

King County Parks

Recent Accomplishments, Parks Levy Citizen Oversight Board Findings, and Parks Levy Task Force Recommendations



Briefing to
the Transportation, Economy and Environment Committee
of the King County Council
Councilmember Larry Phillips, Chair

02/19/2013

Agenda

1. About King County Parks: Background and Highlights
2. King County Parks Levy Citizen Oversight Board: Overview and Findings
3. King County Parks Levy Task Force: Findings and Recommendations
4. Planning for the future of King County Parks

About King County Parks



Kevin Brown, Division Director

King County Parks' Vision



Providing regional and rural recreational facilities



Partnering with business and community



Connecting the county: Regional Trails System and open space corridors



A New Way of Doing Business

2002 Business Transition Plan – Key Principles:

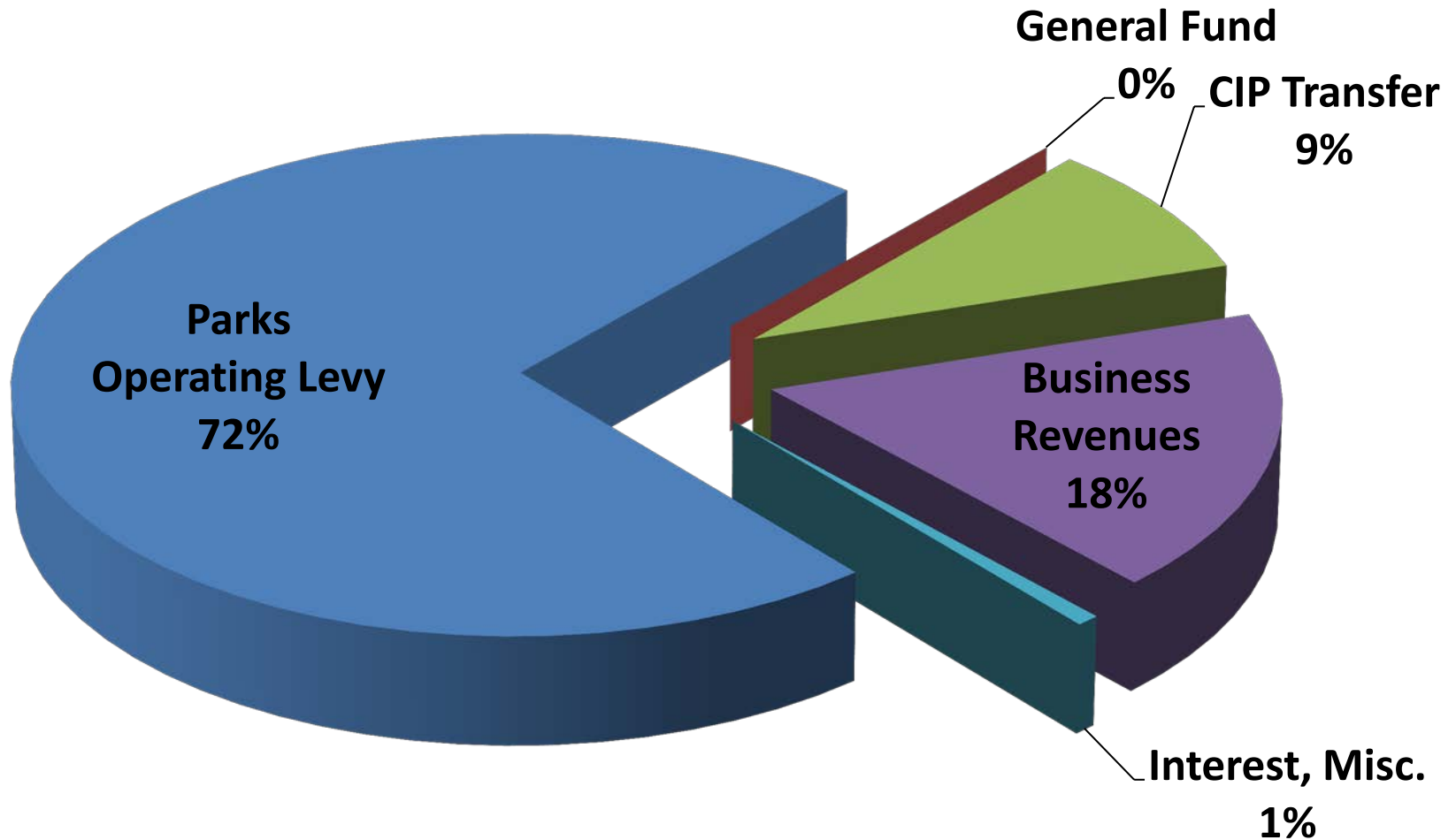
- Regional parks, open space and trails
- Local, rural parks
- Maximize business revenues
- Strategic partnerships
- Be entrepreneurial
- Transfer assets in urban areas


Operations & Maintenance Levy



- Approved in August 2007 by 63%
- 6-year period: 2008-2013
- Levy lid lift, with annual CPI adjustment
- 2013 Effective levy rate = 6.7¢ or \$22.63/yr for owner of a \$340,000 home

