



King County

Dow Constantine

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February 25, 2021

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

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits a proposed ordinance, that if approved, would appropriate \$64.6 million to the Capital budget of the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) for improvements to the electrical system at West Point Treatment Plant (WPTP). These improvements would further limit or eliminate unanticipated power disruptions at WPTP, which present an immediate threat to plant operations and employee safety and can result in unauthorized discharges from WPTP into Puget Sound.

Approval of this proposed legislation supports the Executive Declaration of Emergency (attached) that I made on February 25, 2021. It also supports a proposed motion to extend the waiver of requirements for competitive bidding and solicitation requirements for emergency work to improve power reliability at WPTP.

On February 2, 2021, the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) issued Administrative Order 19477 to King County regarding unauthorized bypasses of the secondary treatment system at WPTP between January 1, 2018 and June 30, 2020, which occurs when stormwater and sewage that has received some treatment is blended with wastewater that has been fully treated and disinfected. The Administrative Order requires DNRP to complete four corrective actions, which include the submittal of two reports to Ecology, development of a strategic master plan for WPTP's electrical system by December 31, 2021, and implementation of the corrective actions in the plan by December 31, 2025.

My Executive Declaration of Emergency, and a proposed motion to extend the waiver of requirements for competitive bidding and solicitation requirements, allow work to proceed quickly on modifying the electrical power system at WPTP. This proposed ordinance seeks

The Honorable Claudia Balducci

February 25, 2021

Page 2


appropriation of \$61.6 million to fund improvements to the electrical system, including modification of the cogeneration system that produces power and heat at WPTP. WTD will also consider other near-term options to improve power reliability, including the possible installation of a battery energy storage system. The proposed ordinance would also appropriate \$3 million for coordination with Seattle City Light to analyze and develop a schedule and cost estimate for a new electrical power line which would improve power reliability in the long term at WPTP.

The proposed legislation furthers the Healthy Environment goal of the King County Strategic Plan to integrate climate preparedness into County operations and provision of public services by appropriating funding to make power system improvements at WPTP. These improvements would limit or eliminate future unauthorized bypasses at WPTP because of power disruptions during extreme rain events that are occurring with greater frequency.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed appropriations ordinance. This important, proposed legislation will ensure there is no delay in addressing power reliability issues at WPTP, protecting employee safety, public health, and the environment.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Mark Isaacson, Division Director of the Wastewater Treatment Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-477-4601.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Karan Gill, Director, Council Relations, Office of the Executive

Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget

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

Mark Isaacson, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP