

JULIA PATTERSON'S 2008

YEAR IN REVIEW



KING COUNTY, DISTRICT 5

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January 2009

Dear Neighbor,

Serving you as Chair of the King County Council in 2008, my highest priority was, and continues to be, making your government as responsive, accessible and accountable as possible. Maximum government involvement is the key to effective democracy, so I invite you to write or call me with your ideas and opinions.

2008 was a year of ups and downs. King County was not immune to the financial strains facing our entire nation. King County, much like our own families, has had to cut back by carefully considering how to prioritize spending. In spite of the budget constraints our government was faced with, we had some great successes last year.

In this newsletter I've outlined the highlights of 2008, as well as critical components of the 2009 budget. It's important for you to have this information so you'll be aware of how your government is serving you.

Best wishes in this New Year,

Julia Patterson

Julia Patterson



JULIA PATTERSON, 2008 HIGHLIGHTS

CHAIR OF THE KING COUNTY COUNCIL

I was honored to have been unanimously selected by my colleagues to serve as the Chair of the King County Council in 2008.

It has been a rewarding experience. I am pleased with the steps we have taken as a Council and as individuals to improve the way we communicate with our constituents and serve the people of King County.

ANIMAL CARE

The King County Council continued efforts to improve conditions at the Kent and Bellevue animal shelters. **In April, I announced with the King County Executive that we would appropriate significant funds for improvements to the Kent shelter.** These improvements will reduce the spread of disease, increase the medications available, and add temporary staff to help adopt and care for animals.

Moving forward, the Council will explore options for how we can best provide medical treatment, spay/neuter, behavioral training, and adoption opportunities for the animals in our care.

NEW BUS SERVICE

In September, King County launched new bus routes servicing the communities east of Kent and Renton, such as Kent East Hill, the Meridian Valley neighborhood and Panther Lake. Funding for the service comes from the voter approved "Transit Now" ballot proposal, expanding bus service throughout the county. This increased service answers some of South King County's request for more transit. Other south county neighborhoods will see additional service in 2009.

For more information and travel times, you can visit <http://transit.metrokc.gov/> or call 206-553-3000 or toll free 1-800-542-7876.

TRAILS

On December 9th, I unveiled a plan giving pedestrians and bikers the ability to travel from Lake Washington to Puget Sound on a proposed 16.9 mile trail connecting the cities of Renton, Tukwila, SeaTac, Burien, and Des Moines.

The proposed "Lake to Sound Trail" offers new opportunities for commuting, recreation, and access to major light rail stations and transit hubs.

FLOOD CONTROL

In 2007, the King County Council created the Flood Control District to help rebuild our aging levees, including those in South King County on the Green River. We embarked upon an ambitious work plan, starting 55 projects to minimize the potential impacts from property-damaging floods during our region's fall flood season.

As Chair of the Flood Control District Board last year, I oversaw the completion of 24 projects that would have taken 17 years to accomplish without the creation of the Flood Control District.

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KING COUNTY COUNCIL

The King County flood protection system includes 119 miles of levees, 25,000 acres of flood plains worth more than \$7 billion. Keeping these levees well maintained protects our roads, our local commerce and, most importantly, our residents.

BNSF CORRIDOR: RAILS AND TRAILS

The Port of Seattle made an historical investment last spring when it secured the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Eastside rail corridor for public ownership.

I led King County in the purchase and acquisition of a 26 mile easement for trail development along the corridor. This corridor runs from Renton to Woodinville and was purchased below market price. King County and the Port of Seattle are committed to using the corridor to its fullest potential, which means rails *with* trails. With high congestion levels on I-405 between Renton and Bellevue, this corridor remains an option for future high-capacity transit. Trail development along the corridor will also provide an additional commuting option and a new place to exercise and recreate.

2009 BUDGET

On November 24th, the King County Council voted to approve the 2009 budget prioritizing public health, public safety, and quality of life for the residents, while maintaining the County's financial health. Since King County anticipates another deficit in 2009 equaling \$93 million, our budget challenges are not yet over. **However, I worked with the Council to protect services important to the residents of South King County.**

The Council secured funding for all Sheriff's Deputy storefront offices, critical to protecting unincorporated areas of King County. In addition, we protected funding for Superior Court's Drug Diversion Court and United Family Court Services and for District Court's award-winning Mental Health Court and Relicensing Court. All public health centers, including those in Renton and Kent, received full-year funding and will remain open in 2009.

To read more about the budget, please visit the Council's website: www.kingcounty.gov/council/budget

I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

In difficult times like these, it is even more important than ever that I hear from you. Please watch your mailbox in early March for a survey newsletter in which I'll ask you for your opinion on county issues that are important to all of us. I'll publish the collective responses in a newsletter you'll receive in May. Whether via survey, town hall, or public hearing, your opinion is important to me. Please share your thoughts and ideas about King County government so that I can better represent you.

Julia Patterson
Working For Us