2012 Adopted Revenues




- 
- 1 million visitors annually
 - Ballfields, dog park, historic Clise Mansion, concerts, Cirque, conservation area, regional trail

Marymoor Park


- Competition & recreation pools, dive tank
- 70+ events held annually, including US Olympic Team–Diving Trials (June 2012)



Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center

- 
- A person is seen from behind, hiking on a dirt trail through a dense forest. The trail is heavily shaded and surrounded by lush green ferns and other vegetation. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating dappled light on the ground. The person is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark pants.
- 3,100 acres with 36 miles of backcountry trails
 - Crown jewel of “Issaquah Alps”, King County’s most popular nature park

Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park

- 
- An aerial photograph of a vast, green forested valley. In the foreground, a dense forest of evergreen trees covers the hillsides. A winding river flows through the center of the valley, surrounded by smaller green fields and scattered buildings. In the background, large, rugged mountains rise against a blue sky with light clouds. The overall scene is a lush, natural landscape.
- 24,000 acres of forests and natural lands
 - 180 miles of backcountry trails
 - 5 working forests
 - Protecting and restoring forests, improving water quality, providing habitat for endangered salmon, and reducing region's carbon footprint

26,000 acres of open space

- 2+ miles of publicly accessible, undeveloped Puget Sound shoreline on Maury Island
- Protecting and restoring critical nearshore habitat for salmon

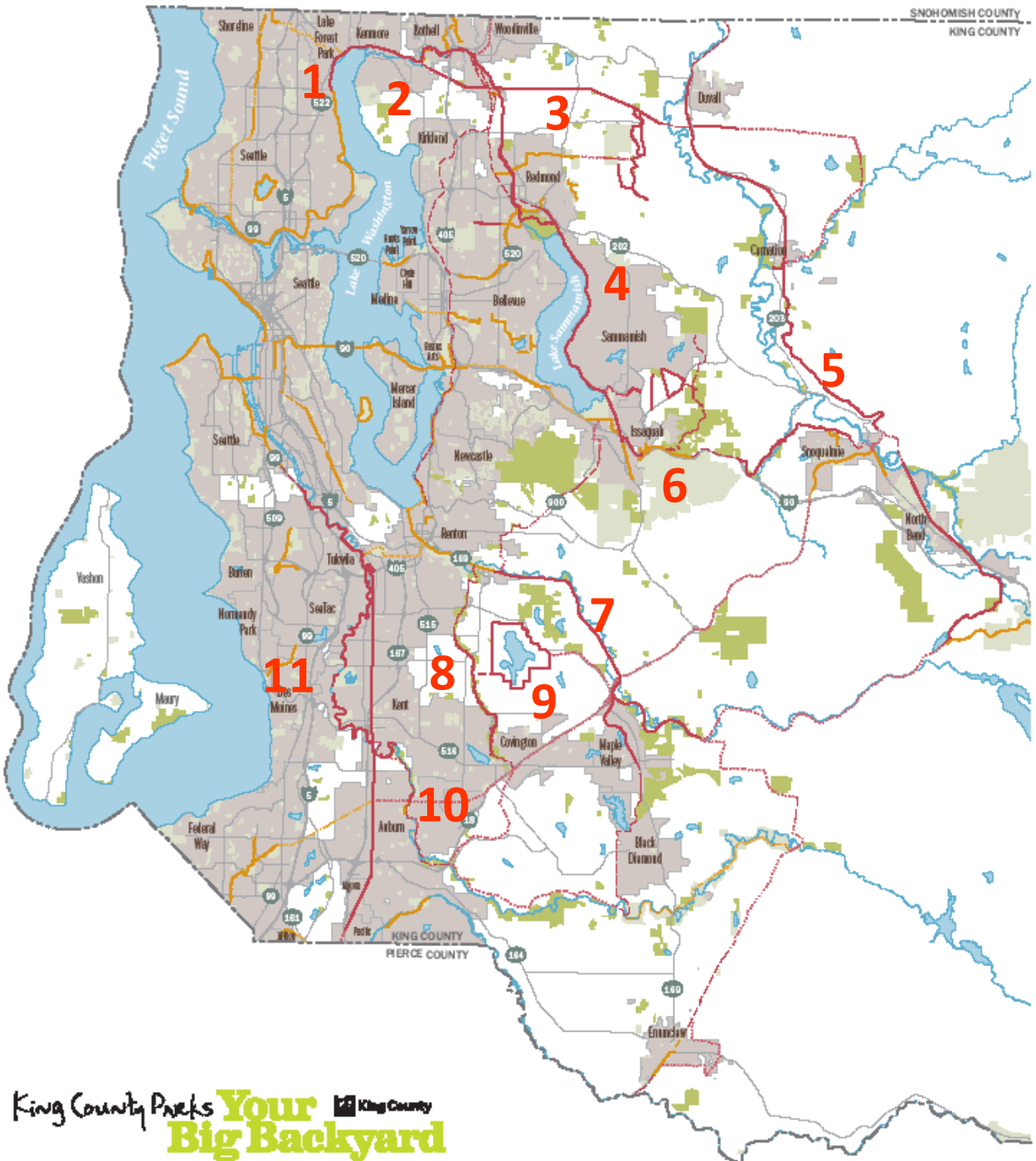
Maury Island Marine Park

A scenic view of a rocky beach on Maury Island, Washington. The foreground is dominated by a large pile of weathered driftwood and tall, dry grasses. The beach is composed of grey pebbles and leads to a calm, blue body of water. In the background, a forested hillside rises under a clear blue sky.

- Local parks serve residents in unincorporated King County
- Ballfields, picnic shelters, play structures, and community gathering spaces



Ravensdale Park



King County's Regional Trails System

Major Trails

1. Burke-Gilman Trail
2. Sammamish River Trail
3. Tolt Pipeline Trail
4. East Lake Sammamish Trail
5. Snoqualmie Valley Trail
6. Preston Snoqualmie Trail
7. Cedar River Trail
8. Soos Creek Trail
9. Lake Youngs Trail
10. Interurban Trail
11. Green River Trail

- 175 miles of regional trails
- Long-term vision: 300 miles of trails



Burke-Gilman Trail

- Connecting communities for commuting and recreation
- Urban and rural trails, links to local trail systems in cities



Snoqualmie Valley Trail

- 50,000+ service hours (annual avgs)
- 8,000+ volunteers from 50+ schools, community groups, and companies
- 400+ events



Volunteer Program

- Generate revenue, create efficiencies, or enhance recreation amenities
- Sponsorships, naming rights, donations, concessions, cross-promotions, special events, parking, and facility rentals



kingcounty.gov/parks

CONCERTS AT MARYMOOR 08

movies@marymoor

CONCERTS AT MARYMOOR 08

June
5 Evelyn Babo & The Rain
14 The Girl's Summer Camp DJ
Popping Works, Resonance, NGPT
Sonic Surf
21 Brian Regan (Comedian)

July
5 One Hand
10 Sander & Son
12-13
S&S Pop Records 20th
Anniversary Festival
19 Lee Lacey Boy and The Ladies
20 The Climbans
22 Super Heroes
& Wonder Mountain Dining Hall

August
9 Double Brothers
15 A Home Home Companion
21 Garret on Kaffir

Located at King County's Marymoor Park
Address: 16000 1st Ave S, Everett, WA 98201

12345678910123456789101

EVENT PARKING
King County Parks Your Big Backyard

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

CONCERTS AT MARYMOOR

movies@marymoor

ART PARK

REDMOND TOWN CENTER

Present this voucher at David Services, located at the corner of 34th and 34th to receive a complimentary Shopping & Dining Voucher Reward Book.

Featuring 10 full-service restaurants and multiple grab and go dining options including: Cold Stone Creamery, Clavin Sanger • Mattie's Bellwether, Noodle Station, Cantine • Red Robin, Spicco Italian Grill • Starbucks and Thai Ginger

Business Revenue & Partnerships



Tanner Landing Park



Island Center Forest



Cougar-Squak Corridor



Tolt-MacDonald Park



Duthie Hill

Open Space & Trails Levy



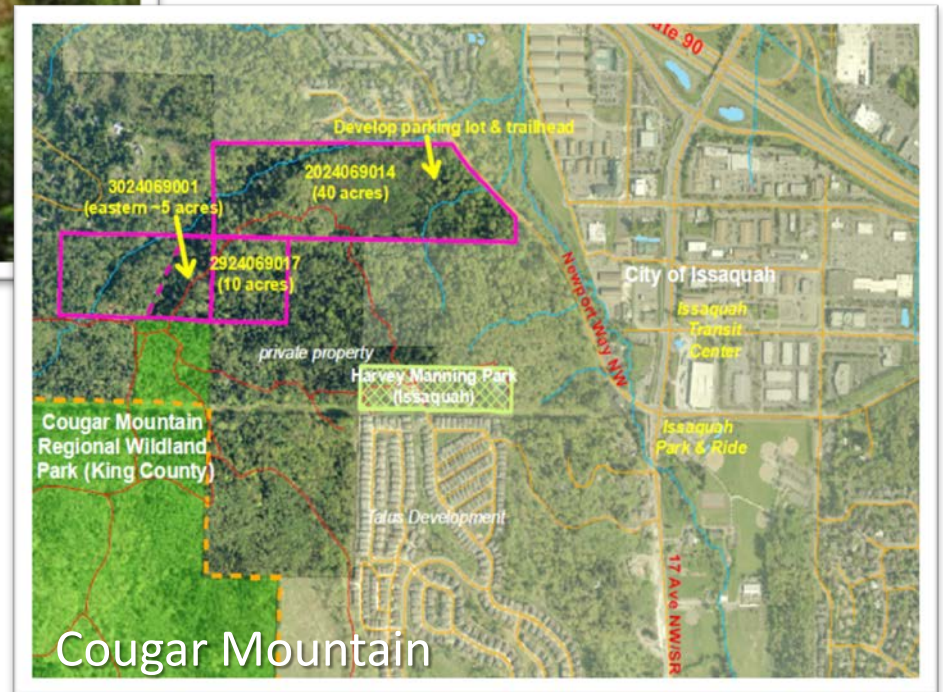
- Approved in August 2007 by 59%
- 6-year period: 2008-2013
- Levy lid lift, with annual CPI adjustment
- 2013 Effective levy rate = 6.7¢ or \$22.63/yr for owner of a \$340,000 home
- Distribution of levy proceeds
 - King County – 60%
 - Cities – 20%
 - Woodland Park Zoo – 20%

Open Space & Trails Levy: Open Space Acquisitions



Island Center Forest

- 5,500 acres protected since 2008 (in fee and easement)



Cougar Mountain

Open Space & Trails Levy: Open Space Acquisitions



Bass Lake Natural Area

- \$20M allocated over 6-year levy period
- Leveraged millions in match from CFT and grants



Carnation Marsh Natural Area

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Regional Trails

- Safe place to walk, run, learn to ride a bike
- Connects Sammamish River Trail to East Lake Sammamish Trail



Marymoor Connector Trail

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Regional Trails

Burke-Gilman Trail Redevelopment (Lake Forest Park Segment)



Before

- Replaced bridge, added benches, lighting, native vegetation

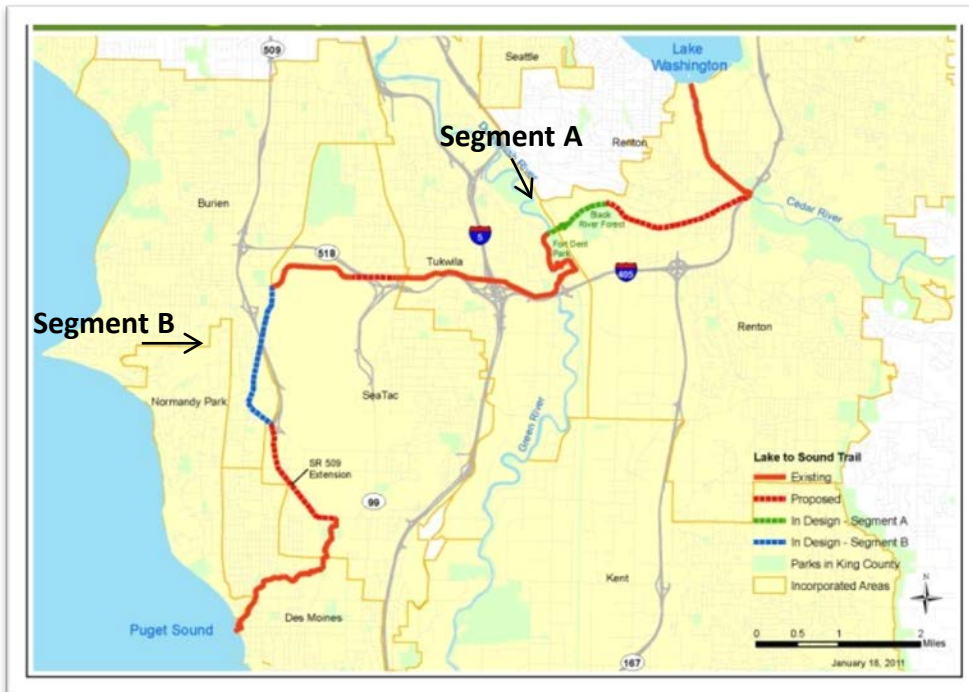
- Improved safety: better sightlines, wider trail, enhanced traffic controls



After

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Regional Trails

Lake-to-Sound Trail: Design and Phase I construction



- 16-mile corridor linking Lake Washington to Puget Sound through 5 cities

- Construction of Segment B begins in 2013



Segment B: Current Conditions

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Community Partnerships & Grants Program



**Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Park
(Partner: Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance)**

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Community Partnerships & Grants Program



**Dockton Historical Trail
(Partner: Friends of Dockton Park)**

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Community Partnerships & Grants Program



**Ravensdale Park
(Partner: Ravensdale Park Foundation)**

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Community Partnerships & Grants Program



**Hollywood Hill Equestrian Park
(Partner: Hollywood Hill Saddle Club)**

2008-2013 Open Space & Trails Levy: Community Partnerships & Grants Program



**Bethaday Community Learning Space at Lakewood Park
(Partner: Technology Access Foundation)**

2008-2013 King County Parks Levy Citizen Oversight Board



Bill Fuller, COB Member, Council District 1

Citizen Oversight Board

Purpose: Review and report to the County Executive and County Council on expenditure of proceeds from parks levies, including making policy recommendations regarding future expenditures of levy proceeds.

Membership: Appointed by Council Council, representing each council district.

Proceedings: Convenes annually to review prior year expenditures; submits written report to County Executive and County Council

Citizen Oversight Board: Findings

- Reviewed years 2008 - 2011
- Concluded that **Parks has complied** with requirements of levies
- **No concerns** with Parks' fiduciary responsibilities or financial management of levy funds

“As was true for every levy year since 2008, ...the Division is in compliance... we commend the Division for their efforts ...”
-COB Report, Nov 2012

Citizen Oversight Board: Recommendations

- Expend the maximum amount allowable towards the **Community Partnerships and Grants** program.
- Make significant progress on the **backcountry trails** program.
- Ensure **appropriate public access** to open space.
- Maximize collaboration with cities on **linking trails under multiple jurisdictions**.
- Maintain and expand **volunteer involvement**.
- **Increase the marketing** of parks and facilities.

King County Parks Levy Task Force



Louise Miller, Co-Chair, Parks Levy Task Force

Purpose of Task Force

Guiding Questions and Considerations

- What should be done to **preserve the County's 26,000-acre system of parks and trails** after the current operating and capital levies expire at the end of 2013?
- What should be done to **meet the future parks and recreation needs** of King County residents?
- Task Force recommendations should promote the goals of the County's **equity and social justice initiative**
- Task Force recommendations should further **King County Strategic Plan** priorities
- Task Force should **identify structure and scope of any funding option(s)** it recommends

King County Parks Levy Task Force

Membership

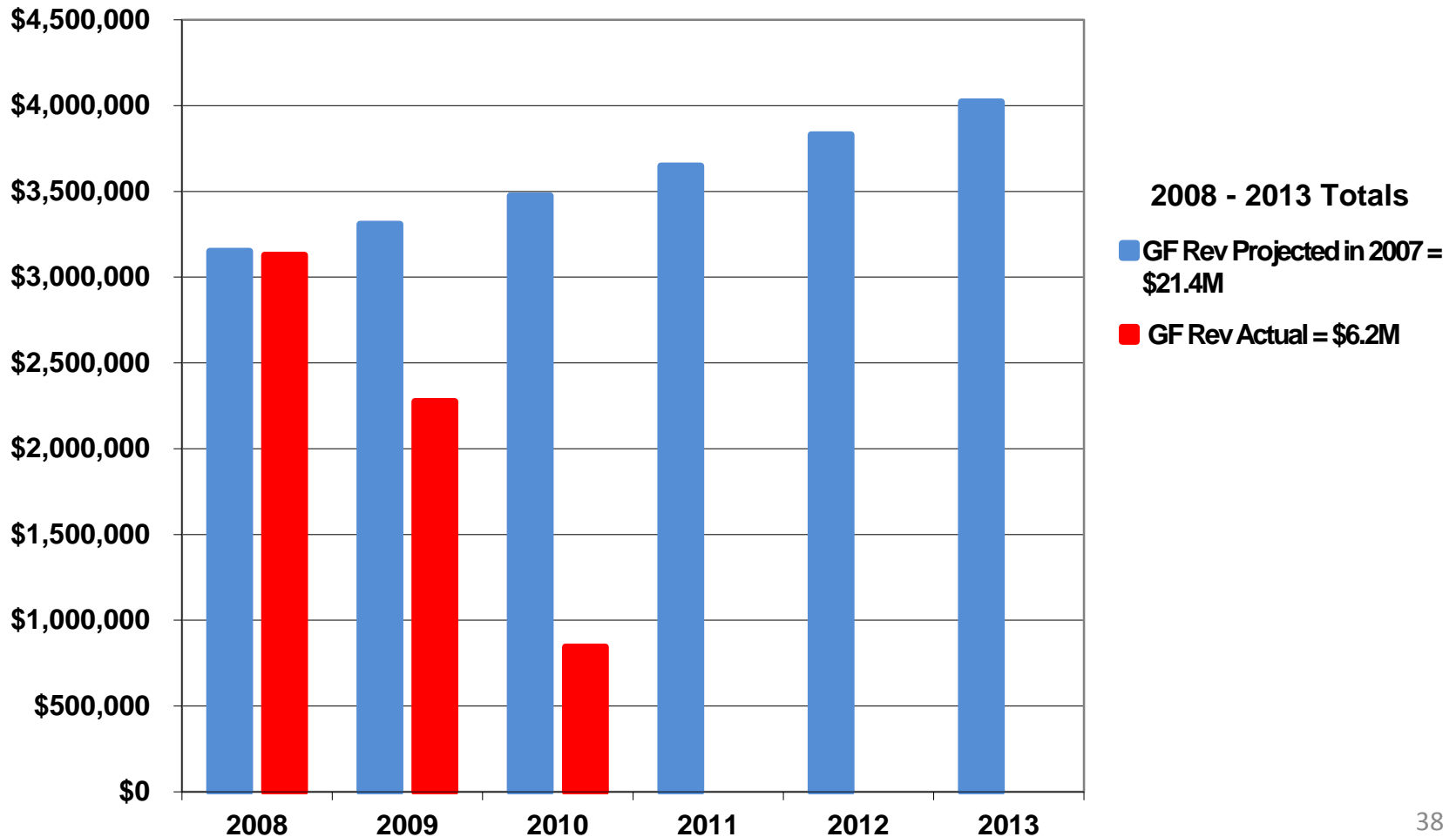
- 21 business and civic leaders
- Representing all geographic regions of county and affiliations such as recreation, open space protection, public health, community involvement, and equity and social justice.

Proceedings

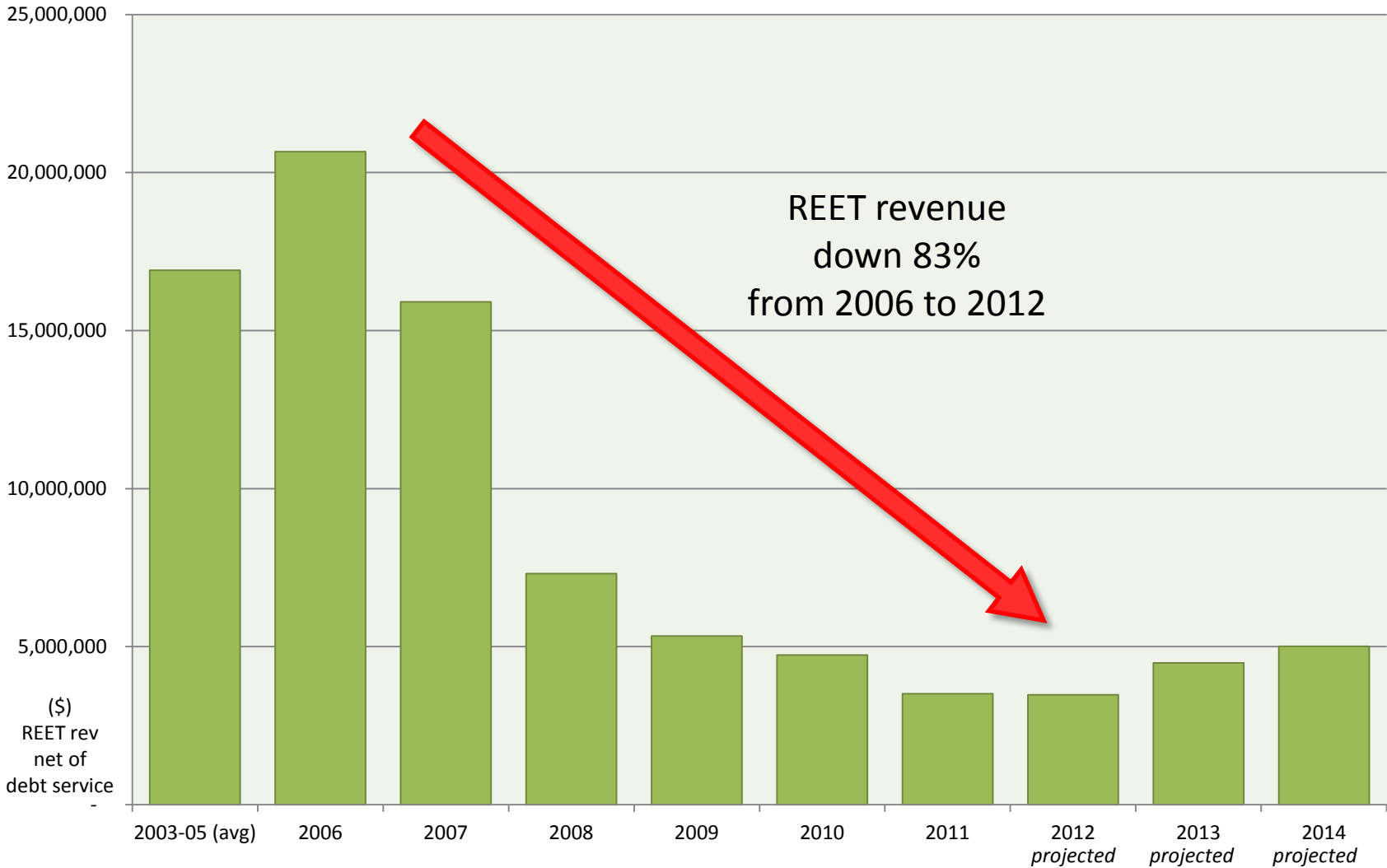
- Met from June – October 2012
- Consensus-based decision-making

Context of Deliberations

Parks Operating Revenues: Elimination of General Fund



REIT Challenges



2011 Customer Satisfaction Initiative



- 1700 online respondents
- 400 park user interviews
- 16 jurisdictions (Parks Directors)
- 15 King County employee meetings
- 2 focus groups

Common Themes

King County's parks, trails, and natural areas - wise investment

Invest in maintenance and protect existing infrastructure

Regional trails: good fit for King County; focus on missing links

Partnerships are critical, leverage tight resources

Regional recreation facilities: geographic inequities

Aquatics: need region-wide discussion, not right fit for Parks' levy

Parks Task Force: Key Findings

- King County's parks, trails, and open space **contribute to our region's high quality of life**; King County residents recognize and value these services.
- A **voter-approved property tax levy lid lift** should be sought to fund King County Parks. There are currently no reasonable alternative revenue sources.
- **Taking care of existing park and trail assets** should be a priority.
- Parks has been **successful at leveraging levy funds and generating revenue**, but future business revenue growth should reflect slightly lower targets.
- Regional and local parks, trails, and recreation facilities are **integrally linked** and should be supported under a regional levy.

Parks Task Force Recommendations

Component		Levy Rate (cents)	Annual \$ (millions)	\$ per HH (annual) ⁺
Continuing Current Level of Effort 14.89¢/\$47.6M/\$50.60 per HH	County Parks Operations and Maintenance	8.29	\$26.5	\$28.20
	Regional Open Space Acquisition	1.32	\$4.2	\$4.50
	Regional Trails System	2.48	\$8.0	\$8.40
	Community Partnerships and Grants	0.16	\$0.5	\$0.50
	Cities' Parks and Trails	1.32	\$4.2	\$4.50
	Woodland Park Zoo	1.32	\$4.2	\$4.50
Strategic Enhancements 4.12¢/\$13.3M/\$14.00 per HH	Preserve/Protect BNSF Corridor	0.23	\$0.7	\$0.80
	4-H Program	0.03	\$0.1	\$0.10
	Community Partnerships and Grants	0.08	\$0.24	\$0.30
	Asset Replacement and Repair *	0.80	\$2.6	\$2.70
	Bridges and Trestles *	0.30	\$1.0	\$1.00
	Trailhead Development and Accessibility *	0.20	\$0.6	\$0.70
	Regional Open Space Acquisition	0.68	\$2.2	\$2.30
	New Trail Corridor Development	1.80	\$5.8	\$6.10
TOTAL **		19.01	\$60.9	\$64.60

* Previously funded by REET

** May not add due to rounding.

Preparing for the Future



200 PARKS 175 MILES OF TRAIL 26,000 ACRES OF OPEN SPACE

King County Parks **Your**  King County
Big Backyard 43

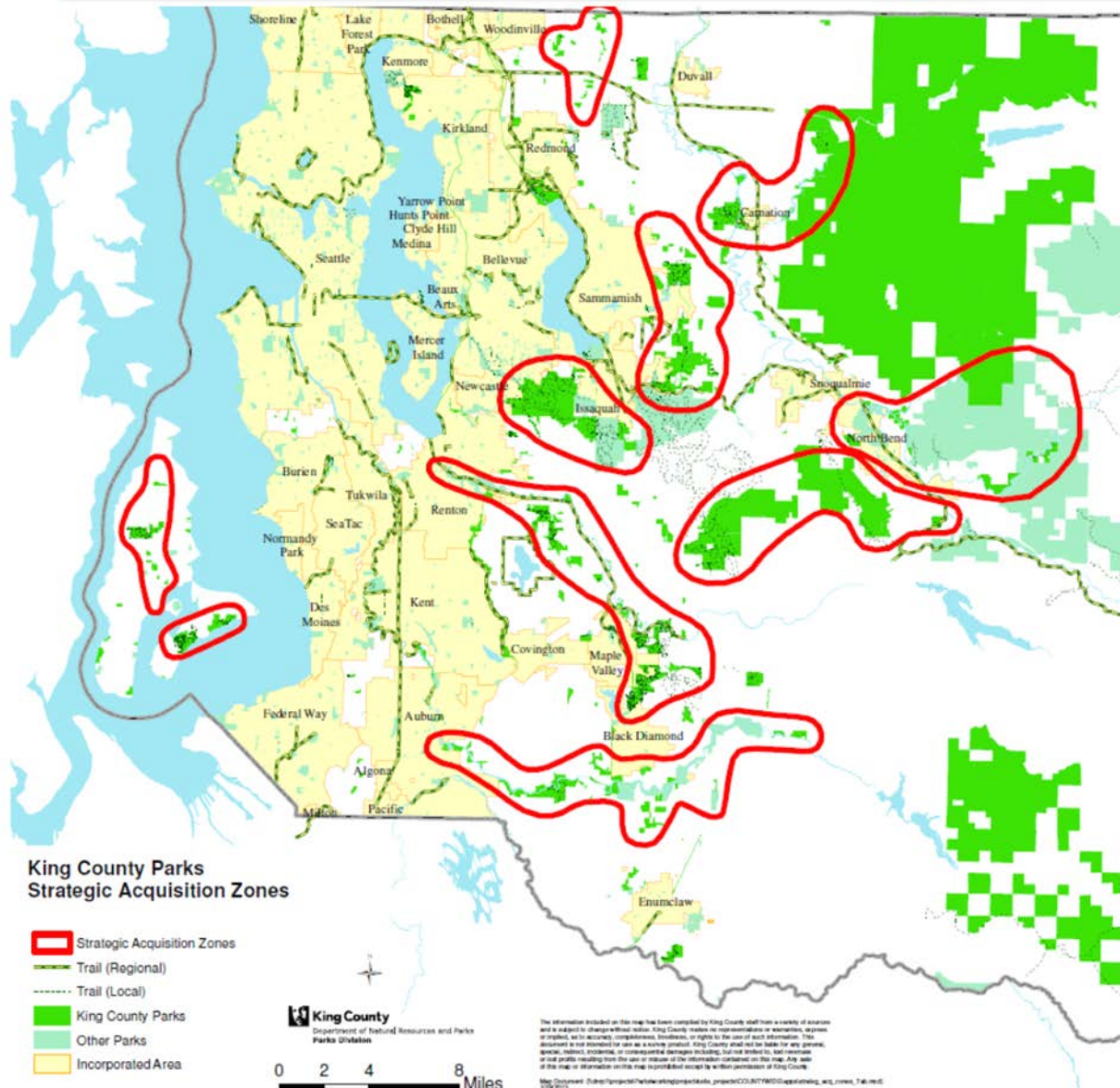
King County Parks in the Future



- Provide a growing system of active and natural area parks
- Connect the county through regional trails
- Offer diverse, accessible, close-to-home recreation
- Protect natural heritage: forests, streams, salmon
- Reduce region's carbon footprint
- Partner to nurture corporate and community stewardship



