county's separated wastewater system.

2. Parameters developed by the wastewater treatment division in consultation with the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee shall be used to guide project scheduling and prioritization for separated wastewater system projects.

3. The south treatment plant effluent transfer system shall be designed with a five-year design storm standard. When effluent volumes exceed the five-year design standard and exceed the capacity of the south treatment plant effluent transfer system, secondary treated effluent from the south treatment plant will be discharged to the Green/Duwamish river until the flow subsides such that the flow can be discharged through the south treatment plant effluent transfer system.

CP-2: King County shall construct the necessary wastewater conveyance facilities, including, but not limited to pipelines, pumps and regulators, to convey wastewater from component agencies to the treatment plants for treatment and to convey treated effluent to water bodies for discharge. Conveyance facilities shall be constructed during the planning period of this plan to ensure that all treatment plants can ultimately operate at their rated capacities. No parallel eastside interceptor shall be constructed. No parallel Kenmore Interceptor shall be constructed.

CP-3: King County shall periodically evaluate population and employment growth assumptions and development pattern assumptions used to size conveyance facilities to allow for flexibility to convey future flows that may differ from previous estimates. The following activities shall take place to confirm assumptions and conveyance improvement needs:

1. Field verification of wastewater flows and conveyance component conditions prior to implementation of regional conveyance capital projects that are intended to expand capacity of the system; and

2. Decennial flow monitoring to correspond with the Federal Census conducted every ten years.

CP-4: The executive shall update the conveyance system improvement program every five years beginning in 2013 to ensure the program remains current. The program updates shall provide information on growth patterns, rate of growth and flow projections and report on how this information affects previously identified conveyance needs. The program updates shall also provide information on changed or new conveyance needs identified since the previous update.

CP-5: King County shall apply uniform criteria throughout its service area for the financing, development, ownership, operation, maintenance, repair and replacement of all conveyance facilities. The criteria shall include:

1. County ownership and operation of permanent conveyance facilities that serve natural drainage areas of greater than one thousand acres;
2. Conformance to the county's comprehensive water pollution abatement plan and the Regional Wastewater Service Plan as precondition of county ownership; and
3. A financial feasibility threshold governing limitations of the county's financial contribution to: development of a new interceptor or trunk sewer; or acquisition of an interceptor or trunk sewer constructed by a local agency. The threshold, as specified in K.C.C. 28.84.080, shall consider the capital costs that can be supported by the existing customers in the natural drainage area that would be served by the new facility.

CP-6: King County shall closely integrate water reuse planning and I/I study results with planning for wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities. King County shall consider water conservation and demand management assumptions developed by local utilities for wastewater facility planning.

CP-7: King County shall evaluate other demand management alternative to meet identified conveyance needs, such as infiltration and inflow (I/I) reduction, water conservation, and reclaimed water facilities. Factors such as operational, environmental and financial impacts, costs and benefits, and the net present value of alternatives shall be included in the evaluation of all feasible alternatives identified by the county. (Ord. 16033 § 1, 2008: Ord. 15602 § 2, 2006: Ord. 13680 § 6, 1999).

28.86.070 I/I policies (I/IP).

A. Explanatory material. The I/I policies are intended to guide the county in working cooperatively with component agencies to reduce the amount of I/I that flows into component agencies' local collection systems, thereby reducing the impact of I/I on the regional system's capacity. This cooperative process will assess levels of I/I in local conveyance systems and construct pilot projects and will evaluate the cost-effectiveness and environmental costs and benefits of local collection system rehabilitation. The executive will develop and recommend long-term measures to reduce existing and future levels of I/I into local collection systems. Incentives for component agencies to meet the adopted target for I/I reduction may include a surcharge.

B. Policies.

I/IP-1: King County is committed to controlling I/I within its regional conveyance system and shall rehabilitate portions of its regional conveyance system to reduce I/I whenever the cost of rehabilitation is less than the costs of conveying and treating that flow or when rehabilitation provides significant environmental benefits to water quantity, water quality, stream flows, wetlands or habitat for species listed under the ESA.

I/IP-2: King County shall work cooperatively with component agencies to reduce I/I in local conveyance systems utilizing and evaluating I/I pilot rehabilitation projects, and developing draft local conveyance systems' design guidelines, procedures and policies, including inspection and enforcement standards. Evaluations of the pilot rehabilitation project and a regional needs assessment of the conveyance system and assessments of I/I levels in each of the local sewer systems will form the basis for identifying and reporting on the options and the associated cost of removing I/I and preventing future

increases. The executive shall submit to the council a report on the options, capital costs and environmental costs and benefits including but not limited to those related to water quality, groundwater inception, stream flows and wetlands, and habitat of species listed under the ESA. No later than December 31, 2005, utilizing the prior assessments and reports the executive shall recommend target levels for I/I reduction in local collection systems and propose long-term measures to meet the targets. These measures shall include, but not be limited to, establishing new local conveyance systems design standards, implementing an enforcement program, developing an incentive based cost sharing program and establishing a surcharge program. The overall goal for peak I/I reduction in the service area should be thirty percent from the peak twenty-year level identified in the report. The county shall pay one hundred percent of the cost of the assessments and pilot projects.

I/IP-3: King County shall consider an I/I surcharge, no later than June 30, 2006, on component agencies that do not meet the adopted target levels for I/I reduction in local collection systems. The I/I surcharge should be specifically designed to ensure the component agencies' compliance with the adopted target levels. King County shall pursue changes to component agency contracts if necessary or implement other strategies in order to levy an I/I surcharge. (Ord. Co § 3, 2006: Ord. 13680 § 7, 1999).

28.86.080 Combined sewer overflow control policies (CSOCP).

A. Explanatory material. The CSO control policies are intended to guide the county in controlling CSO discharges. Highest priority for controlling CSO discharges is directed at those that pose the greatest risk to human health and environmental health. The county will continue to work with federal, state and local jurisdictions on regulations, permits and programs related to CSOs and stormwater. The county will also continue its development of CSO programs and projects based on assessments of water quality and contaminated sediments.

B. Policies.

CSOCP-1: King County shall plan to control its CSO discharges by the end of 2030 to meet:

1. The state's CSO control standard of an average of one untreated discharge per CSO outfall per year based on a twenty-year moving average, and
2. Conditions of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements;
3. conditions of the Environmental Protection Agency/Washington state Department of Ecology Consent Decree.

CSOCP-2: King County shall continue to work with state and federal agencies to develop cost-effective regulations that protect water quality. King County shall meet the requirements of state and federal regulations and agreements.

CSOCP-3: Consistent with the Environmental Protection Agency/Washington state Department of Ecology Consent Decree and the county's long-term CSO control plan as approved through Ordinance 17413, King County shall give the highest priority for control of CSO discharges that have the highest potential to impact:

1. Human health through contact with CSO flows or fish consumption; or
2. Environmental health, such as in areas where sediment remediation is under way or anticipated or where there is potential to impact species listed under ESA.

CSOCP-4: Consistent with its legal authority, if King County constructs new projects that would separate stormwater from its combined system that result in separated stormwater discharges to waterways, the county shall coordinate with the city of Seattle in the city's municipal stormwater National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit (MS4) process as appropriate.

CSOCP-5: King County's wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities shall not be designed to intercept, collect and treat new sources of stormwater. However, King County may evaluate benefits and impacts to the county system from accepting stormwater from the city of Seattle that is not currently in the combined system and shall consider factors including, but not limited to existing capacity, benefits and costs to ratepayers and the regional system, operational impacts, payment to county for value of the use of available capacity and for the costs of conveyance and treatment of new sources of stormwater and compliance with state and federal regulations and commitments.

CSOCP-6: In accordance with King County's industrial waste rules and regulations, including K.C.C. 28.84.050.K.1 and 28.84.060, the county shall accept contaminated stormwater runoff from industrial sources and shall establish a fee to capture the cost of transporting and treating this stormwater. Specific authorization for such discharge is required.

CSOCP-7: King County shall consider implementing green stormwater infrastructure projects to control CSOs when results of technical, engineering, and benefit/cost analyses and modeling demonstrate it is a viable and cost-effective CSO control method.

CSOCP-8: King County shall consider implementing joint CSO control projects with the city of Seattle when it is cost-effective, is within county legal authorities and can be accomplished within the schedule outlined in the Environmental Protection Agency/Washington state Department of Ecology Consent Decree and the county's approved long-term CSO control plan.

CSOCP-9: King County shall implement its long-range sediment management strategy to address its portion of responsibility for contaminated sediment locations associated with county CSOs and other facilities and properties. Where applicable, the county shall implement and cost share sediment remediation activities in partnership with other public and private parties, including the county's current agreement with the Lower Duwamish Waterway Group, the Department of Ecology and the Environmental Protection Agency, under the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

CSOCP-10: Consistent with the Environmental Protection Agency/Washington state Department of Ecology Consent Decree, King County shall assess CSO control projects, priorities and opportunities using the most current studies and information available, for each CSO Control Plan Amendment as required by the Department of Ecology in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit renewal process.

CSOCP-11: Before completion of an National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System required CSO Control Plan Amendment, the executive shall submit a CSO program review report to the council and RWQC. The purpose of the review is to evaluate, at a minimum, changes to regulations, new technologies, existing CSO control performance, and human and environmental health priorities that may affect implementation of the CSO Control Plan. Based on its consideration of the CSO program review, RWQC may make recommendations to the council for modifying or amending the CSO program, including

changing the sequencing of CSO projects. Any future updates or amendments to the county's long-term CSO control plan are subject to Environmental Protection Agency and Washington state Department of Ecology approvals.

CSCOP-12: King County shall implement its CSO control projects in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency/Washington state Department of Ecology Consent Decree and the schedule outlined in the county's approved long-term CSO control plan.

CSOCP-13: King County shall prepare a water quality assessment and monitoring study, consistent with the guidance provided in Ordinance 17413 and other applicable legal requirements, to inform the next combined sewer overflow control program review in 2018. (Ord. 17587 § 1, 2013; Ord. 15602 § 4, 2006; Ord. 13680 § 8, 1999).

28.86.090 Biosolids policies (BP).

A. Explanatory material. The biosolids policies are intended to guide the county to continue to produce and market class B biosolids. The county will also continue to evaluate alternative technologies so as to produce the highest quality marketable biosolids. This would include technologies that produce class A biosolids.

B. Policies.

BP-1: King County shall strive to achieve beneficial use of wastewater solids. A beneficial use can be any use that proves to be environmentally safe, economically sound and utilizes the advantageous qualities of the material.

BP-2: Biosolids-derived products should be used as a soil amendment in landscaping projects funded by King County.

BP-3: King County shall consider new and innovative technologies for wastewater solids processing, energy recovery, and beneficial uses brought forward by public or private interests. King County shall seek to advance the beneficial use of wastewater solids, effluent, and methane gas through research and demonstration projects.

BP-4: King County shall seek to maximize program reliability and minimize risk by one or more of the following:

1. maintaining reserve capacity to manage approximately one hundred fifty percent of projected volume of biosolids;
2. considering diverse technologies, end products, and beneficial uses; or
3. pursuing contractual protections including interlocal agreements, where appropriate.

BP-5: King County shall produce and use biosolids in accordance with federal, state and local regulations.

BP-6: King County shall strive to produce the highest quality biosolids economically and practically achievable and shall continue efforts to reduce trace metals in biosolids consistent with 40 C.F.R. Part 503 pollutant concentration levels (exceptional quality) for individual metals. The county shall continue to provide class B biosolids and also to explore technologies that may enable the county to generate class A biosolids cost-effectively or because they have better marketability. Future decisions about technology, transportation and distribution shall be based on marketability of biosolids products.

BP-7: When biosolids derived products are distributed outside the wastewater service area, the county shall require that local sponsors using the products secure any permits required by the local government body.

