KING COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT

REVISED Staff Report

Agenda Item:	4	**Name:**	Michelle Clark
Proposed Legislation:	FCD2025-12	**Date:**	November 12, 2025

FCD2025-12: A RESOLUTION relating to the operation and finances of the King County Flood Control Zone District, adopting the 2026 budget and authorizing improvements.

Budget Process Background

The King County Flood Control District ("District") Advisory Committee ("Advisory Committee") is comprised of 14 elected executives or councilmember alternates and 1 unincorporated areas representative. The Advisory Committee provides policy recommendations to the District and recommends an annual budget and 6-yr CIP. They generally meet four to five times a year, mostly in the summer months, and per Ordinance 15728, must transmit their budget recommendations to the District by the last business day of the year. The transmittal of the Advisory Committee's Recommended Budget "kicks off" the Distict's annual budget process.

The District budgets annually and sets its levy rate every year as part of the annual budget. The District has the ability to levy up to $0.50/$1,000 AV per statue, however, because of levy suppression, in reality the District can levy up to $0.22/$1,000 AV. The levy rate for 2025 is $0.11/$1,000 AV.

Advisory Committee Recommended Budget

The Advisory Committee met seven times to provide the District with policy advice on regional flood protection issues. They received a briefing on an overview of the District's approaches to flood risk reduction by basin, and the provided input, following briefings, to the District's White Paper related to Integrated Floodplain Management & Capital Project Prioritization and the District's revised financial policy. Additionally, the Advisory Committee received updates related to the District's ongoing efforts and they participated in deliberations related to the District's 2026 Budget and, 2026-2031 6-year Capital Improvement Program (6-yr CIP).

The Advisory Committee recommended 2026 Budget is $110,422,563. The Advisory Committee Recommended Budget does not assume a 1% plus new construction increase in the levy rate. The recommended 2026 Operating Budget of $17,535,208 is an increase of $1,252,808 from the 2025 Approved Budget (or an increase of $952,808 over the 2025 mid-year Revised Budget). The recommended 2026 Capital Budget of $90,398,718 is $21,790,175 lower than last year's capital budget recommendation. The

2026-2031 6-yr CIP contains three new projects proposed for 2026 (Snoqualmie River Capital Improvement Strategy (CIS) Reprioritization, Cedar River CIS Reprioritization, and Technical Flood Studies, Attachment H Lines 20, 71, and 143).

Advisory Committee Policy Recommendations

1. **District Revenue, External Funding Opportunities, and Fund Balance**

The Advisory Committee continues to strongly urge the District to evaluate the revenue and external funding opportunities, staffing capacity, and other resources necessary to cover long-term capital and operating needs and meet project implementation schedules. Additionally, the Advisory Committee reiterates their recommendation that the District designate a minimum fund balance as called for in the District's fund balance policy to ensure sufficient resources to carry out the District's Annual Workplan.

2. **Advisory Committee 2026 Meeting Schedule**

The Advisory Committee appreciated the monthly meetings held between February and August 2025, and the orientation meeting in February to on-board new members and to inform the Advisory Committee about the actions the Board of Supervisors took in November 2024 regarding the 2025 Budget. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee appreciated the collaborative process at a staff-level to begin the process of evaluating construction projects on the District's 2025 Six-Year CIP. The Advisory Committee anticipates this process continuing in 2026 and look forward to the continued exchange of ideas and technical expertise. Therefore, the Advisory Committee urges the District to continue support for the Advisory Committee and Joint Basin Technical Committee to meet throughout 2026.

3. **Capital Project Reprioritization**

The Advisory Committee appreciated the District's holistic consideration of revenue and expenditures and are encouraged by consideration of a capital project prioritization paradigm based on risk, severity, and consequence. The Advisory Committee was briefed on and provided input into the development of the White Paper presented to the District this Spring. The Advisory Committee looks forward to the continued deliberations on, and the adoption of, a capital project prioritization policy based on the White Paper and further work to refine the prioritization criteria and process to align with future strategic planning work. The Advisory Committee also urges the District to balance revenues, resources, and increasing expenses to ensure the District continues to progress on key priorities.

4. **Strategic Plan**

The Advisory Committee recommends the District begin a strategic planning process to guide its critically important work as part of the 2026 Work Plan. The Strategic Plan should incorporate the principles of equity and social justice, climate change, the recognition of Tribal treaty rights and a robust community engagement process. Additionally, the updated strategic plan should be informed by the 2024 King County Flood Management Plan, but the District should undertake a unique planning process that includes an assessment of flood risks countywide, a description of flood risks of all rivers in King County, including but not limited to the Duwamish River, a description of the flood risk reduction tools implemented by the District, and direction on development of future 6-year CIP programs. The Advisory Committee urges the incorporation of the Integrated Floodplain Management Motion and extensive community outreach and collaboration framework used by the District in the creation of its Lower Green River Corridor Flood Hazard Management Plan and Capital Investment Strategy currently underway. The Advisory Committee anticipates providing policy guidance to the District as part of the development of this strategic plan.

5. **Grants**

The District addresses local flood reduction and habitat needs through its robust grant program. The Advisory Committee continues to support these programs and urges the District to continue to require a flood reduction nexus to all its grant programs.

6. **District Financial Policy**

The Advisory Committee discussed the potential for bonding to pay for large, long-term capital projects such as the Pacific Right Bank Flood Reduction Project, the Black River Capital Investment Strategy, and the Lower Frew Levy Setback Project. The Advisory Committee appreciated the inclusion of the development of financial policies in the District's 2025 Work Plan and reiterate their recommendation that the District adopt and implement financial policies that include the possibility of debt financing to pay for large capital projects. The Advisory Committee anticipates the District adopting new financial policies in the coming months and look forward to receiving a briefing shortly after adoption.

Policy Decisions

- Should the District implement the Advisory Committee recommendation to adopt a capital project prioritization policy based on the District's White Paper and further work to refine the prioritization criteria and process to align with future strategic planning work?
- Should the District implement the Advisory Committee recommendation to begin a strategic planning process to guide its critically important work as part of the 2026 Work Plan?
- Should the District implement the Advisory Committee recommendation to adopt and implement financial policies that include the possibility of debt financing to pay for large capital projects?

Outstanding Issues

Staff will continue to work with Supervisors, and jurisdiction staff related to technical adjustments, policy initiatives, and emerging issues. This includes potential changes related to:

1. **Updated Financial Forecast**

The August financial forecast will change the WRIA grant and Sub Regional Opportunity Fund allocations and may require a change to Attachment H and an updated Financial Plan.

2. **Ongoing Work on Capital Projects and Low-Flow Facility Inspections**

Ongoing work including projects reaching the next "gate" or design milestone, and low-flow facility inspections may necessitate a change in Attachment H. These projects include:

   a. Willowmoor Floodplain Restoration
   b. Desimone Major Repair
   c. Projects with service providers other than King County including:

i. Covington Creek Project lead by Black Diamond
ii. Bendigo Bridge Upper, Ribary Creek, and the Middle Fork Flood Conveyance Project led by North Bend

3. **Standardizing Project Names**

District staff have been working with county staff to standardize the names of District projects on Attachment H. The proposed project names are intended to provide clarity and transparency for the public.

4. **King County Request for Additional FTEs**

King County has requested five additional FTEs (one communications staff and four maintenance staff) to implement the District's Work Plan and Budget. District staff and Council are working collaboratively to provide analysis and information to Supervisors and Councilmembers.

CHAIR'S STRIKING AMENDMENT

The proposed 2026 budget is $114,113,120. This includes $94,080,275 in the capital budget, $17,535,208 in the operating budget, and $2,488,637 in the district administration budget. The Chair's Striking Amendment contains direction related to:

1. **Increases Transparency.**
   a. Standardizing Project Names. Attachment H contains the new and old project names. The new project names are intended to provide clarity and transparency for the public.
   b. Creates Individual Projects for Capital Investment Strategies.
2. **Strategic Plans.**
   a. District Strategic Plan. Directs the District executive director to develop a King County Flood Control District Strategic Plan. The District executive director will work with experts, including members of the District Advisory Committee, Joint Basin Technical Committee, and representatives from King County water and land resources division.
   b. Lower Green River Corridor Plan and Capital Investment Strategy. Directs District executive director to continue the work necessary to develop the Lower Green River Corridor Plan and Capital Investment Strategy.
3. **Specific Capital Projects Including:**
   a. Desimone Levee Major Repair Project – directs King County to continue alternatives analysis. These alternatives will meet the District's flood risk reduction goals while complying with the principles of integrated floodplain management.
   b. Willowmoor Floodplain Restoration Project – directs King County to continue the work necessary to pursue permits for long-term maintenance of the Sammamish River Transition Zone and develop thirty percent design.
   c.
   d. Gilliam Creek Fish Barrier Removal Project (Attachment H, Line 109, $300K).

   e. Mill Creek 2 Expansion Project (Attachment H, Line 110, $200K).
   f. Middle Green Acquisitions (Attachment H, Line 11, $200K).
   g. Sammamish River at River Mile 7.2 Left Bank Repair Project (Attachment H, Line 60, $500K).
   h. Lower Cedar River Feasibility Study (Attachment H, Line 87, $290K) – directs District executive director to negotiate an amendment with the City of Renton for this project.
4. **Technical Studies.**
   a. Snoqualmie Valley Feasibility Study. Directs King County to continue work on this study.
   b. Improving Isolated Neighborhoods During Flood Events (Phase 2) Report. Directs King County to continue the work necessary to update the "Improving Access to Isolated Neighborhoods During Flood Events (Phase 2) Report." This update shall include climate change as part of the analysis of communities that are isolated due to flood inundation of King County roads during flood events. King County shall provide a work plan including milestones to the District by March 31, 2026.
   c. Sea Level Rise Analysis (Attachment H, Line 124, $400K) – directs King County to conduct a sea level rise analysis on the Sliver by the River along the Duwamish River. King County shall provide a work plan including project milestones to the District by April 15, 2026.
5. **Continued Funding for the Climate Corps (Attachment H, Line 144, $1.3M).** This innovative internship program is focused on developing workforce pathways creating career opportunities and living wage jobs for youth related to climate change, habitat restoration and/or flood risk reduction.
6. **Technological Updates to the King County Flood Warning Center (Attachment H, Line 147, $100K).** Directs King County to provide a report related to technological updates to the Flood Warning Center related to incorporating information from additional sources including, but not limited to, data from the Floodzilla gauges used in the Snoqualmie Basin and the Alert2 system used by other flood control organizations nationwide. This report shall be to the District by July 3, 2026.
7. **Dam Safety Education and Outreach.** Reaffirms the District commitment dam safety education and outreach by directing King County to continue this work.
8. **PL84-99 Easement Updates (Attachment H, Line 148, $430K).** Directs King County to update easements related to King County levees enrolled in the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) PL84-99 program require changes to maintain eligibility in the USACE PL-84-99 Program. King County shall develop a work plan, including the number of easements requiring updates and a timeline for updating those easements. This report shall be transmitted to the District by July 31, 2026.
9. **Home Elevations.** Directs King County to implement the administrative improvements and efficiencies outlined in the August 2025 Report on Prioritization Paradigms for the King County Home Elevation Program.

10. **Flood Resilience Improvement Program.** Directs King County to implement the Flood Resilience Improvement Program in the Sliver by the River along the Duwamish River. County shall provide a work plan including project milestone to the District by April 15, 2026.