



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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April 10, 2023

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits a proposed Ordinance that, if enacted, would amend Ordinance 19546 to add 73 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) to the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP).

The 2024 sewer rate proposal, which is transmitted concurrently with this proposed Ordinance, details the need for the additional FTEs to deliver WTD's capital program and to continue to safely operate King County's wastewater system. The 10-year sewer rate projection reflects significant rate-drivers such as critical asset management needs, state and federal regulatory requirements, and growth-related demands on the system. These new FTEs are required to meet these demands.

King County is working to hold the line on near-term sewer rates and reduce longer term rate projections while completing important projects to protect water quality. However, significant concerns remain about costs arising from regulatory requirements and resultant financial impacts on ratepayers. To address those concerns, DNRP will continue to utilize low-interest loans through the Washington State Revolving Fund, Washington Public Works Trust Fund, and the federal Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act. These are in addition to a prudent approach to cash funding and bond issuances to pay for the capital program. While these financial options will help reduce longer term rate projections, DNRP must continue to explore new sources and tools to lessen the financial burden on ratepayers.

In February, March, and April 2023, rate briefings that included the need to add 73 FTEs were provided to the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee. At the request of the Regional Water Quality Committee, WTD also provided information on the proposed rate at its April meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance. This important legislation will help King County residents by continuing to protect water quality in the region through the maintenance and repair of the County's wastewater assets.

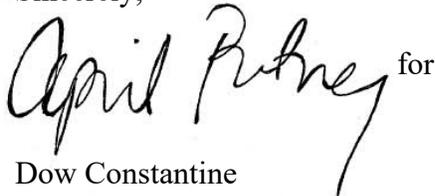
The Honorable Dave Upthegrove

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If your staff have any questions, please contact Kamuron Gurol, Division Director of the Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-263-5767.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Shannon Braddock, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Mina Hashemi, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Kamuron Gurol, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP