

October 18, 2016

Sandy Gaither 15032 SE Aub-Blk Diamond Rd.

King County Council

Re: Budget Review, Unincorporated King County

Thank you for coming to south King County to allow residents easier access to the county budgeting process. I would invite you to do this much more frequently. I would like to speak to many budget items, but of course, time will not allow that. As a resident of Unincorporated Southeast King County, the stress of property taxes, the responsibility of stewardship of land and critical areas, due process of land use concerns, and of course personal and property safety are paramount to me.

I support a county and state income tax system, with reduction in property taxes. I would like to truly own my property rather than continually rent it from the county. Unpopular? Of course, but as I slide from what was once a comfortable economic middle income situation to a plateau with spending limitations that will soon be barely manageable, I ask what else you would propose? We have a good economy. Please lend your courage, your voices to restructure our taxation framework to include income taxes.

Your very best ambassadors in unincorporated King county are the Sheriff Department Deputies. And we need more of them visible on the roads and at community functions, not less. We don't often see Council members in southeast King County. The Deputies represent you as much as the Department as a whole. I want to thank the Sheriff for already implementing something that's in the budget plan, page 22 in my version, which speaks to community outreach and communication. I am regularly notified of training activities which have the potential to concern or adversely impact me as a neighbor to the training site. That notification has made a huge difference.

The Department of Environmental Permitting and Review is clearly still understaffed, and this department impacts what takes place in unincorporated areas. Citizens are told that the department operates on a complaint/violation system with little staff to investigate or monitor existing permits. There are pending violations filed against Pacific Raceway that are years behind, and the statement on page 41 which indicates half of all violations 120 days or older will be "reduced" is bothersome at best. The processes for old and new projects, Demonstration projects, other development must be transparent and inclusive of public comment and notification. This means more funding, more staff.

I will close with a plea to continue park and open spaces funding. There is a continuous stream of words spoken for the environment, preservation of open space, farm lands and other areas that should be held for the future, maintained for our children and grandchildren. So often your words are very site specific, leaving other equally vulnerable areas to the favor of development or profit. Urban communities enjoy and need rural areas and parkland as much as those of us who live there.

Please take these concerns into consideration . Thank you very much.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sandra K. Gaither". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large, stylized 'S' at the beginning.