BP-8: King County shall work cooperatively with statewide organizations on biosolids issues.

BP-9: King County shall seek to minimize the noise and odor impact associated with processing, transporting and applying of biosolids, consistent with constraints of economic and environmental considerations and giving due regard to neighboring communities.

BP-10: Where cost-effective, King County shall beneficially use methane produced at the treatment plants for energy and other purposes. (Ord. 13680 § 9, 1999).

28.86.100 Water reuse policies (WRP).

A. Explanatory material. The water reuse policies are intended to guide the county in continuing to develop its program to produce reclaimed water. The county will coordinate its program with regional water supply plans and work with state agencies and local jurisdictions on opportunities for water reuse. The county will implement pilot and demonstration projects. Additional projects shall be implemented subject to economic and financial feasibility assessments, including assessing environmental benefits and costs.

The water reuse policies, as in the treatment plant policies, intend that the county continue producing reclaimed water at its treatment plants. The treatment plant policies also address the potential construction of one or more satellite plants. These small plants would provide reclaimed water, with the solids being transferred to the regional plants for processing.

B. Policies.

WRP-1: King County shall actively pursue the use of reclaimed water while protecting the public health and safety and the environment. The county shall facilitate the development of a water reuse program to help meet the goals of the county to preserve water supplies within the region and to ensure that any reclaimed water reintroduced into the environment will protect the water quality of the receiving water body and the aquatic environment.

WRP-2: By December 2007, the King County executive shall prepare for review by council a reclaimed water feasibility study as part of a regional water supply plan which will include a comprehensive financial business plan including tasks and schedule for the development of a water reuse program and a process to coordinate with affected tribal and local governments, the state and area citizens. The reclaimed water feasibility study shall be reviewed by the RWQC. At a minimum the feasibility study shall comply with chapter 90.46 RCW and include:

1. Review of new technologies for feasibility and cost effectiveness, that may be applicable for future wastewater planning;
2. Review of revenue sources other than the wastewater rate for distribution of reused water;
3. Detailed review and an update of a regional market analysis for reused water;
4. Review of possible environmental benefits of reused water; and
5. Review of regional benefits of reused water.

WRP-3: Recycling and reusing reclaimed water shall be investigated as a possible future significant new source of water to enhance or maintain fish runs, supply additional water for the region's nonpotable uses, preserve environmental and aesthetic values and defer the need to develop new potable water supply projects.

WRP-4: King County's water reuse program and projects shall be coordinated with the regional water supply plans and regional basin plans, in accordance with state and federal standards. The coordination shall be done with the affected water supply purveyors. Water reuse must be coordinated with water supply/resource purveyors to ensure that resources are developed in a manner complementary with each other to allow the most effective management of resources in the county.

WRP-5: King County shall implement nonpotable projects on a case-by-case basis. To evaluate nonpotable projects, King County shall develop criteria which will include, but are not limited to: capital, operation and maintenance costs; cost recovery; potential and proposed uses; rate and capacity charge impacts; environmental benefits; fisheries habitat maintenance and enhancement potential; community and social benefits and impacts; public education opportunities; risk and liability; demonstration of new technologies; and enhancing economic development. A detailed financial analysis of the overall costs and benefits of a water reuse project shall include cost estimates for the capital and operations associated with a project, the anticipated or existing contracts for purchases of reused water, including agricultural and other potential uses, anticipated costs for potable water when the project becomes operational; and estimates regarding recovery of capital costs from new reused water customers versus costs to be assumed by existing ratepayers and new customers paying the capacity charge. Water reuse projects that require major capital funding shall be reviewed by RWQC and approved by the council.

WRP-6: King County shall work with local water purveyors, including when the local purveyors update their water comprehensive plans, to evaluate the opportunities for water reuse within their local service area.

WRP-7: King County shall develop an active water reuse public education and involvement program to correspond with the development of the water reuse program and be coordinated with other water conservation education programs.

WRP-8: King County shall utilize a forum or multiple forums to provide opportunities for coordination and communication with the Washington state Departments of Health and Ecology, which have the principal state regulatory roles in the planning, design and construction of reuse facilities. The county shall involve other parties on these forums, including but not limited to, the Corps of Engineers, Washington state Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, regional water suppliers, tribal governments, local water and wastewater districts, cities, local health departments, watershed forums and environmental and community groups.

WRP-9: King County shall work, on a case-by-case basis, with the Washington state Departments of Health and Ecology on water reuse projects including, but not limited to, those that are not specifically cited in the 1997 Department of Health and Ecology Water Reclamation and Reuse Standards.

WRP-10: King County shall hold and maintain the exclusive right to any reclaimed water generated by the wastewater treatment plants of King County.

WRP-11: King County's water reuse program projects shall not impair any existing water rights unless compensation or mitigation for such impairment is agreed to by the holder of the affected water rights.

WRP-12: King County shall retain the flexibility to produce and distribute reclaimed water at all treatment plants including retaining options to add additional levels of treatment.

WRP-13: King County shall continue to evaluate potential funding of pilot-scale and water reuse projects, in whole or in part, from the wastewater utility rate base.

WRP-14: King County shall complete an economic and financial feasibility assessment, including environmental benefits, of its water reuse program. The assessment shall include the analysis of marginal costs including stranded costs and benefits to estimate equitable cost splits between participating governmental agencies and utilities. The assessment shall also include a review of existing and planned water and wastewater facilities in an approved plan to ensure that water reuse facilities are justified when any resulting redundant capacity as well as other factors are taken into account.

WRP-15: King County should pursue development of a water reuse program to discharge reclaimed water to reduce freshwater consumption used in the operation of the Ballard Locks when environmental benefits and financial conditions merit this investment and new program. (Ord. 15602 § 5, 2006; Ord. 13680 § 10, 1999).

28.86.110 Wastewater services policies (WWSP).

A. Explanatory material. The wastewater services policies guide the county in both providing wastewater services to its customers and maintaining the wastewater system in a cost-effective, environmentally responsible manner. These policies shall also guide King County's development and operation of community treatment systems.

King County provides wholesale wastewater treatment and disposal service to component agencies. The county's wastewater service area boundary generally coincides with the boundaries of these component agencies, including certain areas in Snohomish county and Pierce county. The county is to provide wastewater services to areas within the respective urban growth boundaries and in rural areas only to protect public health and safety, in conformance with state provisions and local growth management act policies and regulations.

B. Policies.

WWSP-1: King County shall provide wastewater services to fulfill the contractual commitments to its component agency customers in a manner that promotes environmental stewardship, recognizes the value of wastewater in the regional water resource system and reflects a wise use of public funds.

WWSP-2: King County shall continue to foster tribal relations as appropriate to structure processes for joint water quality stewardship.

WWSP-3: King County shall not accept additional wastewater directly from private facilities within the boundaries of a component agency without the prior written consent of such component agency.

WWSP-4: King County's wastewater service area generally has been developed along those boundaries adopted in the original metropolitan Seattle sewerage and drainage survey, substantive portions of which were adopted as the county's comprehensive water pollution abatement plan and amended. King County's wastewater service area consists of the service areas of the component agencies with which a sewage disposal agreement has been established (agreement for sewage disposal, section 2) and the county's service area boundary is the perimeter of these areas. The service area boundary for sewer service provided to Snohomish county and Pierce county shall not exceed each county's urban growth boundary. The service area boundary within

King County shall be consistent with countywide planning policy CO-14 and the King County Comprehensive Plan which permit sewer expansion in rural areas and resource lands where needed to address specific health and safety problems. To protect public health and safety, the county may assume in accordance with state procedures, the ownership of existing sewer treatment and conveyance facilities that have been constructed by a sewer district organized under state law.

WWSP-5: Extensions of existing conveyance facilities or construction of new conveyance facilities must be consistent with King County's land use plans and policies, and certified by potentially affected land use jurisdictions as consistent with their adopted land use plans and policies.

WWSP-6: King County shall operate and maintain its facilities to protect public health and the environment, comply with regulations and improve services in a fiscally responsible manner.

WWSP-7: King County shall plan, design and construct wastewater facilities in accordance with standards established by regulatory agencies and manuals of practice for engineering.

WWSP-8: King County shall construct, operate and maintain facilities to prevent raw sewage overflows and to contain overflows in the combined collection system. In the event of a raw sewage overflow, the county shall initiate a rapid and coordinated response including notification of public health agencies, the media, the public and the affected jurisdiction. Preserving public health and water quality shall be the highest priority, to be implemented by immediately initiating repairs or constructing temporary diversion systems that return flow back to the wastewater system.

WWSP-9: To ensure the region's multibillion-dollar investment in wastewater facilities, an asset management program shall be established that provides for appropriate ongoing maintenance and repair of equipment and facilities. The wastewater maintenance budget, staffing levels and priorities shall be developed to reflect the long-term useful life of wastewater facilities as identified by the asset management program.

WWSP-10: The asset management program shall establish a wastewater facilities assets management plan, updated annually, establishing replacement of worn, inefficient and/or depreciated capital assets to ensure continued reliability of the wastewater infrastructure.

WWSP-11: King County shall design, construct, operate and maintain its facilities to meet or exceed regulatory requirements for air, water and solids emissions as well as to ensure worker, public and system safety.

WWSP-12: King County shall accept sewage, septage and biosolids from outside its service area provided that it is consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan or the comprehensive plan of the source jurisdiction, capacity is available and no operating difficulties are created. The county shall establish a rate to recover costs from accepting sewage, septage and biosolids from outside its service area.

WWSP-13: King County shall identify the potential for "liability protection" for component agencies for unexpected costs associated with water quality requirements.

WWSP-14: King County shall continue its long-standing commitment to research and development funding relating to water quality and technologies for the wastewater system.

WWSP-15: King County will consider development and operation of community treatment systems under the following circumstances:

1. The systems are necessary to alleviate existing documented public health hazards or water quality impairment;
2. Connections to public sewers tributary to conventional wastewater treatment facilities are not technically or economically feasible;
3. Installation of on-site septic systems is not technically feasible;
4. Properties to be served by said systems are within the jurisdiction and service area of a local government authority authorized to provide sewer service;
5. The local sewer service provider agrees to own and operate the collection system tributary to the community treatment system;
6. Development of the community systems and provision of sewer service are consistent with all applicable utility and land use plans; and
7. Public sewer extensions shall be in compliance with King County Comprehensive Plan Policy F-313 as in effect on March 11, 1999. (Ord. 15602 § 6, 2006; Ord. 13680 § 11, 1999).

28.86.120 Water quality protection policies (WQPP).

A. Explanatory materials. The water quality protection policies are intended to guide King County in identifying and resolving regional water quality issues, protecting public and environmental health and protecting the public's investment in wastewater facilities and water resource management. Research and analysis are required and will be used to evaluate water quality in county streams and other bodies of water within the service district.

B. Policies.

WQPP-1: King County shall participate in identifying and resolving water quality issues pertaining to public health and ecosystem protection in the region to ensure that the public's investment in wastewater facilities and water resource management programs is protected.

WQPP-2: King County shall evaluate the impacts and benefits of actions that affect the quality of the region's waters and identify measures to meet and maintain water quality standards.

WQPP-3: King County shall forecast future aquatic resource conditions that may affect wastewater treatment decisions and work cooperatively to identify cost-effective alternatives to mitigate water quality problems and enhance regional water quality.

WQPP-4: King County shall participate with its regional partners to identify methods, plans and programs to enhance water quality and water resources in the region.

WQPP-5: The King County executive shall implement a comprehensive water quality monitoring program of streams and water bodies that are or could be impacted by influent, effluent, sanitary system overflows or CSOs. The range of data to be gathered should be based on water pollutants and elements that scientific literature identifies as variables of concern, what is needed to substantiate the benefits of abating combined sewer overflows and what is required by state and federal agencies. The executive shall submit summary reports and comprehensive reviews of this information to the King County council as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165.

WQPP-6: King County shall implement and maintain water quality, monitoring, evaluating and reporting programs to support the national pollutant discharge elimination system for wastewater and other permit applications, and ensure permit compliance.

WQPP-7: King County shall actively participate in the development of water quality laws, standards and program development to ensure cost-effective maintenance or enhancement of environmental and public health.

WQPP-8: King County shall assess the risk to human health and the environment from wastewater treatment and conveyance activities, and use this information in evaluating water pollution abatement control options. (Ord. 15384 § 2, 2006: Ord. 13680 § 12, 1999).

28.86.130 Wastewater planning policies (WWPP)

A. Explanatory material. The wastewater planning policies are intended to guide the county in its long-term comprehensive planning for design and construction of facilities that meet the wastewater needs of customers within the service area.

Recognizing that the RWSP is a complex and dynamic comprehensive development guide that will regularly need to be updated, the county will conduct annual reviews of plan implementation and its consistency with policies, and of scientific, economic and technical information as well as periodic comprehensive reviews of the assumptions on which the RWSP is based.

These policies also express the intent of the council to request that the RWQC continue review of the conditions and assumptions that guide the implementation of the RWSP.

B. Policies.

WWPP-1: King County shall plan comprehensively to provide for the design and construction of facilities that meet the wastewater system needs of the service area and shall coordinate with other local jurisdictions to ensure that construction-related disruption to neighborhoods is minimized.

WWPP-2: In planning future wastewater systems, King County shall make a long-term assessment of wastewater system needs.

WWPP-3: In planning for facilities, King County shall work collaboratively with other jurisdictions and look for opportunities to achieve cost savings.

WWPP-4: Facility sizing shall take into account the need to accommodate build-out population.

WWPP-5: RWSP review processes. King County shall monitor the implementation of the RWSP and conduct reviews of the RWSP as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165. (Ord. 15384 § 3, 2006: Ord. 13680 § 13, 1999).

28.86.140 Environmental mitigation policies (EMP).

A. Explanatory material. The environmental mitigation policies are intended to guide King County in working with communities to develop mitigation measures for environmental impacts from the construction and operation of wastewater facilities. These policies also ensure that the siting and mitigation processes for wastewater facilities are consistent with the Growth Management Act and the state Environmental Policy Act.

B. Policies.

EMP-1: King County shall work with affected communities to develop mitigation measures for environmental impacts created by the construction, operation, maintenance, expansion or replacement of regional wastewater facilities. These mitigation measures shall:

1. Address the adverse environmental impacts caused by the project;
2. Address the adverse environmental impacts identified in the county's environmental documents; and
3. Be reasonable in terms of cost and magnitude as measured against severity and duration of impact.

EMP-2: Mitigation measures identified through the state Environmental Policy Act process shall be incorporated into design plans and construction contracts to ensure full compliance.

EMP-3: The siting process and mitigation for new facilities shall be consistent with the Growth Management Act and the state Environmental Policy Act, as well as the lawful requirements and conditions established by the jurisdictions governing the permitting process.

EMP-4: King County shall mitigate the long-term and short-term impacts for wastewater facilities in the communities in which they are located. The county's goal will be to construct regional wastewater facilities that enhance the quality of life in the region and in the local community, and are not detrimental to the quality of life in their vicinity.

EMP-5: King County shall enter into a negotiated mitigation agreement with any community that is adversely impacted by the expansion or addition of major regional wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities. Such agreements shall be executed in conjunction with the project permit review. Mitigation shall be designed and implemented in coordination with the local community, and shall be at least ten percent of the costs associated with the new facilities. For the south treatment plant and for the new north treatment plant, a target for mitigation shall be at least ten percent of individual project costs, or a cumulative total of ten million dollars for each plant, whichever is greater, provided that mitigation funded through wastewater revenues is consistent with: chapter 35.58 RCW; Section 230.10.10 of the King County Charter; agreements for sewage disposal entered into between King County and component agencies; and other applicable county ordinance and state law restrictions. (Ord. 13680 § 14, 1999).

28.86.150 Public involvement policies (PIP).

A. Explanatory material. The public involvement policies are intended to guide the county in maintaining public information and education programs and to engage the public and component agencies in planning, designing and operating decisions that affect them.

B. Policies.

PIP-1: King County shall maintain public information/education programs and engage the public and component agencies of local sewer service in the planning, designing and operating decisions affecting them.

PIP-2: King County shall develop public information and education programs to support county wastewater programs and shall lay the groundwork for public understanding of and involvement in specific programs.

PIP-3: King County shall involve public officials and citizens of affected jurisdictions early and actively in the planning and decision-making process for capital projects.

PIP-4: King County shall inform affected residents and businesses in advance of capital construction projects.

PIP-5: King County shall disseminate information and provide education to the general public, private sector and governmental agencies regarding the status, needs and potential future of the region's water resources.

PIP-6: King County shall actively solicit and incorporate public opinions throughout the implementation of its comprehensive plan.

PIP-7: Beginning January 1, 2001, King County shall implement a public awareness and education program regarding the environmental impacts and costs to wastewater rate payers of I/I in the local and regional conveyance systems.

PIP-8: King County shall support regional water supply agencies and water purveyors in their public education campaign on the need and ways to conserve water. King County should promote pilot projects that support homeowner water conservation in coordination with water suppliers and purveyors, emphasizing strategies and technologies that reduce wastewater. (Ord. 13680 § 15, 1999).

28.86.160 Financial policies (FP).

A. Under the King County Charter and RCW 35.58.200, these financial policies are hereby adopted and declared to be the principal financial policies of the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan for King County, adopted by the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (Metro) in Resolution No. 23, as amended, and the RWSP, a supplement to the plan.

B. Explanatory material.

1. Financial forecast and budget. Policies FP-1 through FP-10 are intended to guide the county in the areas of prudent financial forecasting and budget planning and are included to ensure the financial security and bonding capacity for the wastewater system. This set of policies also addresses the county's legal and contractual commitments regarding the use of sewer revenues to pay for sewer expenses.

2. Debt financing and borrowing. Policies FP-11* through FP-14* are intended to guide the county in financing the wastewater system capital program. These policies direct that capital costs be spread over time to keep rates more stable for ratepayers by the county issuing bonds. A smaller share of annual capital costs will be funded directly from sewer rates and sewer revenues and capacity charges.

3. Collecting revenue. Policies FP-15* through FP-17* are intended to guide King County in establishing annual sewer rates and approving wastewater system capital improvement and operating budgets. Monthly sewer rates, which are the primary source of revenue for the county's regional wastewater system, are to be uniformly assessed on all customers. Customers with new connections to the wastewater system will pay an additional capacity charge. The amount of that charge is set by the council, within the constraints of state law.

4. Community treatment systems. Policy FP-18* is intended to guide the county in the financial management of community treatment systems.

C. Policies.

1. Financial forecast and budget.

FP-1: The county shall maintain for the wastewater system a multiyear financial forecast and cash-flow projection of six years or more, estimating service growth,

operating expenses, capital needs, reserves and debt service. The financial forecast shall be submitted by the executive with the annual sewer rate ordinance.

FP-2: If the operations component of the proposed annual wastewater system budget increases by more than the reasonable cost of the addition of new facilities, increased flows, new programs authorized by the council, and inflation, or if revenues decline below the financial forecast estimate, a feasible alternative spending plan shall be presented, at the next quarterly budget report, to the council by the executive identifying steps to reduce cost increases.

FP-3: The executive shall maintain an ongoing program of reviewing business practices and potential cost-effective technologies and strategies for savings and efficiencies; the results shall be reported in the annual budget submittal and in an annual report to the RWQC.

FP-4: New technologies or changes in practice that differ significantly from existing technologies or practices shall be reported to the council and RWQC with projected costs prior to implementation and shall also be summarized in the RWSP annual report.

FP-5: Significant new capital and operational initiatives proposed by the Executive that are not within the scope of the current RWSP nor included in the RWSP, or are required by new state or federal regulations will be reviewed by the RWQC and approved by the council to ensure due diligence review of potential impacts to major capital projects' schedules, including Brightwater, the bond rating or the sewer rate and capacity charge.

FP-6: The county shall maintain for the wastewater system a prudent minimum cash balance for reserves, including, but not limited to, cash flow and potential future liabilities. The cash balance shall be approved by the council in the annual sewer rate ordinance.

FP-7: Unless otherwise directed by the council by motion, the King County department of natural resources and parks or its successor agency shall charge a fee that recovers all direct and indirect costs for any services related to the wastewater system provided to other public or private organizations.

FP-8: Water quality improvement activities, programs and projects, in addition to those that are functions of sewage treatment, may be eligible for funding assistance from sewer rate revenues after consideration of criteria and limitations suggested by the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee, and, if deemed eligible, shall be limited to one and one half percent of the annual wastewater system operating budget. An annual report on activities, programs and projects funded will be made to the RWQC. Alternative methods of providing a similar level of funding assistance for water quality improvement activities shall be transmitted to the RWQC and the council within seven months of policy adoption.

FP-9: The calculation of general government overhead to be charged to the wastewater system shall be based on a methodology that provides for the equitable distribution of overhead costs throughout county government. Estimated overhead charges shall be calculated in a fair and consistent manner, utilizing a methodology that best matches the estimated cost of the services provided to the actual overhead charge. The overall allocation formula and any subsequent modifications will be reported to the RWQC.

FP-10: The assets of the wastewater system are pledged to be used for the exclusive benefit of the wastewater system including operating expenses, debt service

payments, asset assignment and the capital program associated therewith. The system shall be fully reimbursed for the value associated with any use or transfer of such assets for other county government purposes. The executive shall provide reports to the RWQC pertaining to any significant transfers of assets for other county government purposes in advance of and subsequent to any such transfers.

2. Debt financing and borrowing.

FP-11: The county shall structure bond covenants to ensure a prudent budget standard.

FP-12: King County should structure the term of its borrowings to match the expected useful life of the assets to be funded.

FP-13: The wastewater system's capital program shall be financed predominantly by annual staged issues of long-term general obligation or sewer revenue bonds, provided that:

All available sources of grants are utilized to offset targeted program costs;

Funds available after operations and reserves are provided for shall be used for the capital program; excess funds accumulated in reserves may also be used for capital;

Consideration is given to competing demands for use of the county's overall general obligation debt capacity; and

Consideration is given to the overall level of debt financing that can be sustained over the long term given the size of the future capital programs, potential impacts on credit ratings, and other relevant factors such as intergenerational rate equity and the types of projects appropriately financed with long-term debt.

FP-14: To achieve a better maturity matching of assets and liabilities, thereby reducing interest rate risk, short-term borrowing shall be used to fund a portion of the capital program, provided that:

Outstanding short-term, variable rate debt comprises no more than twenty percent of total outstanding revenue bonds and general obligation bonds; and

Appropriate liquidity is available to protect the day-to-day operations of the system.

3. Rates - sewer rates and capacity charge.

FP-15: King County shall charge its customers sewer rates and capacity charges sufficient to cover the costs of constructing and operating its wastewater system. Revenues shall be sufficient to maintain capital assets in sound working condition, providing for maintenance and rehabilitation of facilities so that total system costs are minimized while continuing to provide reliable, high quality service and maintaining high water quality standards.

1. Existing and new sewer customers shall each contribute to the cost of the wastewater system as follows:

a. Existing customers shall pay through the monthly sewer rate for the portion of the existing and expanded conveyance and treatment system that serves existing customers.

b. New customers shall pay costs associated with the portion of the existing wastewater conveyance and treatment system that serves new customers and costs associated with expanding the system to serve new customers. New customers shall pay these costs through a combination of the monthly sewer rate and the capacity charge. Such rates and charges shall be designed to have growth pay for growth.

2. Sewer rate. King County shall maintain a uniform monthly sewer rate expressed as charges per residential customer equivalent for all customers.

a. Sewer rates shall be designed to generate revenue sufficient to cover, at a minimum, all costs of system operation and maintenance and all capital costs incurred to serve existing customers.

b. King County should attempt to adopt a multiyear sewer rate to provide stable costs to sewer customers. If a multiyear rate is established and when permitted upon the retirement by the county of certain outstanding sewer revenue bonds, a rate stabilization reserve account shall be created to ensure that adequate funds are available to sustain the rate through completion of the rate cycle. An annual report on the use of funds from this rate stabilization account shall be provided annually to the RWQC.

c. The executive, in consultation with the RWQC, shall propose for council adoption policies to ensure that adequate debt service coverage and emergency reserves are established and periodically reviewed.

3. Capacity charge. The amount of the capacity charge shall be a uniform charge applied to each residential customer class structure type based on an estimate of the average persons-per-household occupancy for each such a residential customer class structure type. The amount shall be approved annually and shall not exceed the cost of capital facilities necessary to serve new customers. The methodology that shall be applied to set the capacity charge is set forth in FP-15.3.a.

a. The capacity charge shall be based on allocating the total cost of the wastewater system (net of grants and other non rate revenues) to existing and new customers as prescribed in this subsection. The total system cost includes the costs to operate, maintain, and expand the wastewater system over the life of the RWSP. Total estimated revenues from the uniform monthly rate from all customers and capacity charge payments from new customers, together with estimated non rate revenues, shall equal the estimated total system costs. The capacity charge calculation is represented as follows:

$$\text{Capacity Charge} = \frac{[\text{Total system costs} - \text{rate revenue from existing customers}] - \text{Rate revenue from new customers}}{\text{Number of new customers}}$$

where:

(1) total system costs (net of grants and other non rate revenues) minus rate revenue from existing customers equals costs allocated to new customers.

(2) costs allocated to new customers minus rate revenue from new customers equals the total revenue to be recovered through the capacity charge.

(3) total capacity charge revenue requirements divided by the total number of new customers equals the amount of the capacity charge to be paid by each new customer.

b. The capacity charge may be paid by new customers in a single payment or as a monthly charge at the rate established by the council. The county shall establish a monthly capacity charge by dividing that amount by one hundred eighty (twelve monthly payments per year for fifteen years). The executive shall transmit for council adoption an ordinance to adjust the discount rate for lump sum payment. The executive shall also transmit for council adoption an ordinance to adjust the monthly capacity charge to reflect the county's average cost of money if the capacity charge is paid over time.

c. King County shall pursue changes in state law to enable the county to require payment of the capacity charge in a single payment.

d. The capacity charge shall be set such that each new customer shall pay an equal share of the costs of facilities allocated to new customers, regardless of what year the customer connects to the system. The capacity charge shall be based upon the costs, customer growth and related financial assumptions used for the Regional Wastewater Services Plan adopted by Ordinance 13680 as such assumptions may be updated. Customer growth and projected costs, including inflation, shall be updated every three years beginning in 2003. For only the update of customer growth and projected costs scheduled for 2021 and anticipated for transmittal to the council with the proposed sewer rate in 2022, the update shall be deferred until the next annual sewer and capacity charge rate proposal following council approval of the Clean Water Plan as an update to the RWSP or 2024, whichever occurs earlier.

e. The county should periodically review the capacity charge to ensure that the actual costs of system expansion to serve new customers are reflected in the charge. All reasonable steps should be taken to coordinate the imposition, collection of and accounting for rates and charges with component agencies to reduce redundant program overhead costs.

f. Existing customers shall pay the monthly capacity charge established at the time they connected to the system as currently enacted by K.C.C. 28.84.055. New customers shall pay the capacity charge established at the time they connect to the system.

g. To ensure that the capacity charge will not exceed the costs of facilities needed to serve new customers, costs assigned and allocated to new customers shall be at a minimum ninety five percent of the projected capital costs of new and existing treatment, conveyance and biosolids capacity needed to serve new customers.

h. Costs assigned and allocated to existing customers shall include the capital cost of existing and future treatment, conveyance and biosolids capacity used by existing customers, and the capital costs of assessing and reducing infiltration and inflow related to the use of the existing conveyance and treatment capacity.

i. Capital costs of combined sewer overflow control shall be paid by existing and new customers based on their average proportionate share of total customers over the life of the RWSP.

j. Operations and maintenance costs shall be paid by existing and new customers in the uniform monthly rate based on their annual proportionate share of total customers.

k. Any costs not allocated in FP-15.3. f., g., h., i. and j. shall be paid by existing and new customers in the sewer rate.

l. Upon implementation of these explicit policies, the Seattle combined sewer overflow benefit charge shall be discontinued.

4. Based on an analysis of residential water consumption, as of December 13, 1999, King County uses a factor of seven hundred fifty cubic feet per month to convert water consumption of volume-based customers to residential customer equivalents for billing purposes. King County shall periodically review the appropriateness of this factor to ensure that all accounts pay their fair share of the cost of the wastewater system.

FP-16: The executive shall prepare and submit to the council a report in support of the proposed monthly sewer rates for the next year, including the following information:

Key assumptions: key financial assumptions such as inflation, bond interest rates, investment income, size and timing of bond issues, and the considerations underlying the projection of future growth in residential customer equivalents;

Significant financial projections: all key projections, including the annual projection of operating and capital costs, debt service coverage, cash balances, revenue requirements, revenue projections and a discussion of significant factors that impact the degree of uncertainty associated with the projections;

Historical data: a discussion of the accuracy of the projections of costs and revenues from previous recent budgets, and

Policy options: calculations or analyses, or both, of the effect of certain policy options on the overall revenue requirement. These options should include alternative capital program accomplishment percentages (including a ninety percent, a ninety-five percent and a one hundred percent accomplishment rate), and the rate shall be selected that most accurately matches historical performance in accomplishing the capital program and that shall not negatively impair the bond rating.

FP-17: Expenditures from the wastewater revenues to correct water pollution problems caused by septic systems shall occur only if such expenditures financially benefit wastewater system current customers when the additional monthly sewer rate revenues from these added customers are considered.

FP-18: The cost of community treatment systems developed and operated in accordance with WWSP-15 would not be subsidized by the remaining ratepayers of the county's wastewater treatment system. (Ord. 19403 § 1, 2022: Ord. 19153 § 1, 2020: Ord. 17492 § 1, 2012: Ord. 15602 § 7, 2006: Ord. 14219 § 3, 2001: Ord. 14199 § 253, 2001: Ord. 13680 § 16, 1999).

28.86.165 Reporting policies. The executive shall review the implementation of the RWSP on a regular basis and submit the following reports to council and the RWQC:

A. Regional wastewater services plan annual report. The executive shall submit a written report to the council and RWQC in September each year until the facilities identified in the RWSP are operational. This report, covering the previous year's implementation, will provide the following:

1. A summary of activities for each major component of the RWSP, including treatment, conveyance, infiltration and inflow, combined sewer overflows, water reuse, biosolids and highlights of research and development projects underway and proposed for the coming year;

2. Details on each active RWSP project in the capital budget, including a project summary, project highlights, project issues, upcoming activities, schedules, an expenditures summary including staff labor and miscellaneous services, a description of adjustments to costs and schedule and a status of the projects contracts;

3. A status of the odor prevention program, including a listing and summary of odor complaints received and progress on implementing odor prevention policies and projects;

4. A summary of the previous year's results for the comprehensive water quality monitoring program;

5. A review of the plan elements, including water pollution abatement, water quality, water reclamation, Endangered Species Act compliance, biosolids management and variability of quality over time, wastewater public health problems, compliance with other agency regulations and agreements, to ensure it reflects current conditions; and

6. An update of anticipated RWSP program costs through the year 2030;

B.1. Comprehensive regional wastewater services plan review. The executive shall submit a written report to council and RWQC that provides a comprehensive review of the RWSP. The report will review the following:

a. assumptions on the rate and location of growth, the rate of septic conversions and the effectiveness of water conservation efforts;

b. phasing and size of facilities;

c. effectiveness of RWSP policies implementation, for infiltration and inflow reduction, water reuse, biosolids, CSO abatement, water quality protection, environmental mitigation and public involvement; and

d. policy guidance for the construction fund and the emergency capital reserves.

2. The next comprehensive regional wastewater services plan review is due in June 2014. Subsequent reports will be prepared every three to five years as established by the council and RWQC following their review of the current report. The specific due date will be based upon the availability of necessary information, the completion of key milestones, and the time needed to collect and analyze data. The executive may recommend policy changes based on the findings of the report and other information from changing regulations, new technologies or emerging or relevant factors.

3. The comprehensive regional wastewater services plan review will include all elements of the RWSP annual report, replacing it for that year; and

C. Operational master plan. The RWSP Operational Master Plan that was adopted by council in December 1999 shall be updated on a regular basis in conjunction with policy revisions to the RWSP. (Ord. 17480 § 1, 2012: Ord. 15384 § 6, 2006).

28.86.170 Capital improvement program. The capital improvement program required to implement the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan, as amended, including the RWSP, a supplement to the comprehensive water pollution abatement plan, as amended, shall be prepared pursuant to K.C.C. chapter 4A.100. (Ord. 17929 § 76, 2014: Ord. 13680 § 17, 1999).

28.86.180 Implementation.

A. The RWSP operational master plan that was adopted by council in December 1999, shall be updated on a regular basis following substantive adopted policy revisions to the RWSP, and shall meet the requirements of K.C.C. chapter 4A.100.

B. The operational master plan shall contain projects related to major program elements and shall further define as necessary the major projects, projected capacity, milestones, projected completion dates, and estimated costs.

1. Treatment capacity.

a. Population and employment growth is projected to require the wastewater system capacity to expand from two hundred forty-eight mgd to three hundred four mgd by 2030. The estimated cost and list of treatment facilities and improvements to achieve this expanded capacity by 2030, shall be included in future RWSP operational master plans, summarized in RWSP annual reports and comprehensive reviews as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165.

b. The Brightwater treatment plant at the Route 9 site shall be built with a capacity of thirty-six mgd by 2010 or as soon thereafter as possible to handle wastewater flows from a new north service area as defined in the plan. This plant would provide secondary treatment and would discharge treated effluent to Puget Sound. To facilitate the production of reclaimed water, the possibility of upgrading to tertiary treatment with a freshwater outfall should be investigated before subsequent expansions.

c. Expanding the treatment capacity at the south treatment plant from one hundred fifteen mgd to one hundred thirty-five mgd by 2029. This expansion would handle increased wastewater flows from the southern and eastern portions of the service area. Some or all of the plant capacity could also be upgraded to tertiary treatment, to meet water quality standards or facilitate water reuse, as part of future expansions or in additions to the secondary level of treatment using available land reserves at the plant site.

d. The west point treatment plant will be maintained at its capacity of one hundred thirty-three mgd, primarily to serve the city of Seattle and handle flows from the combined sewers in the area.

2. Conveyance facilities.

a. Conveyance facilities are to be configured, sized, and scheduled to support the treatment plants by conveying wastewater to and treated effluent from the plants. The estimated cost, schedule and list of conveyance facility improvements, shall be included in future RWSP operational master plans, summarized in RWSP annual reports and comprehensive reviews as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165.

b. King County will construct additional conveyance improvements (e.g., increasing conveyance and pump station capacity and extending conveyance) to accommodate increased flows in other parts of the service area to serve population growth in the smaller wastewater service basins and to prevent improper discharges from the sanitary system.

3. I/I control.

a. The I/I control program shall be implemented incrementally and be limited to projects that prove to be most cost effective. The estimated cost, schedule and list of I/I improvement projects, shall be included in future RWSP operational master plans, summarized in RWSP annual reports and comprehensive reviews as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165.

b. The goal of the I/I control program is to reduce the expense of conveyance system improvements over time. Every ten years, beginning in 2010, the wastewater treatment division will conduct system monitoring to update hydraulic models and measure the effectiveness of I/I control and reduction in the system.

