



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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April 22, 2022

John McClellan

Chair, Metropolitan Water Pollution

Abatement Advisory Committee

201 S Jackson .

Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Chair McClellan:

Thank you for the March 23, 2022, letter from the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC) regarding the Wastewater Treatment Division's (WTD) 2023 sewer rate proposal. MWPAAC's review and feedback are very important to me, and I am glad that you found this year's rate information to be transparent, thorough, and timely.

On April 21, 2022, I transmitted my proposed sewer rate and capacity charge increase for 2023 to the King County Council along with an updated 10-year rate forecast (2023-2032). The sewer rate proposal reflects essential investments in the regional wastewater system to sustain this critical regional service that protects public health, the environment, and our economy. As your letter notes, the 10-year rate forecast projects continued increases with a doubling of today's rate by 2032. This rate forecast may be further impacted by the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) schedule and the state's proposed nitrogen discharge limits. Like all our customers, I am concerned about affordability and the impact that projected rate increases have on households and businesses.

As we address major rate drivers over the next decade, I want to continue to work with MWPAAC as we evaluate the cost to complete capital projects under the CSO consent decree alongside many other necessary investments. In addition, King County will continue to develop and advocate for results-oriented, affordable solutions to improve water quality in Puget Sound. We appreciate MWPAAC's continued support and engagement on these tough issues.

Asset management is the foundation to ensuring a reliable, resilient, and efficient regional wastewater system, particularly as we experience the impacts of climate change and population growth. We must continue to make sufficient investments to replace and refurbish aging assets now and in the coming years, and we are building a data-informed system to

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prioritize those projects. We are also committed to continued collaboration to identify and deploy best practices for project management and cost estimating, so that decision-makers continue to have confidence in this important capital planning and implementation work.

Finally, I agree that our region needs creative, innovative strategies as we prepare for climate impacts, improve water quality, steward our assets, and provide for growth. MWPAAC's continued engagement is critical to our success. We need to work together to promote regulatory innovations that improve water quality faster and in the most cost-efficient way possible.

Thank you again for your thoughtful comment letter. We look forward to continued and productive collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dow Constantine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

cc: MWPAAC Members
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Kamuron Gurol, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP