Proposals for Renewal of County Parks Operating Levy and Park and Recreation Expansion Levy
King County Parks System

- Over 180 parks – from 0.25 acres to 3,100 acres
- More than 25,000 acres in total
- Regional Trail System comprised of nearly 175 miles of trails throughout urban and rural King County
- 90,000 acres of development rights (Snoqualmie Tree Farm) preserving land in private ownership, with public access
- Majority of System acreage is in large regional “passive” parks located in rural areas—open space, natural areas. Inexpensive to operate and maintain.
- Small percentage of parks and facilities are developed for “active recreation” – ballfields, pools, community centers. These are relatively expensive to operate and maintain.
Changes to County Park System since 2002 Budget Crisis

- 1/3 fewer FTEs
- We now focus on regional trails, regional passive parks and limited regional active parks
- Continue to maintain role as local rural park park provider
- Seek to transfer local urban parks to cities and others: transition nearly complete except for few remaining parks in annexation areas
- Focus on raising new operating revenue from entrepreneurial efforts
  - 22% of operating budget now supported from these sources.
County Parks System since 2002

- Development of new recreation facilities have been accomplished primarily thru the Community Partnership Grants program in which the Parks Division provides grant $ for groups that develop/maintain facilities on Park property.
- Limited acquisitions of new open space from Conservation Futures Tax funded purchases (about 1,000 acres a year).
- Regional Trail system additions of about 5 miles/year.
County system focuses on regional open space and regional trails

At least 280,000 more people will live in King County in 20 years.

Open space provides recreational opportunities, preserves watersheds and critical habitat.

Regional Trails provide recreation, link communities and parks, and serve as alternate transportation corridor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Regional Trails</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(owned and developed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquired Trail ROW</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(owned but not developed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional ROW planned</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parks System 2005 Operating Budget Revenues

$20.4 million

- Levy 57%
- Business Revenues (user fees, enterprise-entrepreneurial) 21%
- CX (General Fund) 13%
- Real Estate Excise Tax 6%
- Reimbursables for work on Capital Projects 2%
- Other 1%

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2006 Capital Budget Summary
$21.5 million
(Revenue Source: Unincorporated Area REET revenue)
Key Challenges

- Operating levy provides direct support for approximately 57% of operating budget. Expires 12/31/07

- Annexations and slower housing market could cause loss of over half of Parks capital funding (Real Estate Excise Tax) in next 6 years.

- County General Fund heading back into deficit in 2008. Service reductions likely across the board.

- County parks maintenance levels remain well below 2002 levels – and well below that of most city park systems.
Snapshot of County Budget Challenges

- Public Health funding: current program cost growth outstripping revenue growth
- PERS, LEOFF, benefit growth increasing dramatically
- Other funds also stressed: Roads, Surface Water Management
- Debt capacity limits: potential capital requests outstrip CX Fund debt policy limits
- Reserves funded in 2005-06 will be expended in 07-09 period
The Cyclical CX Deficit: From “The Perfect Storm” to “An Inconvenient Truth”

- In 2008, forecasted deficit of $9 million
- In 2009, additional deficit of $26 million
- In 2010, additional deficit of $32 million
Current (2004 to 2007) County Parks Operating Levy

- 2003 MPTF Recommendation: 5.5 cents, 6 years
- County Executive Proposal: 5 cents, 6 years
- County Council, voter approved: 4.9 cents, 4 years

- Typical household burden in 2007: $17.00/year ($400,000 a.v.)
- Provides about 57% of funding for Parks operation and maintenance (in 2007, will generate $12.6M)
2007 King County Parks Futures Task Force

- Convened: November 29, 2006 – March 14, 2007
- Co-Chairs: Gene Duvernoy, Ron Sher
- Task Force Mission: Address 2 issues:
  - How to maintain today's county park system after operating levy expires?
  - How to build the system to serve needs to the region tomorrow?
King County Parks Futures Task Force Deliberations

- Reviewed data on park system operations, finances
- Reviewed information on County General Fund situation
- Received presentations from city parks directors (Bellevue, Redmond, Renton, Seattle, Woodinville)
- Heard from park system user groups
- Presentations from Woodland Park Zoo, Seattle Parks Foundation
- A privately funded poll of County voters (n = 600) also provided information on public views of parks and recreation
Poll of 600 King County voters, February 2007

- A 7 cent maintenance levy for County parks system has 58% support
- A combined 15 cent County parks maintenance and expansion package has 44% support
- Adding money for Woodland Park Zoo modestly increases support for a County parks system levy
- Adding money for cities’ trails and open space modestly increases support
- Separating the maintenance and new acquisitions measures into two separate levies significantly increases support
- Support drops below 50% when the package costs more than $50/year
2007 Parks Futures Task Force Recommendation

Two companion levies* – August 21st Primary Ballot/6 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 cents King County Parks Support: Renew, Restore, Preserve</th>
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<tr>
<td>Replace current operating and maintenance levy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restore maintenance levels to pre-2002 budget crisis</td>
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<tr>
<td>King County: preserve open space and acquire and develop regional trails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities: open space and trails projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland Park Zoo: education, conservation &amp; capital programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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*Includes CPI inflator
Executive Recommendation/Council Approved

Two companion levies* – August 21<sup>st</sup> Primary Ballot/6 years

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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Replace current operating and maintenance levy</td>
<td>4.44 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore maintenance levels to pre-2002 budget crisis</td>
<td>0.56 cents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preserve adequate capital funding/replace declining REET – other source to be identified</td>
<td>0 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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*Includes CPI inflator
County Parks Renewal Levy

- Current operations can be continued for slightly smaller levy.

- Addition to levy to allow Division to restore maintenance levels in parks to pre-2002. Examples:
  - Allows Division to again maintain and further develop back country trails in passive open space parks.
  - Enhanced maintenance in open space (removal of illegal dumping, more plantings, mowing, removal of invasive species)
  - 75% increase in staff hours dedicated to maintaining regional trails
  - Increased field maintenance, restroom cleaning, security at regional active parks.
Expansion Levy

- 3 cents to County for open space and urban trail connections.
  - No funding included for BN Trail acquisition or development.
  - Estimated 6-year levy proceeds: $65M

- City dollars proposed to be allocated through application to Conservation Futures Tax Citizen Oversight Committee. Either trails or open space. Est. 6-yr levy proceeds: $22M
  - Trails: regional in nature, connecting to regional trails, or in underserved communities
  - Open space: consistent with current CFT criteria

- Woodland Park Zoo: for expansion of environmental education and conservation programs for youth and children, capital projects, facility improvements. Est. 6-yr levy proceeds: $22M
Additional Levy Provisions

- Both ordinances will be placed on the August 21st Primary ballot.
- Passage of one levy measure not conditioned on passage of the other
- Typical household burden in 2008: $20.00/year ($400,000 a.v.) for each levy
- Operating renewal levy goes on November General Election ballot if measure fails in August.