4. CSOs.

a. The county shall implement CSO control projects consistent with the schedule outlined in the county's long-term CSO control plan as approved in Attachment A to

Ordinance 14713* and the Environmental Protection Agency/Washington state Department of Ecology Consent Decree.

b. Consistent with the Environmental Protection Agency/Washington state Department of Ecology Consent Decree, the county may request refinements to the CSO program, including changes to the sequencing of projects, in response to changing conditions, new information and new regulations.

5. Biosolids.

a. King County will continue to produce Class B biosolids using anaerobic digestion at the south and west treatment plants and to implement the same process at the Brightwater treatment plant until a new technology can be used reliably. The plan also proposes that the county continue to evaluate alternative technologies to reduce the water content of biosolids while preserving their marketability. The primary objective of this evaluation will be to identify alternatives to digesters at the west treatment plant, a condition of the West Point Settlement Agreement.

b. As part of ongoing planning for its treatment plants, King County will periodically evaluate conventional, alternative and new solids processing technologies using criteria such as product quality (class A or B), marketability, odor and other potential community impacts, impact on sewer rates, reliability of the treatment process, amount of land needed for the treatment facility and the number of truck trips needed to transport the biosolids produced. Based on the results of this evaluation and public comment, the executive should recommend one of three biosolids handling scenarios at any of all of the treatment plants:

- (1) continue using anaerobic digestion;
- (2) supplement anaerobic digestion with another treatment technology; or
- (3) replace anaerobic digestion with another treatment technology.

c. The estimated cost, schedule and list of biosolids improvement projects, shall be included in future RWSP operational master plans, summarized in RWSP annual reports and comprehensive reviews as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165.

d. The county should continue using a public-private partnership approach to recycling biosolids such as using biosolids on working forests in King County to enhance wildlife habitat and generate long-term income from selective timber harvests.

6. Water reuse.

a. The south and west treatment plants should continue to produce reclaimed water for non-potable uses and explore the production of reclaimed water at new facilities. King County will explore the production of reclaimed water at new facilities and work with water suppliers to plan and implement an accelerated water reuse program that could augment existing water supplies.

b. If a public education and involvement program on water reuse is to be developed and implemented, it shall be coordinated with water conservation education programs. The estimated cost, schedule and list of water reuse projects, shall be included in future RWSP operational master plans, summarized in RWSP annual reports and comprehensive reviews as outlined in K.C.C. 28.86.165.

7. Community treatment systems.

a. Any operations under these policies shall require an operational master plan as described in K.C.C. 4.04.200.C.1. Failure to submit such a plan shall cause the affected capital improvement project to be out of compliance with these policies.

b. In addition to the requirements of K.C.C. 4.04.200.C.1, an operational master plan submitted under these policies shall include:

(1) description of career retention programs that are to be structured in a manner consistent with the King County/metro merger, labor law and King County's labor contracts;

(2) an engineering evaluation that confirms that the selected projects are most cost effective and technically efficacious and consistent with King County growth management policies for the surrounding area; and

(3) explanation of how King County participation in community treatment systems is consistent with other water pollution abatement activities of the department of natural resources and parks, which currently operates centralized wastewater treatment facilities as contrasted with community treatment systems. (Ord. 17929 § 77, 2014: Ord. 17587 § 2, 2013: Ord. 15602 § 8, 2006: Ord. 14199 § 254, 2001: Ord. 13680 § 18, 1999.)

***Available in the King County Archives.**

28.86.200 Productivity initiative for the wastewater program.

A.1. The executive shall develop and implement a productivity initiative for the wastewater program that would include implementing business plans, meeting annual budget targets, creating an incentive fund, continuing to work collaboratively with labor, developing service agreements with county support agencies and modifying certain internal wastewater program administrative policies.

2. The goals of the productivity initiative are to:

- a. continue providing high quality wastewater treatment and conveyance services to the region;
- b. use private sector models to improve management of the wastewater program;
- c. improve cost efficiencies;
- d. provide savings to the public;
- e. define target budgets and accountability measures for meeting those targets;
- f. continue working collaboratively with labor; and
- g. allow employees to be creative in meeting the vision of becoming the best wastewater program.

B.1 The productivity incentive program, referred to in this subsection as "program," is hereby created as a component of the productivity initiative. The goals of the program are to: provide financial incentives to employees to achieve higher than projected savings to the wastewater treatment ratepayers; encourage teamwork; and encourage employee involvement in and ownership of the business.

2. Except as otherwise excluded in this subsection, represented and nonrepresented full-time and part-time regular and term-limited temporary employees in the wastewater program, which provides design/construction, maintenance and operations, planning, finance and administration, technology assessment, environmental laboratory, and industrial waste program services are eligible to participate in the program. However, the wastewater division manager and the wastewater division assistant manager are not eligible.

3. The executive shall establish a reserve subaccount known as the productivity incentive fund, in the wastewater treatment reserves fund. This reserve subaccount shall receive a pro rata share of interest earnings from the wastewater treatment reserves fund.

4. The productivity incentive fund oversight committee is hereby created and shall be responsible for oversight of the productivity incentive fund. The committee shall have the authority and responsibility to determine the distribution and use of the fund, subject to the approval of the wastewater treatment division manager. Membership in the productivity incentive fund oversight committee shall include:

- a. represented employees approximately proportional to each union's percentage of employees in the wastewater program;
- b. nonrepresented employees approximately proportional to their percentage of employees in the wastewater program;
- c. two wastewater program management representatives; and
- d. ex officio, nonvoting membership including, but not limited to, the office of the executive and the department of executive services, finance and business operations division.

5. It is the intent of the council that the productivity incentive fund be used to support a variety of incentives including, but not limited to:

- a. provision of additional training opportunities for employees;
- b. investments in productivity improvement projects;
- c. funding overexpenditures on asset management and operating projects;
- d. monetary payments or awards to employees; and
- e. employee awards and recognition.

C.1. The productivity initiative for the wastewater program also applies to the wastewater program's capital improvement program.

2.a. The objectives of extending the productivity initiative to the wastewater program's major capital improvement projects are to:

- (1) provide savings to ratepayers through the appropriate use of approved contracting methods and more efficient management of consultants and contractors;
- (2) refine and improve the accuracy of cost estimating for major capital improvement projects; and
- (3) test the efficacy of different approved contracting methods and contract incentives in reducing the overall cost and time needed to complete major capital improvement projects.

b. For a major capital improvement project, which, for the purposes of this section, means a capital improvement project with an estimated cost of one million dollars or more, to be eligible for the productivity initiative, the wastewater treatment division must use the following best practices:

- (1) determining the difference between the level of service of the current capital assets and the needed level of service for the new or upgraded asset. The wastewater treatment division shall identify how the project under consideration will achieve the planned or required results;
- (2) evaluating alternative approaches to achieving the results;
- (3) integrating organizational goals into the major capital decision-making process;
- (4) establishing a review and approval framework supported by analysis;

- (5) tracking project costs, schedule and performance; and
- (6) evaluating results and incorporating lessons learned.
- c. Project targets for major capital improvement projects in the productivity initiative shall be determined by an independent third party.
- 3.a. The objectives of extending the productivity initiative to the wastewater program's asset management program are to:
 - (1) provide savings to ratepayers through the development of a more strategic approach to the maintenance and replacement of wastewater assets;
 - (2) refine and improve the accuracy of budget forecasting for wastewater asset management;
 - (3) improve reliability of the wastewater treatment system;
 - (4) test new asset management techniques on a subgroup of assets and determine the applicability of these techniques to the rest of the wastewater system;
 - (5) compare the costs of using in-house resources to perform small capital construction projects versus the more traditional practice of contracting out this work; and
 - (6) provide incentives for employees to develop innovative approaches to asset management.
- b. Application of the productivity initiative for the wastewater program to asset management maintenance and replacement projects shall be limited to categories of assets for which detailed information on historical maintenance costs, current replacement costs, and a determination of remaining useful life have been developed.
- 4. Certain capital program work of the wastewater program has traditionally been performed by independent contractors procured by the county rather than county employees. If the wastewater program begins to use county employees for all or any portion of such capital program work in connection with implementation of the productivity initiative, subsequent use of independent contractors shall not be limited as a result of this temporary pilot project.
- 5.a. The executive shall, by June of each year, file with the clerk of the council for distribution to the chair of the council and the chair of the labor, operations and technology committee, or its successor committee, an annual report that evaluates the implementation of the productivity initiative for the wastewater program. Based on the experience, data and analysis from 2004 and 2005, the executive shall, by June 2006, file with the clerk of the council for distribution to the chair of the council and the chair of the labor, operations and technology committee, or its successor committee, recommendations for modifications that may be needed, together with any necessary proposed legislation, to help further the goals and objectives outlined in this section.
- b. The executive shall facilitate a thorough review of the productivity initiative for the wastewater program no later than December 31, 2010. The review shall be undertaken by an independent third party hired and supervised by the county auditor, with input from the wastewater program, and shall provide for a report to the council, which shall be filed with the clerk of the council for distribution to the chair of the council and the chair of the labor, operations and technology committee, or its successor committee. The review is to determine how effective the productivity initiative has been in achieving the goals and objectives in this section.
- c. The productivity initiative for the wastewater program expires April 30, 2011, unless before that date an ordinance is enacted to continue the productivity initiative. Any

major capital improvement project included in the productivity initiative, for which targets have been set by April 30, 2011, as specified in subsection C.2.c of this section, may continue with provisions of the productivity initiative applied through the completion of the project.

6. King County's wastewater treatment system shall continue to be maintained as a public facility and shall be managed and operated by public employees for so long as the productivity initiative is in effect. (Ord. 14941 § 4, 2004).



King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Overview

January 7, 2026



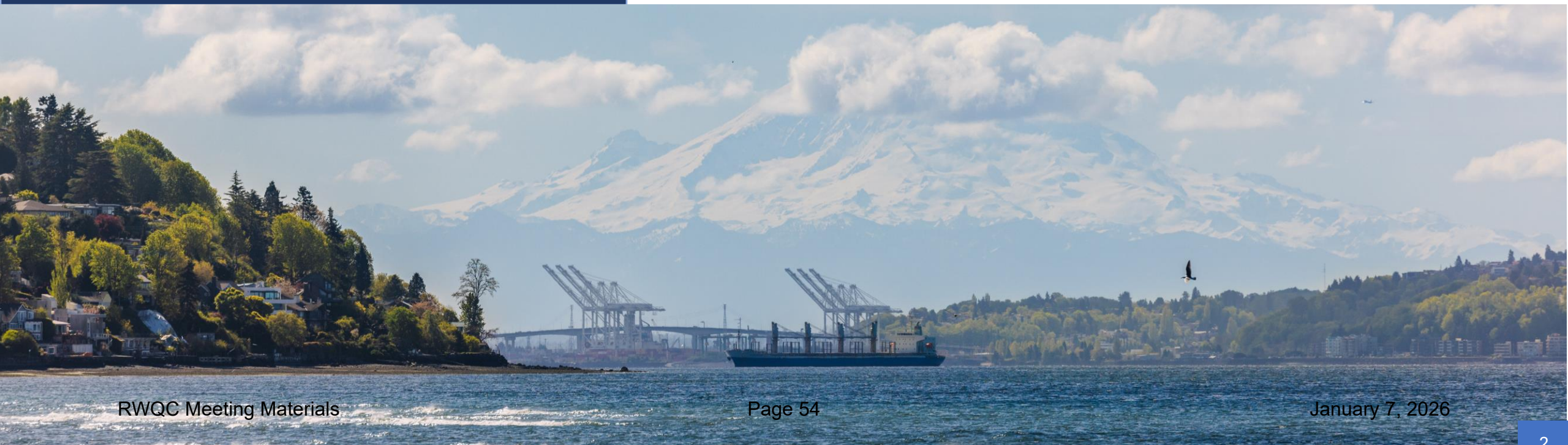
King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Wastewater Treatment Division

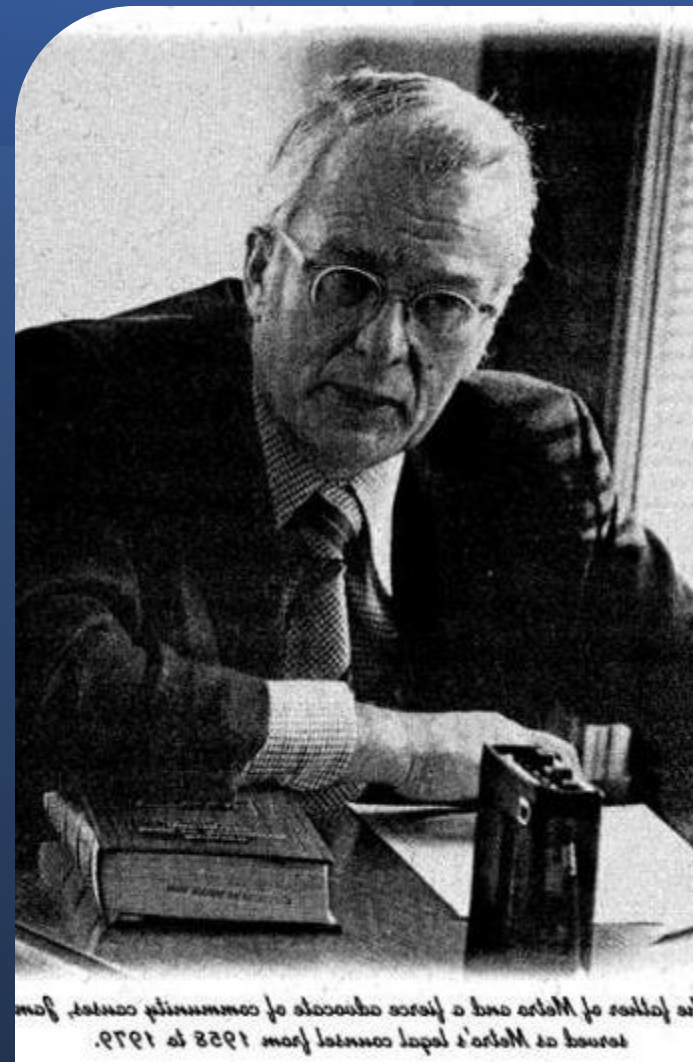
WTD's Mission

We protect public health and the environment by collecting and cleaning wastewater while recovering valuable resources for a thriving Puget Sound region.





In 1958, voters approved formation of Metro to improve water quality and protect public health. James Ellis, the father of Metro, worked to bring communities together to improve water quality through a regional wastewater treatment system.





Early days of Metro

- Metro Council adopts comprehensive water pollution abatement plan.
- Initial sewage disposal agreement with Seattle in 1961.
- Closed 10 sewage plants discharging into Lake Washington; ended raw sewage discharges to Elliott Bay and Duwamish.
- Construction begins on 110-mile regional conveyance system.
- South Treatment Plant opens in 1965 and West Point Treatment Plant in 1966.





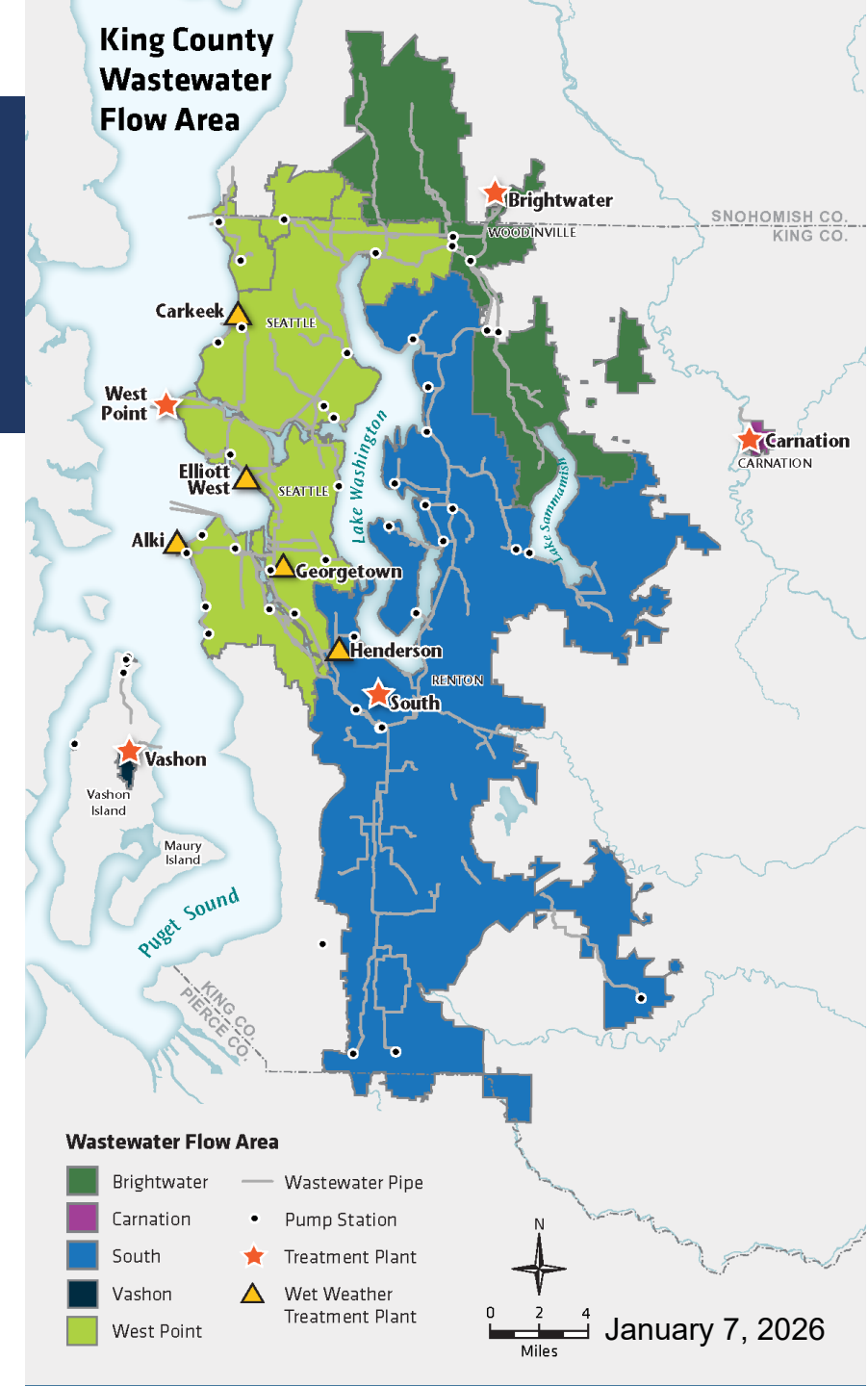
Regional Wastewater Services Plan

- Robinswood Agreement, executed in 1998, to guide funding of future capital projects.
- King County Council adopts the Regional Wastewater Services Plan in 1999
- Plan provides policies that govern the regional wastewater system thru 2030.



About the Wastewater Treatment Division

- Largest clean water utility in Washington
- 3 regional plants
- 2 community plants
- 48 pump stations
- 26 regulator stations
- 400 miles of conveyance pipe
- Service area of 2M residents across 424 sq. miles
- About 1000 employees
- \$350-400M annual capital program
- \$220M annual operational expenses
- Funded by ratepayers





Sewage Disposal Agreements and Rate

- 34 Local Sewer Agencies contract with King County for sewage treatment and disposal.
- Agencies include 18 cities, 15 sewer districts, and the Muckleshoot Tribe.
- Sewer Rate passed annually. Per contract must be approved by July 1 of every year.
- Capacity Charge is a separate charge assessed on development that results in new connections to the sewer system.



Examples of Current WTD Capital Projects

- West Point Treatment Plant Grit Classifiers
- Coal Creek Sewer Upgrade
- Lake Hills and NW Lake Sammamish Sewer Upgrade Project
- M Street Trunk Rehabilitation Project



Asset Management and Aging Infrastructure

- Manage over 60,000 Assets, including treatment plants, pumps, pipelines, storage tanks, and regulator stations.
- Address the backlog of work and fund the highest priority items.
- Operate and maintain assets to meet Level of Service targets.





Resource Recovery

Recover valuable resources from waste streams that can be reused and meet region's climate and sustainability goals

- Biosolids (Loop® product)
 - Over 120 farmers/landowners using biosolids to improve crop yields
- Biogas
 - Fuel to heat and operate plants
 - Scrub and sell back to the grid
 - Generate electricity
- Recycled water
 - Eight current recycled water customers, including Willows Run and Foster Golf Courses
- Sewer heat recovery pilot
 - One of largest commercial projects in nation is using County sewer heat in South Lake Union, Seattle



Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs)

- Built into the system design 80+ years ago
- Overflows occur during heavy rainstorms
- Control remaining CSO outfalls and follow up on supplemental compliance
- Multi-decade **process** and a driver of costs
- Recent examples include Joint Ship Canal Water Quality Project and Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station
- Design examples: storage tanks, CSO treatment station, and/or green infrastructure
- Modification of CSO Federal Consent Decree approved in 2025





Changing Regulations

- Regulated by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Washington State Department of Ecology
- Clean Water Act and other laws govern pollution discharges through facility permits (NPDES)
- Regulatory requirements a primary driver of costs and projects in capital program
- Ecology's Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit (nitrogen removal)
- PFAS and other contaminants of concern



Climate Resiliency

- Climate changing bringing about weather extremes
 - More frequent severe storms, heat waves and droughts
- Larger, more resilient facilities
 - CSO projects designed to be climate-resilient
- Wastewater system must adapt
 - Sea level rise
 - Saltwater intrusion
 - Power supply

Affordability Challenge

- The 'Big 3' in WTD's capital program are:
 - Regulatory requirements for water and air quality
 - Asset management to maintain system in good repair
 - Capacity projects to serve growth and comply with contracts
- Continued forecasted rate increases, with significant impacts to low-income ratepayers
- Federal and state funding, especially grants, is crucial to meet this growing and vital capital program





Working 24/7/365 to fulfill our mission and provide value to King County



Questions

Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) Update Policy Framework Schedule

Presented to the Regional Water Quality Committee
January 7, 2026

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

RWSP Policy Approach

Framework & Topics for the Analyses: Major policy questions will be analyzed from the following information:

- Step 1 {
- a. Problem Statement
 - b. Contextual and baseline information:
 - i. What WTD knows about the topic and current conditions
 - ii. Current policies in Code, contract or in-practice
 - iii. The wastewater 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

RWSP Policy Approach

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

RWSP Policy Approach

How Analyses will Inform RWSP Update:

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. The Draft RWSP Update will go through a SEPA process in 2027.

Step 3: WTD will integrate RWQC's direction into development of a full range of policy options to include in the **Draft RWSP Update in 2027**.

Step 2: Upon completion of cost estimates (parts g & h), WTD will provide **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** for WTD.

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*).

