

King County Bridges and Roads Task Force Meeting Summary

Meeting #5

November 12, 2015, 2:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Mercer Island Community and Event Center – Mercer Room

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review, and Summary Acceptance

Bob Wheeler (facilitator) called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m., and the King County Bridges and Roads Task Force (Task Force) did a round of introductions. A quorum for consideration of the approval of the Review Draft Recommendations Report was declared.

The facilitator briefly reviewed the agenda and noted that the focus of the meeting would be on reviewing and refining high impact recommendations and then lower impact recommendations. The Task Force would then vote to accept high and low impact recommendations and the Task Force recommendations report for further review by the King County Executive and Council. Final approval of the recommendations report would take place at the January 20, 2016 Task Force meeting.

Review and Acceptance of the October 28, 2015 Draft Task Force Meeting Summary

The Task Force reviewed the October 28, 2015 draft Task Force meeting summary and accepted it without any changes.

Report Out and Discussion on Task Force Recommendations

Report-Out on the Report Updates and the Process for Reaching Report Approval

The facilitator reviewed lists of high and low impact recommendations that came out of the Task Force discussion at its October 28 meeting. These recommendations were grouped by revenue, infrastructure, efficiencies, and outreach. Recommendations were further cleaned up and refined by the King County Road Services Division (RSD) – particularly to ensure recommendations were in a form that could maximize the likelihood their implementation.

The facilitator then briefly shared an updated draft recommendations report and highlighted sections the Task Force should primarily focus on at the meeting as well as where the recommendations would appear in the report. He explained that the interim recommendations short-lists that led to the current recommendations will be included within the appendix of the recommendations report.

Comments and questions:

- What is the dollar threshold between high and low impact recommendations?
 - This threshold has not been defined, however high impact recommendations are intended to have a significant impact on the large funding gap for bridges and roads.
 - Brenda Bauer added that the bridges and roads funding gap is so significant that RSD needs to see high impact recommendations that affect 20 percent or more of the funding gap. Given the limited meetings available to the Task Force, it is important to avoid spending a lot of time and resources on small issues that address only a small percent of the funding gap. The county is committed to working to evaluate all suggestions, but would appreciate hearing from the Task Force members those options seen as potentially most impactful.

Report Out by King County on the Task Force Recommendations

Brenda Bauer, RSD Director, explained that the Task Force was asked to do a very difficult task in making recommendations on a complex road network and addressing a large funding gap which current funding tools are not sufficient to address. Through this process, the Task Force was asked to recognize the significance of the bridges and roads funding need and the consequences of not addressing it. The Task Force was also asked to identify recommendations that would help support an effort by elected officials to address the gap between needs and resources. RSD is seeking recommendations that focus on the infrastructure that the county should be responsible for and revenue tools to care for that infrastructure at some level. Rather than have the Task Force work on specific amounts of funding from different tools and level of service decisions, it would be useful to have recommendations on what is taxed and who pays. Legislators will be deciding which tools to use, level of funding from those tools, and levels of service as part of the political decision making process.

Comments and questions:

- Is the Task Force being asked to recommend a set of issues and ideas for King County's consideration rather than specific solutions (such as a 0.2 percent sales tax, for example)?
 - In the limited time the Task Force had, it could have either identified that the system should be preserved with additional revenue sources or rather that parts of the system should be shut down. It appears the Task Force would like to preserve as much of the road system as possible. Therefore it should consider what taxing tools are available to King County – including what should be taxed and who pays for it. This latter discussion would involve some consideration of how benefits and tax burdens might be shared between incorporated and unincorporated areas.
 - The facilitator added that all of the recommendations can be revised at this meeting.
- It is clear there is not a silver bullet solution so the Task Force should offer more than one funding vehicle to consider. Also, it is not clear that recommendations will require legislative action. Does King County expect to move these recommendations forward as a legislative package in 2016?
 - The next legislative session is a short session. While King County expects to have conversations with elected officials about the inadequate funding for meeting the current bridges and roads funding need, given other state legislative priorities, it is not expected that the state legislature will take up legislation on bridges and roads funding in the next session. However, these recommendations will create a base for discussion with key people that can raise this issue of county roads funding for a future state legislative session.

Task Force Discussion on High and Low Impact Recommendations

The Task Force spent most of the remaining time during the meeting discussing the high and low impact recommendations that came out of its October 28 meeting. Most of the Task Force discussion focused on the following issues:

- Whether recommendations should be more general and be considered *guidelines* for King County to consider, or rather be more specific in outlining specific numbers (i.e. such as outlining specific percentages for taxes). The Task Force left some of the recommendations more general but was specific for some – particularly regarding the amount of certain taxes and who would be taxed.
- The order in which recommendations will appear in the report and whether the order implies priority. The Task Force ended up ordering recommendations based on those it wanted policy makers and legislators to see first.
- Whether the recommendations should pose solutions that fit within the existing tax system or rather whether they should be more aspirational and address a new tax system.

- What lead-in statements, if any, should be added for the recommendations in the Task Force report?
- Whether certain recommendations would be considered “high” or “low” impact.
- The extent to which recommendations would or could rely on funding from City residents as well as the extent to which costs and benefits of specific recommendations were spread among city and unincorporated residents.
- The extent to which the costs and benefits of specific recommendations would be shared county-wide or rather just within unincorporated or incorporated areas of King County.

Comments and questions:

- Has the Task Force considered any recommendations that address the issue of drivers from other counties using and impacting King County roads?
 - A placeholder recommendation was added regarding further study of how drivers from other counties use King County roads.
- The Suburban Cities Association (SCA) is OK with recommendations posed as long as Cities are not burdened by sharing costs with King County. Cities are dealing with many of their own infrastructure funding challenges and they also have to maintain their roads to a higher standard than King County. A next step would be to engage cities in this discussion.
 - This relates to the issue of regional corridors and how to keep them open and funded. If funds can be raised from all county residents for regional corridors then there should be enough money to fund them.
 - There is nervousness about who defines “regional corridors” and who pays for them.
 - The City of Snoqualmie did its own analysis and found that if the bridges and roads funding gap is spread countywide the burden would be far less per person than if it was imposed just on unincorporated residents or on specific city residents.
- The Task Force should avoid putting too many specific restrictions on funding recommendations.
- Are there any recommendations that update the county’s current taxing structure?
 - The Association of Washington Cities had a meeting about this recently. A big topic of discussion was the changing responsibility of governments and how to reach financial sustainability. There have been discussions about modernizing the taxation system in Washington State.
- The Task Force Recommendations Report should include some indication of the financial impact of each recommendation.
- The next step for the Task Force should involve engagement with cities.
- Several Task Force members discussed the extent to which recommendations should direct funding to county roads or to both city and county roads.
 - It is concerning to include recommendations that direct funding from new revenue sources toward city roads. Cities have more access to revenue sources than unincorporated areas. County roads are forgotten roads for which new revenues from these recommendations should be directed.
 - Cities are 80 percent of the taxpayers in King County. By virtue of this there should be some benefit to city residents from recommendations that potentially increase taxes in cities.
 - County roads connect to city roads. King County does not want this process to lead to fragmentation where nobody wants to support anyone else’s roads.
 - The Task Force should focus on mutual benefits for cities and counties from these recommendations. All taxpayers have to pay for things they do not agree with or use.
 - It is easier to gain support for these recommendations if they allude to mutual benefits for both city and county roads.

- There are many cities that have poorly maintained roads – it is not just unincorporated King County.
- How are private roads currently determined and maintained?
 - There is not currently a rational scheme that determines which roads from new developments are public or private.

