COMMITTEE ACTION

Proposed Substitute Ordinance 2018-0312.2, creating the Department of Local Services, passed out of committee on September 4, 2018 with a “Do Pass” recommendation. The Ordinance was amended in committee with Amendment S1 to make clarifying and technical changes, and require a follow up ordinance from the Executive by January 1, 2020.

SUBJECT

Proposed Ordinance 2018-0159 would establish the Department of Local Services, eliminate the Department of Transportation, and move the fleet services division and airport divisions into the Department of Executive Services.

SUMMARY

The County Executive has proposed to create a new Department of Local Services, which would include the duties of the former Department of Permitting and Environmental Review as a new permitting division, and the duties of the road services division, which would move from the Department of Transportation.

A striking amendment that makes clarifying and technical changes will be available at the committee meeting.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2017, the Executive created a Local Services Initiative to “explore new and better ways to serve the people of unincorporated King County.” In January 2018, the Local Services Initiative team issued their report, and the Executive announced a proposal for the creation of a new Department of Local Services (DLS), to be effective January 1, 2019. This new department would be “focused on the needs of” and provide “an additional point of executive branch accountability for residents of” unincorporated areas. The new department was stated to potentially include:
Subsequent to issuance of the Local Services Initiative report, Executive staff indicated that the new DLS would only include DPER, Road Services, and the Community Service Area Program. The airport division would be moved to the Department of Executive Services, and the on-site septic and plumbing and gas piping programs would stay in Public Health.

Following discussions within the executive branch and conversations with Councilmembers and briefings at Council Committees, the Council passed Motion 15125 in April 2018. This motion provided guidance for the Executive branch to consider while continuing their work on creating such a department. As adopted, the guidance in Motion 15125 includes direction to:

- Create a DLS by January 1, 2019
- Include a DLS in the 2019-2020 biennial budget
- Form a transition team to recommend organizational, operational and other changes to the Executive, in consultation with the Councilmembers representing unincorporated area, and that can also be available to brief Council committee’s
- Develop and transmit an ordinance to establish a DLS in the King County Code, which will work with Councilmembers to improve municipal services in unincorporated areas. The Motion directed that DLS should have an emphasis on:
  - Improving coordination and collaboration of local services by King County agencies
  - Strengthening and expanding partnerships
  - Improving delivery, responsiveness and quality of local services to unincorporated King County through unified accountability
  - Improving local services through robust employee engagement, equity and social justice and continuous improvement
  - Strengthening unincorporated communities by supporting local planning and community initiatives
  - Pursuing innovative funding strategies
- Develop and transmit legislation to address funds, fund management and financial policies and if needed to address a county organization change

**ANALYSIS**

Proposed Ordinance 2018-0312 would make the following substantive changes:

**Create a Department of Local Services.** Section 3 of the Proposed Ordinances changes the Department of Permitting and Environmental Review (DPER), to the Department of
Local Services (DLS). As transmitted, this department would be comprise of the permitting division, the road services division, and the community service area (CSA) program. The duties of the permitting division would be the same as the duties of DPER that exist today. The road services division would have the same duties as they do today as part of the Department of Transportation (DOT).

One policy consideration for the Council is that Motion 15125 included language regarding the emphasis for DLS. This language generally does not appear in the creation of DLS. Additionally, the Council included language regarding coordination of DLS with the Council. No language appears in the Proposed Ordinance regarding such coordination. Executive staff have noted that the third Statement of Fact has language taken from the Motion 15125. The Executive feels this is sufficient to capture Council’s intent, and would like to avoid adding policy or aspirational statements in the Code.

A second policy consideration for the Council is that the Local Services Initiative, and subsequent briefings from Executive staff, expects there to be service partnership agreements with the other County agencies that provide services in unincorporated areas. Executive staff have stated that the service partnership process will be determined after the Department of Local Services is created.

**Move the Fleet and Airport Divisions to the Department of Executive Services.** Section 2 of the Proposed Ordinance adds the fleet services division and the airport division to the Department of Executive Services (DES). The duties of these two divisions remain the same as they do today where they are part of DOT. There is some language proposed to be added to the duties of the fleet services division to make it clear that the fleet services division is the manager of various equipment rental and revolving funds.

**Eliminate the Department of Transportation.** Section 5 of the Proposed Ordinances repeals King County Code (K.C.C.) section 2.16.140, which will eliminate the Department of Transportation. Today, DOT is responsible for the road services division, transit division, fleet services division, airport division and marine division. DOT is responsible for the metropolitan public transportation function, the county roads function, the passenger ferry service function, as well administration of grants and the coordination of transportation planning activities with other county agencies and outside entities to integrate transportation planning and land use planning.

Under Proposed Ordinance 2018-0312, the roads services division and county roads function would move to DLS. The fleet services division and airport division would move from DOT to DES.

The Council has recently approved Ordinance 18777, which will establish a Metro Transit Department in January 2019. The Metro Transit Department will include the duties of the transit division, the marine division, the metropolitan public transportation function, the passenger ferry service function, and the grants administration and long range planning duties from DOT.

**Technical Changes.** The Proposed Ordinance is lengthy, because all references to DPER or DOT are proposed to be changed to the appropriate new department (either DLS, DES or Metro Transit). Council staff have worked through the Proposed Ordinance
with Executive staff to ensure that the changes made are to the appropriate department, and where indicated, the appropriate division within the departments. The striking amendment will include changes requested by Executive staff to specify the correct level of authority.

**AMENDMENT**

A striking amendment (and title amendment) will be available at today’s committee meeting that proposes clarifying and technical changes to the Proposed Ordinance.