RWSP Policy Approach

Following the SEPA process for the Draft RWSP Update, WTD will begin to evaluate and consider tradeoffs for a full range of options in consultation with the Executive's Office 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

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

Policy questions that cover multiple topics: Where relevant 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 Analyses Schedule

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	<u>Group #1</u> Step #1: March 2026 Step #2: Oct 2026 (Tent)
2 & 22/23 & 27/28 & 24/25/26	<p>How should I/I be managed and how can costs be <u>fairly apportioned</u>? Should system capacity be expanded to account for increases in <u>I/I</u>? Should I/I policies change to support reducing the capacity needed for <u>I/I</u>?</p> <p><i>Is there a better rate structure for the sewer rate?</i></p> <p><i>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?</i></p> <p><i>Relationship <u>to</u> contracts</i></p> <p><i>ESJ (*see note for Group #9 indicating ESJ evaluation will be integrated into each of the analyses for Groups 1 through 8).</i></p>	<p>Separated System Conveyance (including infiltration/inflow)</p> <p>&</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>&</p> <p>Relationship <u>to</u> contracts</p> <p>&</p> <p>ESJ</p>	
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)	

Number (of 29)	Major Policy Questions from Scoping Document	Topic	Timeline (RWQC Discussions)
4	What upstream or source control actions should the region undertake to prevent contaminants and reduce costs?	Pollution (Source Control and Legacy)	<u>Group #2</u> Step #1: April 2026 Step #2: Nov 2026 (tent)
5	How can WTD best support environmental benefits while <u>instituting</u> safeguards to protect against environmental risks of contamination? How should cost considerations be weighed?	Pollution (Source Control and Legacy)	
6 & 22/23	How proactive vs. reactive should WTD be when deciding to refurbish or replace aging infrastructure? <i>Is there a better rate structure for the sewer rate? Will WTD maintain a single uniform sewer rate per residential customer equivalent (<u>Robinswood</u> “one for all, all for one”), or consider alternative cost recovery rate structures to reflect other system impacts?</i>	Asset Renewal and Replacement & Finance	<u>Group #3</u> Step #1: May 2026 Step #2: Dec 2026 (tent)
7	What level of <u>redundancy of critical systems</u> should WTD have? What level of risk tolerance should WTD accept?	Asset Renewal and Replacement & Climate Impact Preparedness and Natural Disaster Resiliency	

Meeting Materials

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Number (of 29)	Major Policy Questions from Scoping Document	Topic	Timeline (RWQC Discussions)
8	What level of resiliency should WTD <u>plan for</u> 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?	Climate Impact Preparedness and Natural Disaster Resiliency	<u>Group #4</u> Step #1: June 2026 Step #2: Jan 2027 (tent)
9	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?	Climate Impact Preparedness and Natural Disaster Resiliency	
10	How much should WTD reduce energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?	Climate Impact Preparedness and Natural Disaster Resiliency	
11	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?	Climate Impact Preparedness and Natural Disaster Resiliency	
12	How will WTD measure customer affordability for contract agencies and ratepayers?	Finance/Affordability	<u>Group #5</u> July 2026
13	What other rate relief approaches should WTD implement to improve affordability for those who may struggle to pay their sewer bill?	Finance/Affordability	

Number (of 29)	Major Policy Questions from Scoping Document	Topic	Timeline (RWQC Discussions)
14	Should the County evaluate costs and plan for levels of treatment beyond current legal requirements?	Treatment	<p><u>Group #6</u></p> <p>Step #1: August 2026 Step #2: March 2027 (tent)</p>
1	<i>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?</i>	Treatment	
15	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?	Treatment	
16 & 22/23	<p>To what extent should WTD prioritize use of existing facility sites vs. acquiring new property to accommodate future treatment needs (including capacity)?</p> <p><i>Is there a better rate structure for the sewer rate? Will WTD maintain a single uniform sewer rate per residential customer equivalent (<u>Robinswood</u> “one for all, all for one”), or consider alternative cost recovery rate structures to reflect other system impacts?</i></p>	<p>Treatment</p> <p>&</p> <p>Finance</p>	
17	Should the region continue to provide a centralized approach for regional wastewater treatment, or should the region move towards a more decentralized approach?	Treatment	

Number (of 29)	Major Policy Questions from Scoping Document	Topic	Timeline (RWQC Discussions)
18	Energy production and heat recovery – Should WTD be expanding its efforts to capture energy and heat? If so, at what level of effort?	Resource Recovery (Biosolids, Energy, Recycled Water)	<u>Group #7</u> Step #1: September 2026 Step #2: April 2027 (tent)
19	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?	Resource Recovery (Biosolids, Energy, Recycled Water)	
20	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?	Resource Recovery (Biosolids, Energy, Recycled Water)	
5	<i>How can WTD best support environmental benefits while <u>instituting</u> safeguards to protect against environmental risks of contamination? How should cost considerations be weighed?</i>	Resource Recovery (Biosolids, Energy, Recycled Water)	

Number (of 29)	Major Policy Questions from Scoping Document	Topic	Timeline (RWQC Discussions)
21	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.)	Finance/Affordability	Group #8 Q4 2026: Full analysis of the rate structure policy questions 21, 22, 23 (both Capacity Charge and RCE) & March, May, Aug. 2026: WTD will begin to address the rate structure question sequentially where relevant as we move through Policy Question Groups 1, 3, 6. This will allow RWQC members to see how the rate structure issue relates to various topics. Each relevant analysis would include a specific section dedicated to addressing “rate structure considerations” alongside the policy options. e.g. the Group #1 I/I analysis will introduce and begin to address the rate structure question as it relates to the <u>I/I issue</u> .
22	Is there a better rate structure for the sewer rate?	Finance/Affordability (overlap with Groups 1, 3, 6)	
23	Will WTD maintain a single uniform sewer rate per residential customer equivalent (<u>Robinswood</u> “one for all, all for one”), or consider alternative cost recovery rate structures to reflect other system impacts?	Finance/Affordability (overlap with Groups 1, 3, 6)	
			RWQC may choose to form a <u>sub committee</u> focused on the rate structure question and/or WTD may propose a consultant-separate track for this discussion.

Number (of 29)	Major Policy Questions from Scoping Document	Topic	Timeline (RWQC Discussions)
24	What actions should WTD take to increase equity and social justice for the regional wastewater system?	Equity and Social Justice	<u>Group #9</u> Analyses for these ESJ questions will be integrated into each of the analyses for Groups 1 through 8. April 2027: A comprehensive ESJ analysis for these questions across all topics/groups will be completed.
25	How will equity and social justice be interwoven in the update: community engagement, rate structure analysis, etc.?	Equity and Social Justice	
26	How should the regional wastewater system address environmental justice concerns as described in the 2021 Healthy Environmental for All Act, such as addressing the disproportionate environmental health impacts of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities?	Equity and Social Justice	
27	Are major policy updates aligned with component agency contracts?	Relationship to Contracts	<u>Group #10</u> Where relevant these questions will be integrated into prior
28	How will WTD implement the RWSP Update consistent with direction and requirements expected of contract agencies?	Relationship to Contracts	
			group analyses (e.g. Group #1 analysis) May/June 2027 (following completion of step #2 for all Groups of questions)
	How should WTD efforts support the water quality in Sound and applicable inland waterways?	ALL	<u>Applies to all groups</u>

Q & A



King County | Wastewater Treatment

RWQC Work Program for 2026 January 7, 2026

The suggested agenda topics are based on the latest information available and subject to change based on availability of presenters and committee priorities. This work program will stay marked as “draft” to reflect that the committee will adjust the schedule throughout the year to accommodate any necessary changes.

RWSP Update and RWQC

Pre-Draft RWSP Update for SEPA Review. Beginning in March 2026, the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) plans to present the initial analysis of selected policy questions from the RWSP Update scope document. (See Attachment.) WTD refers to this stage of the analysis for these policy questions as Step #1. Related policy questions will be grouped together. The intent of these initial Step #1 briefings is for members to receive information on each policy question and identify any gaps in the information or options presented by WTD. WTD expects the options presented at these initial briefings will be included in the Draft RWSP Update for SEPA Review. WTD commits to also including any additional RWQC identified options in the Draft RWSP for SEPA Review. WTD’s initial analysis of the policy questions will provide a framework for the committee for future discussions on these policy questions. WTD will accept feedback and suggestions based on this initial analysis on a rolling basis in 2026.

Beginning in Q4 2026 and continuing through Spring 2027, WTD intends to present cost information on a rolling basis for the options related to each policy question. WTD refers to this cost information as Step #2. With this cost information, RWQC will have the opportunity to revisit any options it requested for analysis for inclusion in the DRAFT RWSP Update for SEPA review. All requested analysis and cost information for the policy questions is anticipated to be completed by Spring 2027.

After the DRAFT RWSP Update for SEPA review is released. The Draft RWSP Update for SEPA Review is scheduled for completion at the end of 2027. RWQC will have the opportunity in early 2028 to make recommendations to the Executive on the Draft RWSP Update for SEPA review. The Executive will develop the final Proposed Plan and transmit it to Council by end of 2028 for Council adoption in 2029 at which time RWQC will have the opportunity to review and amend the plan.

MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE

January 7, 2026

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update: Update on RWSP Policy Analysis as Required by Proviso. This briefing will present the proposed schedule and grouping of policy questions. (30 minutes)
- ☐ 2026 RWQC Work Program (60 minutes).

February 4, 2026

- ☐ Wastewater Treatment Division's Preliminary 2026 Sewer Rate, Including Rate Options. (60 minutes)
- ☐ An Overview of Water Quality in Puget Sound. Presentation by the Water and Land Resources Division, DNRP. (Pending confirmation from speakers) (30 minutes)

March 4, 2026

- ☐ WTD's 2027 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge Recommendations and Options. (35 minutes).
- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update Policy Questions Initial Analysis Group #1 (Capacity related policy questions, including Inflow and Infiltration.) (50 minutes)
- ☐ WTD Initial Presentation on Capacity Charge Code Changes Proposal. (15 minutes)

Optional March Site Visit. Date TDB. South Plant to tour capital projects and compost pilot

April 1, 2026

- ☐ Capacity Charge Code Changes (15 minutes)
- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update: Policy Questions Initial Analysis #2 (Source control and legacy pollution) (50 minutes)
- ☐ WTD's 2027 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge Recommendations and Options. Consider letter to Executive (25 minutes)

May 6, 2026

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Vision Final Vision (15 minutes)
- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update: Policy Questions Initial Analysis #3. Asset Renewal and Replacement. (50 minutes)
- ☐ Executive's Proposed 2027 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge (Discuss if comment letter to Council needed) (35 minutes)
- ☐ Capital Project Cost Update per proviso (Written Notifications.)

Optional May Site Visit. Date TBD. SoDo Tour of MDCSO planned area. This would be a pre-construction tour.

June 3, 2026

- ☐ Executive's Proposed 2027 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge. (If comment letter to King County Council requested, approve.) (30 minutes)
- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update: Policy Questions Initial Analysis Group #4 Climate Impact and Natural Disaster Resiliency (60 minutes)

July 1, 2026

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update Policy Questions Initial Analysis Group # 5 Finance/Affordability (60 minutes)
- ☐ Regional Stormwater Solutions (30 minutes)
- ☐ Capital Project Cost Update per proviso. (Written)

August 2026 (Council Recess)

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update – Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update Policy Questions Initial Analysis Group # 6 Level of treatment. (60 minutes)

August Optional Site Visit. Date TDB. Visit selected non-plant projects such as M Street Trunk Rehabilitation**September 3, 2026**

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update – Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update Policy Questions Initial Analysis Placeholder Group # 7 Resource Recovery. (60 minutes)

October 1, 2026

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update ---Costing Information on Group # 1 (60 minutes)
- ☐ Update on Puget Sound Nutrient Issue (30 minutes)

November 5, 2026

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update ---Costing Information on Group # 2 (60 minutes)
- ☐ PFAS Annual Update (20 minutes)

December 3, 2026

- ☐ Regional Wastewater Services Plan Update (40 minutes) Costing Information Group # 3 (Asset Renewal and Replacement, Climate Impact.)
- ☐ Capital Project Cost Update per proviso (written)

Note for RWSP Update—Policy Analysis. Remaining costing information for Policy Questions Groups #4-9 will be provided in Q1 and Q 2 in 2027.

Monthly Written Report on Status Update for Motion 16900:

Committee requests monthly status report include status update on key tasks in Motion 16900, (WTD's sewer rate and capital work plan to improve engagement, transparency, and accountability) including:

- 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.
- 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.
- Independent consultant to review WTD's capital program.
- Evaluate regulatory requirements.
- Significant changes in capital project costs.
- Options for multi-year rate predictability.

Revised January 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 (MWWPAAC).

The King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) drafted this scoping document based on initial verbal and written input from RWQC and MWWPAAC 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 MWWPAAC general meeting, the September 4 RWQC workshop, the September 5 MWWPAAC Engineering and Planning (E&P) subcommittee meeting, the October 2 RWQC meeting, and the November 7 joint meeting of the MWWPAAC E&P and Rates and Finance subcommittees. WTD revised the document based on feedback from MWWPAAC 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.”

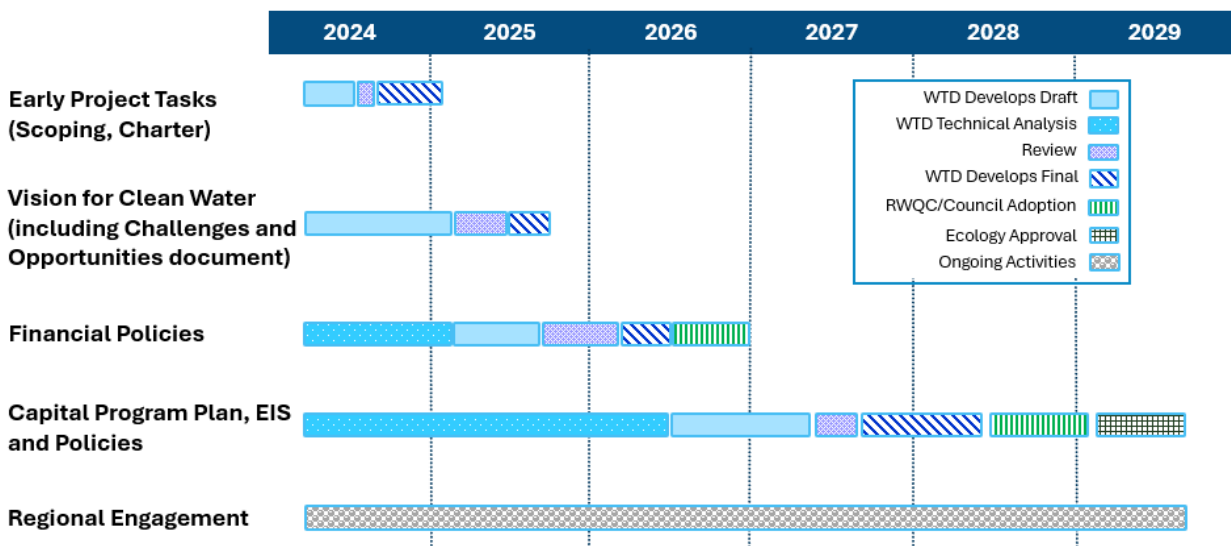
The Vision for Clean Water will inform but not constrain policies and investments that are included in the final RWSP Update. The planning process will produce an RWSP Update that will guide future investments; support the core mission to protect water quality; seek to achieve affordable wastewater utility 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.

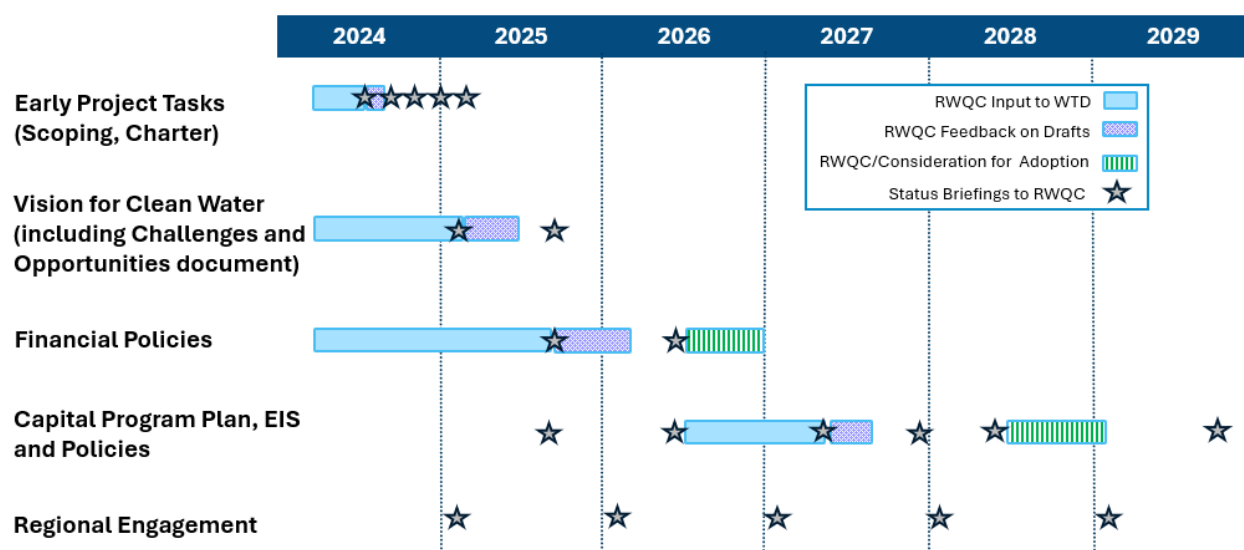
Timeline: Final completed in 3rd quarter 2029.

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
<p>requirements, opportunities for larger regional partnerships to address water concerns, requirement to comply with future total maximum daily loads</p>	<p>What upstream or source control actions should the region undertake to prevent contaminants and reduce costs?</p> <p>How should WTD efforts support the water quality of Puget Sound and applicable inland waterways?</p>
<p>Capacity Demands</p> <p>I/I, population growth, conveyance and treatment capacity demand, including on-site septic systems in urban areas</p>	<p>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?</p> <p>To what extent should WTD prioritize use of existing facility sites vs. acquiring new property to accommodate future treatment needs (including capacity)?</p> <p>Should the region continue to provide a centralized approach for regional wastewater treatment, or should the region move towards a more decentralized approach?</p> <p>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?</p> <p>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?</p>
<p>Infrastructure Resiliency</p> <p>Asset management, maintenance, improvements, renewal, replacement, labor and supply chain disruptions, natural hazard resiliency</p>	<p>How proactive vs. reactive should WTD be when deciding to refurbish or replace aging infrastructure?</p> <p>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?</p> <p>What level of redundancy of critical systems should WTD have?</p>
<p>Equity and Social Justice</p> <p>Distributional equity, WTD role in safeguarding public health</p>	<p>What actions should WTD take to increase equity and social justice for the regional wastewater system?</p> <p>How will equity and social justice be interwoven in the update: community engagement, rate structure analysis, etc.?</p>

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
	<p>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?</p>
<p>Climate Change</p> <p>Mitigation – green building, eliminating/reducing fossil fuel use, energy and water efficiency, renewable energy, materials management, tree planting, etc. Adaptation – sea level rise, more extreme heat, increased storm intensities, wildfire smoke, increased river flooding, etc.</p>	<p>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?</p> <p>How much should WTD reduce energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?</p> <p>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?</p>
<p>Resource Recovery</p> <p>Recycled water, biosolids, energy capture</p>	<p>Energy production and heat recovery – Should WTD be expanding its efforts to capture energy and heat? If so, at what level of effort?</p> <p>Biosolids – Should WTD further expand its efforts to develop Class A biosolids? What changes are needed to biosolid recovery policies to get to Class A?</p> <p>Recycled water – Under what circumstances should the region expand the use of reclaimed water? Which uses (e.g., environmental benefits, groundwater recharge, industrial uses, irrigation) are most appropriate?</p> <p>How can WTD best support environmental benefits while instituting safeguards to protect against environmental risks of contamination? How should cost considerations be weighed?</p>
<p>Finance / Customer Affordability</p> <p>Rate equity, fairness, and structure, capital financing and debt management, financial planning and revenue sufficiency</p>	<p>How will WTD measure customer affordability for contract agencies and ratepayers?</p> <p>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.)</p>

¹ RCW 70.A.02

Challenges and Opportunities – Topics/Themes	Major Policy Questions to be Analyzed in RWSP Update
	<p>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?</p> <p>Should WTD update the rate structure for the capacity charge to align with current industry standards? (Note: The capacity charge rate structure was updated in 2021. A capacity charge methodology study is in progress.)</p> <p>What other rate relief approaches should WTD implement to improve customer affordability for those who may struggle to pay their sewer bill?</p>
<p>Relationship to Contracts and Functional Plans</p>	<p>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?</p> <p>How will WTD implement the RWSP Update consistent with direction and requirements expected of contract agencies?</p>

Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD’s) Sewer Rate and Capital Work Plan to Continue to Improve Engagement, Transparency, and Accountability – January 7, 2026, Status Update

Note: Changes from the last month’s update are in bold, blue font.

Major Recommendations from RWQC Letter	Wastewater Treatment Division Tasks	Working Timeline	Status
<p>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:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c. Ensure that the long-term rate forecast methodology requested by Motion 16449 is used to develop scenarios to evaluate options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To promote meaningful and timely engagement, WTD will host regular meetings with MWPAAC and/or its subcommittees to review:<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.	Q4 2025 and ongoing	Briefings provided on WTD’s capital project prioritization process and key capital projects impacting the rate in Q3/Q4 2025.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.	Q1/Q2 2026	“Look Ahead” briefings to MWPAAC scheduled for Q4 2025 and Q1 2026.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.	Q2 2026	Work is underway for WTD to provide multiple rate scenarios in Q2 2026 as part of the 2027 rate adoption process.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.	Q3 2025 and ongoing	An independent consultant selected by MWPAAC members has reviewed the model and is scheduled to brief MWPAAC on January 28, 2026. Further briefings on implementation of the long-term forecasting model will be provided to MWPAAC with an opportunity to suggest any further improvements to align with industry standards.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.	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

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Note: Changes from the last month's update are in bold, blue font.

Major Recommendations from RWQC Letter	Wastewater Treatment Division Tasks	Working Timeline	Status
			process beginning in Q1 2026.
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 30, 2026 , retreat.
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 received an initial briefing and provided feedback on potential options at its December 4, 2025, Rates and Finance Subcommittee meeting.
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>Q3 2025 – 2026</p> <p>Q3 2025 – 2026</p>	<p>WTD’s Planning team is meeting in Q1 2026 and will coordinate with the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office and County Executive’s Office to evaluate potential regulatory changes.</p> <p>WTD is initiating outreach with its local agency partners on a federal/state outreach strategy.</p>

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Major Recommendations from RWQC Letter	Wastewater Treatment Division Tasks	Working Timeline	Status
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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. The contract is in procurement, and the scope of work will be finalized in January 2026.
6. Regional Utility Affordability Summit. In partnership with local municipal leaders, prepare a multi-jurisdictional summit to address affordability and access to essential utilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.Identify and implement resources to execute follow-up steps agreed upon at the summit.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.	<div>Q3 2025 – Q1 2026</div> <div>Q4 2025-Q1 2026</div> <div>Q1 2026</div>	<p>The Regional Utility Rate Summit was held in SeaTac on November 14, 2025, with approximately 150 attendees.</p> <p>WTD participated in the Staff Committee and Steering Committee for planning the Summit and as a participant presenting at the Summit.</p> <p>Follow-up will be coordinated with participants, including a potential second summit in 2026.</p> <p>WTD will hold an initial discussion in January 2026 with local agency public information officers or similar staff in anticipation of engagement and communications strategy development in Q1 2026.</p>