

Master Plan Developments in Black Diamond

SKCR successfully supported the approval of Development Agreements for two master planned developments in Black Diamond, *Lawson Hills* and *The Villages*.

The two developments would add more than 6,000 housing units to the City, along with open space, parks, retail, schools and commercial space. A recent *Land Use Petition Act* appeal of the developments filed by opponents was rejected by King County Superior Court Judge Patrick Oishi. At full build-out of the developments, the total commission income on the first sales of the homes could exceed \$1.4 Billion.

Maple Valley Business License Ordinance

In Maple Valley, SKCR was successful in defeating a proposed new "business license" ordinance that would have required every individual broker who engages in any real estate brokerage activity in the City to obtain his/her own City business license, even if the real estate office where the broker is licensed is located outside the City of Maple Valley. Instead, the ordinance as finally adopted by the City will require only the Designated Broker of real estate firms with an office in the City (there are two: WRE & JLS) to obtain a business license.

Kent B&O Tax Defeated

Kent B&O Tax: In a significant victory for NWMLS members, REALTORS[®] and other members of the business community, on July 31st the Kent City Council voted 5-2 not to impose a new 0.2% city B&O tax. If the measure had passed the tax revenues would have been used to pay for streets damaged by heavy vehicles. *However*, following defeat of the measure the Council voted 6-1 to adopt a resolution indicating the City intends to enact some type of business tax or fee by the end of the year, so this fight is still not over. The Council wants to work with the business community to find an additional \$4 million annually to pay for arterial streets. In the meantime, the City has moved forward on a request from the private sector that the City hire a consultant to help identify efficiencies and additional savings available in current operations.

King County Planning Policies

Worked aggressively to influence potential amendments to King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) to ensure workers can find housing, and REALTORS[®] have more inventory to sell when the market begins to recover, and going forward over the next decade.

Auburn Real Estate Sign Provisions

Favorable real estate sign code provisions adopted in Auburn for new construction (to assist with local economic development efforts associated with the sale and development of both residential and non-residential property in the City).

Promoting New Homebuilding in Kent

Obtained regulatory changes to promote new homebuilding activity in Kent, including:

- Streamlining permitting & public notice requirements
- Differentiating *major* and *minor* developments
- Increasing the period of time plat permits are valid to 9 years (to avoid additional costs for property owners/builders if they have to re-apply, pay additional fees and submit updated traffic/hydrology/stormwater studies, etc.); and

- Repealing automatic increases in Transportation Impact fees that would have risen to \$16,000 per peak-hour vehicle trip (which is then multiplied by the number of trips the development is likely to create).

Federal Court Win for Flood Insurance

Won a major federal court legal challenge that could have prohibited FEMA from selling flood insurance for new construction in flood plain areas in 120 Northwest Washington jurisdictions. The insurance is currently sold under the National Flood Insurance Program which FEMA administers. As the earliest outspoken advocate on these flood levee-related issues, SKCR assisted POSFR and Washington REALTORS® with this effort.

Shoreline Conditional Use Permits to Improve Flood Plain Levees

Advocated successfully for approval of two Shoreline Conditional Use permits required for the City of Kent to make improvements to flood plain levees on the Green River. The projects should facilitate federal certification of the levees, thereby significantly reducing the extent of FEMA-designated floodplain areas that will be subject to new ESA regulations.

Prevented New Point-of-Sale Rules

Prevented new "Point-of-Sale" rules that could have made it hard to sell existing homes that have fireplaces or older woodstoves. In addition, SKCR supported successful efforts — led by TPCAR and Washington REALTORS® — to obtain statutory prohibitions on future point-of-sale mandates related to woodstove *PM* 2.5 pollution.

Stopped King County Water Rationing Proposal

Killed water rationing proposals that could have harmed rural-area property owners in King County who own horses, llamas, cattle, goats or other non-domesticated animals. This was a collaborative effort with Washington REALTORS®.

Shoreline Permit Proposal Killed

In Shoreline, SCKR killed a proposal to require that a permit be obtained for all normal and routine street tree pruning and maintenance.

Shoreline Revisions to Tree Regulations

In Shoreline, SCKR was successful in obtaining favorable revisions to a still-difficult set of tree regulations: The City Council directed that staff develop a low-cost permit for tree removal on private property as an alternative to the current mandate which requires a permit costing \$450+.

Opposed Seattle Proposed Certified Arborist Requirement

In Seattle, SKCR has helped bring attention and community opposition to a proposed requirement that street trees be pruned and maintained only by certified arborists.

Seattle Incentives to Retain Trees Slows Tree Ordinance

In Seattle, SKCR's efforts to encourage the use of incentives to retain trees on private property (rather than strict prohibitions on tree removal) have slowed the development of an aggressive tree ordinance, and have attracted the interest of a key City Council member.

Woodinville City Council Cautioned Against Proposed Traffic Impact Fee

In Woodinville, SKCR has cautioned the Council against impact fees that would add to the cost of housing. Recently, the Council rejected a staff-proposed traffic impact fee ordinance that would have doubled the fees for single-family homes. Council directed staff to come back with a gentler, phased approach.

Petition for New Peasley Canyon Incorporation Halted

A petition was filed with King County to create a new incorporation in the Peasley Canyon area. Had this attempted incorporation been approved by the County Council and voters in the area of the proposed township, the number of local municipal jurisdictions in King County would have increased from 40 to 41: 39 cities, King County, and a township in King County. The incorporation attempt failed, which is consistent with SKCR's annexation/incorporation policy. SKCR's policy supports annexation over incorporation inside King County's urban growth boundary as the approach most likely to accommodate compact efficient urban growth supported by adequate urban infrastructure. This is consistent with the requirements of the Growth Management Act.

Auburn Mayor Acknowledges SKCR's Help to Obtain Funding

The City of Auburn's new Environmental Park opened this year, and Mayor Pete Lewis acknowledged the early contributions of SKCR in assisting the City with obtaining WWRP funding for the project.

State and Local Collaboration

Working in collaboration with Washington REALTORS[®], SKCR also assisted in successful efforts to:

- Protect Homeowner Associations from new real estate license law rule interpretations that would have required HOAs to meet real estate licensing law requirements.
- Protect NWMLS members and REALTORS[®] from liability in connection with a seller's failure to satisfy the requirements of new rules regarding carbon monoxide alarms; and
- Pass legislation that provides new help for short-sale sellers and real estate brokers.

Five-Year Extension of the National Flood Insurance

Assisted NAR with obtaining passage of a five-year extension of the National Flood Insurance Program, which is particularly important for cities with rivers located in South King County, especially given the challenges we have experience over the last few years in connection with the Howard Hanson Dam flooding issues.

Broad Regulatory Reform Package in Seattle

In Seattle, SKCR was successful in achieving a broad regulatory reform package that will promote new housing opportunities with greater design flexibility and encourage new business startups by eliminating red tape and streamlining the environmental review processes. The package made important reforms to SEPA, parking regulations, accessory dwelling units and home business regulations.

Helped Lake Forest Park Waterfront Property Owners

In Lake Forest Park, SKCR helped waterfront property owners gain time and additional review in the city's new shorelines regulations.