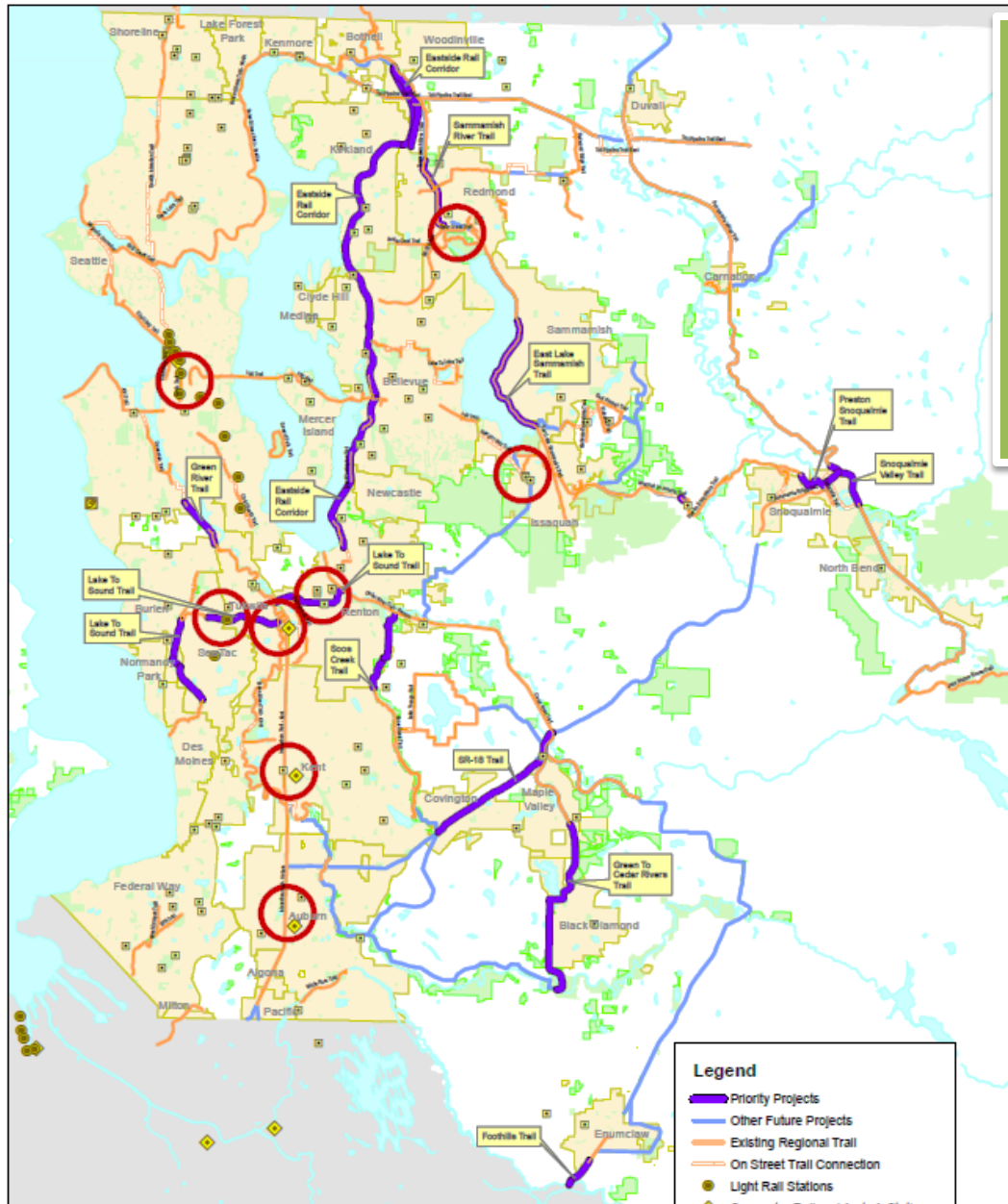
Planning for the future: Open space acquisition



- ✓ Connectivity / Adjacency
- ✓ Public access
- ✓ Protect regional watersheds and streams (informed by WRIA and Open Space Plans, CFT criteria)
- ✓ Provide multiple benefits (recreation, public access, habitat protection)
- ✓ Build upon prior public land investments

Planning for the future: Regional Trails










- ✓ Take care of existing Regional Trails System
- ✓ Improve regional mobility
- ✓ Address missing trail connections
- ✓ Connect trails to transit, civic hubs
- ✓ Coordinate with local, regional jurisdictions



Regional Trails Future Priority Projects

 **King County**
Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
Parks Division

Legend

-  Priority Projects
-  Other Future Projects
-  Existing Regional Trail
-  On Street Trail Connection
-  Light Rail Stations
-  Commuter Rail and Amtrak Stations
-  King County Metro Park & Ride Lots
-  Ferry Terminals
-  Mobility Connection Opportunities

February 4, 2013

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