



City of Seattle

Via email: Reagan.Dunn@kingcounty.gov

April 20, 2023

King County Councilmember Reagan Dunn, Chair
King County Flood Control District Board of Supervisors

Re: Funding to address flooding in South Park

Dear Councilmember Dunn:

We are writing to seek your help in securing funding in the Flood Control District's 2023 Interim Budget to reduce flooding in Seattle's South Park community. Councilmember Joe McDermott is bringing this request to you for discussion and action. We appreciate your leadership of the Flood Control District Board and urge you to join our efforts to protect South Park residents and businesses from ongoing major flooding.

More than 30,000 people work in the Duwamish Valley. The Lower Duwamish Valley area generates almost \$300 million in annual taxable revenues and supports more than 10,000 industrial and maritime jobs.

Late last year, 49 homes and businesses in South Park were flooded when the Duwamish River overtopped its banks. This 100-year event resulted from an extreme King Tide, storm surge, and very low atmospheric pressure. Without a temporary and long-term barrier to address Duwamish River flooding, our region faces ongoing clean-up costs and trauma to impacted people and business. For example, the December 2022 flood displaced dozens of people and at least 58 individuals required hoteling, while others stayed with family and friends or in their damaged homes. The cost to the City of Seattle for emergency response and recovery from this single event is well over \$2 million. Climate change and sea-level rise will exacerbate flood heights and frequency. The December flood reached levels we expected to see in 2050. The risk is now, not in the future. We cannot let our community flood like this again.

To protect against future river flooding, Seattle is working with King County and the impacted community on coastal flooding and stormwater flooding preparedness and resilience. Currently, Seattle Public Utilities is spending approximately \$100 million to reduce flooding in South Park and improve water quality in the Duwamish River. Additional work and resources are needed to support interim flooding response and planning for longer term infrastructure improvements to address Duwamish River flooding.

Seattle requests inclusion of three items in the Flood Control District's 2023 Interim Budget that will help to reduce flooding of the Duwamish River in time for the upcoming winter season:

1. Request that the District work with King County on feasibility and recommendations by September 15, 2023, to expand the King County Flood Warning Program to include forecasted King Tide events.
2. Fund \$1.8M for Seattle's interim flood preparedness and emergency response. The City of Seattle program would include temporary barriers and pumping, support for flood recovery materials if

needed, community capacity building, and related communication materials in multiple languages. This funding will allow Seattle to prepare for the upcoming winter. One-time equipment purchases of a staging trailer for temporary operations, pumps, a shower trailer, and a laundry trailer (needed if flooding occurs and could be used by the District) are also included. We anticipate seeking annual funding for interim flood prevention and response until a long-term solution to address Duwamish River flooding is developed and implemented.

3. Fund \$500,000 for the City of Seattle to support early scoping and analysis of alternatives for long term infrastructure to reduce flood risks and damage in this community, including sea-level rise adaptation.

The City of Seattle very much appreciates the past support of the District for our efforts to reduce flooding risks and damage in South Park and other parts of Seattle. We are grateful for the support of the King County councilmembers, especially the advocacy of Councilmember McDermott for our South Park communities. We look forward to continued partnership now and into the future.

Thank you very much for your consideration. We would be happy to discuss our request further.

Sincerely,



Bruce Harrell
Mayor of Seattle



Councilmember Lisa Herbold
Seattle City Council, District 1



Councilmember Alex Pedersen
Seattle City Council, District 4

Cc:

Seattle City Council

King County Council

Michelle Clark, King County Flood Control District Executive Director

Andrew Lee, General Manager, Seattle Public Utilities