Bryce Yaden (Futurewise) Report-Out on Past County GMA Intentions

Prior to a Task Force discussion on recommendations that addressed efficiencies, Bryce Yaden (Futurewise) reviewed two handouts he provided to the Task Force about the original intent and implementation of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) and how or whether funding could be transferred between incorporated areas and unincorporated areas. As outlined in his handouts, in 1991 the Growth Management Planning Council was established and in 1994 the Council established the Fiscal Impact Analysis and Economic Development Task Force. This Task Force was established to identify solutions to funding challenges posed by countywide planning policies under the GMA. The Task Force reported in 1994 that there would be less revenue to fund unincorporated county roads as more annexations occurred. Bryce also noted that 80 percent of King County residents live on 20 percent of the land.

Approval of Task Force Recommendations

Following a thorough discussion about each high and low impact recommendation, the Task Force, with a quorum of 17 out of 21 members present, voted to approve by consensus the Draft Review Task Force Recommendations Report with the following motion:

The King County Bridges & Roads Task Force gives its initial approval of the Task Force Recommendations Report, inclusive of high and low impact recommendations, as a review draft with the intention that final Task Force approval will take place at the January 20, 2016 meeting.

Public Comments

No public comments were received on paper, electronically, or orally, and no public comments were received between the October 28 and November 12 Task Force meetings.

Next Steps

The January 20, 2015 Task Force meeting will take place at 2:30 p.m. in Mercer Rooms 1 and 2 of the Mercer Island Community and Events Center. It will include final approval and signing of the Task Force Recommendations Report, a report-out by RSD staff on the status of recommendations identified as the responsibility of RSD, and a discussion on the implementation of Task Force recommendations.

Attachment 1: November 12, 2015 Task Force Meeting Attendees

Task Force Members

Name	Affiliation	Attended?
Van Anderson	King County Boundary Review Board	Yes
John Bloomer	Enumclaw Fire Department/King County Fire District #28	Yes
Josh Brown	Puget Sound Regional Council	Yes
Peter Eberle	Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council	Yes
Joe Fain	Washington State Legislature—47 th District	No (represented by proxy, Noah Ullman)
Ashley Glennon	Fall City Community Association	No
Michael Gonzales	Teamsters Local 174	Yes
Bob Harrison	City of Issaquah	No
George Irwin	King County Agricultural Commission	No
Janet Keller	Keller Dairy	Yes
Duana Koloušková	Transportation Concurrency Expert Review Panel	No
Andra Kranzler	Skyway Solutions	Yes
Matt Larson	City of Snoqualmie	Yes
Hank Lipe	Vashon Island Fire & Rescue	Yes
Ceci Mena	Professional & Technical Employees Local 117	Yes
Louise Miller	Former King County Councilmember and State Representative	Yes (phone)
Louis Moscoso	Washington State Legislative—1 st Legislative District	Yes
Amy Ockerlander	City of Duvall	Yes
Ron Paananen	Parsons Brinckerhoff	Yes
Blake Trask	Washington Bikes	Yes
Noah Ullman	Executive Assistant to Senator Fain (proxy)	Yes
Bryce Yadon	Futurewise	Yes

Meeting Organizers

Name	Affiliation
Brenda Bauer	Road Services Division, King County
Jay Osborne	Road Services Division, King County
Susan West	Road Services Division, King County
Bob Wheeler	Triangle Associates
Evan Lewis	Triangle Associates

Other Meeting Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Rick Brater	King County Road Services Division
Ed Connors	Washington State Department of Transportation
Tricia Davis	King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wes Edwards	King County Department of Transportation

Name	Affiliation
Jeremy Ferguson	King County Roads Services Division
Ruth Harvey	King County Road Services Division
Lise Kaye	King County Council Staff
Katie Kuciemba	Sound Cities Association
Alan Painter	King County Community Service Areas
Charles Prestrud	Washington State Department of Transportation
Stephanie Pure	King County Department of Transportation
April Sanders	King County Council Staff