



KING COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT

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August 31, 2020

Dave Upthegrove, Chair
King County Flood Control District Board of Supervisors
516 Third Avenue
Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Transmittal of Recommendations for the 2021 Annual Budget and 2021-2026 Six-Year Capital Improvement Program.

Dear Chair Upthegrove and King County Flood District Board of Supervisors:

The members of the King County Flood Control District Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) are pleased to transmit our recommendations to the King County Flood Control District Board of Supervisors (District) for the 2021 Annual Budget and 2021-2026 Six-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

The King County Council established the Advisory Committee through Ordinance 15728 on April 16, 2007, to provide expert policy advice to the District on regional flood protection issues.

According to Ordinance 15728:

“The advisory committee is created to provide expert policy advice to the board of supervisors of the King County Flood Control Zone District on regional flood protection issues. The committee shall review and recommend an annual work program and budget for the district, including capital improvement program projects and funding levels, subject to approval or approval and modification by the board of supervisors. Eleven copies of the recommendations shall be filed with the clerk of the King County council no later than August 31 of the preceding year, for distribution to all councilmembers.”

The Advisory Committee met four times between June 19 and August 20, 2020. The meetings focused on briefings on the District's current planning efforts and the Black River Capital Program Strategy, deliberations related to the 2021 Annual Budget, the 2021-2025 CIP, the newly created grant programs, and the 2021 levy rate, and the topics to be considered for the Flood Hazard Management Plan Update. A staff-level Joint Basin Technical Committee also met four times to provide feedback on budget related documents, the newly created Flood Reduction Grant categories, and the Flood Hazard Management Plan Update in advance of the Advisory Committee meetings. In order to keep informed of the activities of the District, we request an increase in the number of Advisory Committee meetings and that we meet two other times in addition to our summer meetings.

Attached to this letter is an electronic link with all of the Advisory Committee meeting materials.

Flood Hazard Management Plan Update

We appreciate the Board's commitment to including our recommended list of elements into the Flood Hazard Management Plan (Plan) update included in our recommendation letter last year and are pleased that the District plans to partner with King County on the development of the updated Plan. We reiterate our desire to have an active role in the process of updating the Plan and request opportunities to be briefed on the work and to provide comments on the progress of the Plan. We also ask that the Joint Basin Technical Committee as well as basin specific work groups be convened to provide technical input to the Plan.

Newly Created Flood Reduction Grant Programs

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the recent expansion of the District's Flood Reduction Grant Program to include three new grant categories: urban streams, coastal erosion, and culvert/fish passage. While we understand each successful grant applicant must demonstrate a flood nexus, a majority of the Advisory Committee members are concerned the expansion of the grant program may constitute a diversion from the original purpose of the District – to reduce the risks associated with flooding along the major rivers in King County. Projects in these new grant categories, especially coastal erosion and culverts, have the potential to erode the District's undesignated fund balance and jeopardize the ability to address existing and future riverine flood issues. We recommend the Board of Supervisor's consider limiting these grant programs by a percentage of the District budget. We also recommend that the criteria for these new grants require a flood risk reduction nexus.

Levy Rate

We understand the Board of Supervisors has discussed the appropriateness of the current levy rate given the current state of economic uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Now is not the time to reduce the District's levy rate. In fact, it is extremely important to look toward the future. We must continue to invest in (1) the critical flood reduction facilities identified in the recommended 2021-2026 CIP; (2) the unfunded needs identified in the recently completed planning efforts such as the Black River Pump Station Capital Project Strategy, the Tolt and Cedar River Capital Investment Strategies, and the planning efforts currently underway such as the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Sammamish River Capital Investment Strategies and the ongoing Lower Green River Corridor Flood Hazard Management Plan Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; (3) the flood reduction strategies that will be identified in the upcoming the Flood Hazard Management Plan Update; and (4) the unknown repair needs resulting from flood events such as those identified in the 2019-2020 Flood Season Report. We recommend a 2021 Operating Budget and 2021-2026 Capital Budget that relies on a levy rate that is unchanged levy from 2020.

Operating Budget

We appreciate the District's continued funding of studies recommended by the Advisory Committee. We look forward to seeing the results of those studies still underway. We also appreciate the commitment of funding to the Flood Hazard Management Plan Update and look

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forward to meaningful participation in that planning process. We understand information on the District's expected cost savings resulting from King County Water and Land Resources Division staff permanently working from home is not currently available. We look forward to receiving information related to these anticipated savings as soon as the analysis becomes available.

Capital Budget

We appreciate the District's commitment to implementing the results of its planning processes such as the Tolt and Cedar Capital Investment Strategies and the Black River Pump Station Capital Project Strategy. We look forward to a discussion of capital project prioritization during the Flood Hazard Management Plan Update.

Looking Ahead

We recognize the importance of our role as "expert policy advisors to the District on regional flood protection issues" and look forward to providing meaningful feedback on policy development such as multi-benefit projects. In order to provide useful feedback and comments, we request that we receive updates and have the opportunity to comment on the development of policies including multi-benefit projects. Additionally, we request that we receive (1) regular reports on capital project delivery by District service providers; (2) information on capital project milestones and completion; (3) data relating to the "Strike Team" accomplishments; and (4) information on the metrics used to determine staffing levels.

Attached to this letter please find our recommendations for the King County Flood District 2021 Operating and 2021-2026 Capital Improvement Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leanne Guier".

Leanne Guier, Mayor, City of Pacific
Chair, King County Flood Control District Advisory Committee

cc: Members, King County Flood Control District Advisory Committee
Michelle Clark, Executive Director, King County Flood Control District

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2020 Advisory Committee Members

	Jurisdiction	Title	Name
Member Permanent Seat	City of Auburn	Mayor	Nancy Backus
Member Permanent Seat	City of Bellevue	Councilmember	Jeremy Barksdale
Member Permanent Seat	City of Carnation	Mayor	Kim Lisk
Member Permanent Seat, Vice Chair	City of Kent	Mayor	Dana Ralph
Member Permanent Seat	King County	Executive	Dow Constantine
Member Permanent Seat	City of North Bend	Mayor	Rob McFarland
Member Permanent Seat	City of Renton	Mayor	Armondo Pavone
Member Permanent Seat	City of Seattle	Mayor	Jenny Durkan
Member Permanent Seat	City of Snoqualmie	Mayor	Matt Larson
Member Permanent Seat	City of Tukwila	Mayor	Alan Ekberg
Member SCA	City of Duvall	Councilmember	Michelle Hogg
Member SCA, Chair	City of Pacific	Mayor	Leanne Guier
Member SCA	City of Sammamish	Mayor	Karen Moran
Member SCA	Town of Skykomish	Mayor	Henry Sladek
Member Rural/Unincorporated			Ken Hearing
Alternate SCA	Black Diamond	Mayor	Carol Benson
Alternate SCA	Maple Valley	Councilmember	Linda Johnson
Alternate SCA	Burien	Councilmember	Kevin Schilling
Alternate	City of Auburn	Councilmember	Chris Stearns
Alternate	City of Bellevue		
Alternate	City of Carnation		
Alternate	City of Kent	Councilmember	Toni Troutner
Alternate	King County	Director, Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget	Dwight Dively
Alternate	City of North Bend		
Alternate	City of Renton	Councilmember	Valerie O'Halloran
Alternate	City of Seattle	Councilmember	Alex Pedersen
Alternate	City of Snoqualmie		
Alternate	City of Tukwila		