



Legislation Text

File #: AM No. 19-090, **Version:** 1

MEMO TO: Members of the City Council

FROM: Mayor John Marchione

SUBJECT:

Adoption of a Resolution Supporting the Proposed King County 2020-2025 Medic One/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy

- a. RESOLUTION NO. 1519: A Resolution Supporting the Countywide Ballot Proposition for the Medic One/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy for the Period from January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2025, Pursuant to RCW 84.52.069

I. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve a resolution supporting the proposed King County Medic One/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy at a rate of 26.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value for 2020-2025.

II. DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Tommy Smith, Fire Chief	425-556-2202
Eric Timm, Medical Services Administrator	425-556-2201

III. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

Summary

The King County Medic One/EMS system is primarily funded with a countywide, voter approved EMS levy. The current EMS levy expires at the end of 2019. An EMS Advisory Task Force, consisting of elected officials from throughout King County, supported by subject matter experts and stakeholders, met from January - September 2018 and recommended a successor levy to replace the expiring levy. This month, the County Executive transmitted a proposed EMS Levy ordinance and a Medic One/EMS 2020-2025 Strategic Plan to the King County Council for their review and approval.

Proposed EMS Levy Ordinance (Proposed Ordinance 2019-0185): would place on the November 5, 2019 ballot a proposition authorizing a six-year property tax levy in the amount of 26.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, that would generate approximately \$1.1 billion during the levy period to support the King County Medic One/EMS system.

Proposed Strategic Plan (Proposed Ordinance 2019-0186): would approve the 2020- 2025 EMS Strategic Plan, which is the primary policy and financial document that would direct the Medic One/EMS system from 2020 to 2025. The EMS levy renewal proposal was based on this Plan.

King County EMS System:

King County's Medic One/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system provides residents of Seattle and King County with life-saving pre-hospital medical care through an internationally recognized tiered regional response system. This system relies upon coordinated partnerships with fire departments, paramedic agencies, dispatch centers and hospitals. The use of a tiered response system ensures the most appropriate care provider responds to each 9-1-1 call. Of note, the City of Seattle operates and funds a Medic One emergency services program that is separate from the county program but is part of the regional delivery system.

The tiered regional Medic One/EMS system consists of five major components:

1. EMS System Access: A patient or bystander accesses the Medic One/EMS system by calling 9-1-1 for medical assistance. Bystanders' reactions and rapid responses to the scene can greatly impact the chances of patient survival.
2. Dispatcher Triage: Calls to 9-1-1 are received and triaged by professional dispatchers who determine the most appropriate level of care needed. Dispatchers are trained to provide pre-arrival instructions for most medical emergencies and guide the caller through life-saving steps, including Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) instructions, until the Medic One/EMS provider arrives.
3. First Tier Response - Basic Life Support (BLS): BLS personnel, usually first to arrive on scene, provide immediate basic life support medical care that includes advanced first aid and CPR/AED to stabilize the patient. Staffed by firefighters trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), EMTs are employed by 29 fire-based agencies across King County. EMTs are certified by the state and are required to complete initial and ongoing training.
4. Second Tier Response - Advanced Life Support (ALS): Paramedics respond to about 25 percent of all calls and usually arrive second on scene to provide emergency care for critical or life-threatening injuries and illness. Regional paramedic services are provided by five agencies operating 26 Advanced Life Support (ALS) units throughout King County, including fire departments in Bellevue, Redmond, Shoreline, Seattle, and King County Medic One (KCM1, which operates in south King County). Paramedics receive more than 2,800 hours of intensive training through the University of Washington/Harborview Medical Center Paramedic Training Program.
5. Transport to Hospitals: Once a patient is stabilized, it is determined whether transport to a hospital or clinic for further medical attention is needed. Transport is most often provided by an ALS agency, BLS agency, private ambulance, or taxi for lower-acuity situations.

In addition, King County EMS oversees strategic initiatives and regional services, managed by the EMS Division of Seattle King County Public Health. These services provide for regional coordination and consistent quality across all jurisdictions in King County, and include: program supervision, BLS EMT staff training, E-911 dispatch training, medical data collection and analysis, financial oversight, contract administration, and division management. EMS regularly integrates initiatives that are aimed at preventing/reducing emergency calls and improving the quality of the services.

The current EMS levy was approved by voters in November 2013 at a levy rate of 33.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value for 2014-2019. Levy revenues are anticipated to total approximately \$732.7 million for the six-year period. These revenues have supported the EMS/Medic One System.

IV. PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS HELD

May 21, 2019 - Public Safety Committee of the Whole

V. IMPACT

A. Service/Delivery:

The proposed levy will continue funding several core services that the City of Redmond provides to its community members and the region, including:

- Advanced Life Support (ALS): Redmond has 3 of the 26 medic units in King County, which will continue to be funded.
- Basic Life Support (BLS): funding maintained for Redmond, using an allocation methodology of 50 percent BLS call volume and 50 percent City of Redmond assessed value.
- Mobile Integrated Health: fully funded program (instead of a pilot), with \$4 million per year spread across all agencies using the same BLS allocation method.
- Regional Services: continue to fund services that focus on medical training, oversight, and improvement/strategic initiatives.
- Contingencies/Reserves: will provide funding to support EMS services in the case of an economic downturn (as seen in 2008), with reserves that will allow for more flexibility in responding to unforeseen economic events.

B. Fiscal Note:

The King County Executive has proposed an initial EMS levy rate of 26.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value for 2020-2025. Levy revenues under the proposed levy rate are estimated to total \$1.1 billion for the six-year period. The levy proposal would cost the typical King County home owner \$133 per year, based on a \$500,000 home value. For a homeowner in the City of Redmond, the cost would be \$169.60, based on a \$640,000 home value.

VI. ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Council may choose not to approve the attached resolution.

VII. TIME CONSTRAINTS

A resolution supporting an EMS levy for 2020-2025 must be approved by King County and 75 percent of cities with a population exceeding 50,000 for the levy to be placed on the ballot. King County EMS requested cities to adopt resolutions in support of placing the EMS Levy on the November 2019 ballot by the end of June. The King County Council must approve placing the levy on the November 2019 ballot by July 10th or they must abide by exceptional processing requirements (such as emergency clauses and a super-majority vote).

VIII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Proposed City Resolution Supporting the King County 2020-2025 Medic One/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy