



JOINT-ELECTED OFFICIALS WORKSHOP – Summary Report

LOTT Regional Services Center – September 17, 2018

INTRODUCTION

As a companion to the September 19, 2018 Open House and Community Meeting, a joint meeting of the City of Olympia Council, LOTT Clean Water Alliance Board of Directors and the Port of Olympia Commission was held on September 17, 2018. The September 17, 2018 elected officials workshop was an opportunity for discussion among elected officials and leadership staff. Public comment was limited to written form. No public comments were received.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

An abbreviated summary of the comments and questions raised by elected officials during the workshop organized by subject matter follows.

General

I understand that Olympia has made or will make zoning code changes to address sea level rise. Has the isthmus building redevelopment project had to adapt to sea level rise in some way?

We may not see big “staircase” jumps in sea level rise or we may see an exponentially larger increase as more ice melts. Have we taken this into account?

Is it possible to do combinations of strategies – a berm then a wall – so that things can be built gradually and we do not have to have a 5 foot wall, as an example?

What science or predictors will be used so we know whether or not we are on a good track or if we might get to the higher levels of sea level rise? We need to be strategic and institutionalize in the plan how phasing, monitoring, and decision-making will occur. We will need to define triggers and will need to include a process to inform the interjurisdictional group that the triggers have been met and a change in direction is necessary. We do not need to include exact details on how to monitor – what data to use – but have a built in mechanism in the plan that allows for, if a trigger happens, the interjurisdictional group to be alerted and the plan direction then shifts. If we do not, the government may go on implementing a plan, notice that things are changing, and then have to reinvent the plan to address the changed situation.

Is it correct that the maps are showing Bay View and Oyster House will be underwater and private property owners will have to do their own protection?

Has there been any discussion about what happens to the marinas and docks and what will be required? I assume at some point they will be higher than the surface of the water and will need to be raised.

Agency and Stakeholder Involvement

In January, I asked about our tribal partners. I do not see tribes included on the list of ongoing public outreach. What outreach has occurred with the tribes and what has been their response?

Potential Costs and Funding

Is it correct that the cost estimates do not include costs to protect the marine terminal?

We might consider the WIFIA program as a potential funding source. It is a federal loan program that could support our work, or at least projects at LOTT.

Why is there such a difference in the cost of the Moxlie Creek Pump Station and the Capitol Lake Pump Station?

Science and Sea Level Rise Projections

The University of Washington Climate Impact Group just published updated sea level rise projections. The new projections include an upper limit of 6 to 8 feet by end of the century for the Puget Sound region. These numbers are off your chart. Important to note that 5 years ago the consensus was that the upper limit was closer to 1 meter, but because the pace of ice melting has accelerated, the projection numbers have doubled in the last year which is reflected in the new UW numbers.

Yes, we can take measurements and look at historic records. Sea levels historically have increased by about one foot in the past century, but are now expected to increase at a rate of one foot per decade. We do not need to reinvent the wheel in regards to sea level measurement data and tracking of sea levels. Instead we should rely on experts such as the UW Climate Impact Group.

There are new high-scenario sea level rise projections of 96-inches by the end of the century. Adding Olympia's one foot of subsidence to this higher number results in a projection that is 40-inches greater than our highest projection. Given this, it makes sense to have a plan B not too far in the back of our minds.

What are the sea level rise projection numbers put on top of ... a typical tide level, a storm tide, average tides? What does the number represent? What is a King Tide elevation now? What does it represent in the future – what level of sea rise does it reflect?

Capitol Lake

Is it correct that less flooding will occur without the lake?

How often does the 14 feet elevation wall at Capitol Lake flood now? If the dam was not there, would one of the options be preferred – is there a driver to prefer option B?

Does the dam at Capitol Lake overtop at 24-inches? Is the water level in the lake driven by the tides as much as what is coming down the river?

The Capitol Lake strategies are all on the state capitol campus. How does it work that we are proposing designs on capital grounds? I assume that approvals and funding for projects by DES will be more difficult than for any of our agencies.

Do we know what the immediate tide gate needs are?

Do the costs for the combined sewer system reflect separating the combined system? It seems to do so would benefit the treatment plant but would require a lot of disruption to downtown.

Will this work be incorporated into the Capitol lake EIS Phase II work? Will they be given the data?

Budd Inlet Treatment Plant and Combined System

Do you have a sense of how much marine water can enter the treatment plant before there is a problem? Who owns the combined system? The governance section will need to include a discussion of who pays for all this work. I can visualize the strategies for 18 to 24-inches, but it is difficult to visualize a five foot wall. Have you thought about other ways to get at the 5- foot level? It also seems that it may be difficult in some areas to construct the required strategies since we may run out of room. We may also have a problem with buoyancy and pressure from groundwater. The depth of the wall structures go down quite a bit. Is this in part to address groundwater pressure or is it more from a structural point of view?

I assume 68-inches of sea level rise is 100 years out. At some point we may not be able to mitigate impacts at the treatment plant. Have you looked at options so that at some point in the future we know what alternatives might be?

What about the PSE station located at/near the treatment plant – will it need to be protected? Has PSE been involved?

Could you explain the difference between a tide gate and a pump station?

If we have a stormwater pipe that discharges into Budd Inlet with a flow protector to keep Budd Inlet from backing up into the pipe, we will still need to get rid of stormwater. Are the proposed pumps to remove rainwater that we may get concurrent with high tides?