

Dear Neighbor:

As 2009 draws to a close, we reflect on the many changes that have occurred in our region over the past year. For many, 2009 was a difficult time that forced us to re-evaluate many aspects of our lives; including our personal budgets and how we live from day to day. At the King County Council, it was no different. Due to drops in sales tax revenues, King County faced a budget shortfall of more than \$50 million. However, by looking closely at our budget and prioritizing what matters, we managed to balance our budget while restoring funding to vital human service programs, bus services and criminal justice; all accomplished while maintaining the county's AAA bond rating and preserving our "rainy day" fund. We expect troubled times to continue to lie ahead for both the region and King County; however, the strength and resilience shown by our community gives me great reason to look towards the future with optimism.

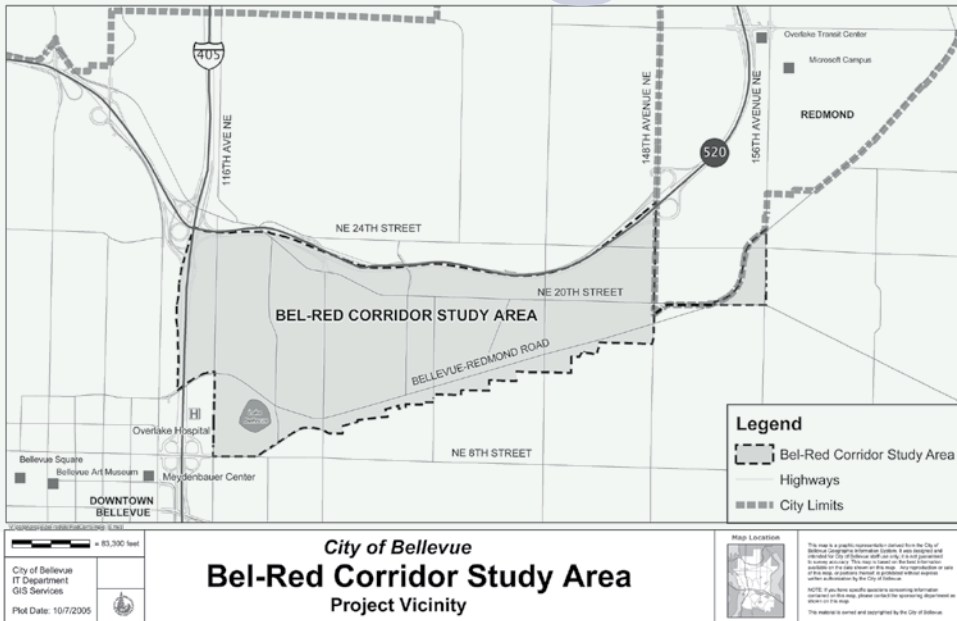
Sincerely,

King County Councilmember District 6



Jane Hague

Looking back on 2009... Bel-Red corridor



This year, I sponsored legislation that will make it easier for the City of Bellevue to create and preserve parks and open space as the Bel-Red corridor becomes more densely populated. The City of Bellevue and King County have been working collaboratively to promote the development of this area into a high-density, "smart-growth" section of Bellevue. This forward-thinking plan will allow Bellevue to focus its growth in a way that preserves the many great neighborhoods, parks and other open space areas we currently enjoy.



Criminal justice

The criminal justice system accounts for 76% of the King County General Fund Budget. With the budget shortfall, there was a potential for

drastic cuts to the criminal justice system. However, with careful planning we reduced cuts to no more than 1% for the agencies that work so hard to keep us safe. This means that you will experience roughly the same level of service as you have in the past. This was a big win for the county and I was pleased to make public safety a top priority.

Transit

This year I chaired the Physical Environment Committee with oversight of transportation, growth management, parks, and the environment. When we saw the budget numbers for King County Metro early on, it looked like we might have to cut hundreds of thousands of hours of bus service. This was not acceptable to me. In September, we received the results of an audit commissioned by the King County Council. Through the report, we identified ways that will make our buses run more efficiently. We need these buses to continue to run so that we can ease the congestion burden and connect population centers to job centers. We were able to restore over 300,000 service hours that were slated to be cut and keep our commitment to implement the new Rapid Ride program. We found a creative solution to keep people on the move. Bus ridership has reached record levels and we made it a priority to save this service in spite of a difficult budget situation.





Jane Hague

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Looking forward to 2010...

Utility rate stabilization



One of the many important responsibilities of King County is to treat wastewater. In order to accommo-

date the growth of the County, construction began on a new water treatment facility called Brightwater. Unfortunately, this facility has faced several problems during construction, resulting in cost overruns and delays. This has already cost taxpayers too much money and now I want to ensure these delays do not result in increased utility rates. Therefore, I will be working with my colleagues to keep your utility rates low. These construction problems should not be your responsibility to pay for and I will make sure that is not the case.

Unincorporated areas and annexation

The City of Kirkland agreed to incorporate the neighborhoods of Juanita, Finn Hill and Kingsgate. This is an exciting development that will have a positive impact on our region. The annexation will take effect beginning June 1, 2011.

Another area that remains to be annexed is the Eastgate area in Bellevue. Talks are already underway to look for the best way to annex this pocket of unincorporated area to the City of Bellevue.

Transit

We need to have a meaningful, regional conversation about transit in this region. We need a system that is seamless, no matter which agency runs the bus you ride. From

fare collection to service integration, we need to continue to improve our Metro bus system to provide the best user experience possible.



Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) corridor



Recently, the King County Council made a commitment to spend \$26.5 million to purchase the BNSF corridor that runs along I-405. This is an exciting development. This will allow the corridor to have multiple uses.

This agreement will bring many exciting opportunities to the area and I look forward to your input on this as we go forward.