





## **CHAPTER 67**

# **PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The quality of life in King County is directly linked to the quality of ~~our~~ the region's environment, with its diverse landscapes reaching from Puget Sound to the Cascade Mountains, scenic beauty and the variety of cultural and recreational opportunities that enriches ~~our~~ our lives. These vital natural and cultural resources contribute to the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of county residents and are integral to attracting employment and business activity.

The policies in this chapter focus on the county's role as a regional leader in acquiring and protecting its system of county-owned parks, forests, natural areas, trails and other open spaces and in supporting cultural opportunities such as music, theater, ethnic heritage museums, literary activities, public art collections, urban historic districts, and rural landmarks.

## **I. Parks, Recreation and Open Space**

The Growth Management Act (~~GMA~~) requires cities and counties to identify open space corridors within and between Urban Growth Areas, including lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas. The county's designation of open space includes those lands that are part of the King County open space system as well as state parks and natural resource conservation areas and federal wilderness areas in unincorporated King County. See the Land Use Map is located at the end of Chapter 1. The ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act states that counties are the providers of regional services and local rural services, while cities are the appropriate providers of local urban services. As the regional government, King County manages a regional open space system of parks, regional trails, natural or ecological areas and working resource lands. While the cities are the managers of local parks, trails and open space lands in the Urban Growth Area, King County will continue to be the provider of local parks, trails and open space lands in the Rural Area.

Population growth and associated development continue to transform the county's landscape as forested and open lands have been converted to urban uses resulting in the fragmentation of wildlife corridors, riparian habitat and the depletion of working resource lands and open vistas. The policies in this section provide guidance for

the open space system of lands the county owns and manages to protect and restore the health of natural systems, provide recreational opportunities, shape community character, and help sustain agriculture and forestry economics. Additional benefits of the open space and regional trail systems include providing transportation alternatives as well as health benefits from physical activity and access to the outdoors for those who are mobility disabled. Large forested parks and natural areas help maintain air quality, water quality and quantity, and help mitigate the effects of climate change. Parks and green spaces also provide stress relief, rest and relaxation and contribute to improved mental health and well-being. The policies also reinforce the county's focus on linking components of the open space system with an emphasis on completing the regional trail system, connecting riparian habitat and reducing forestland fragmentation.

Regional ~~active-recreation~~ and multiuse parks serve a countywide population and provide high-quality, ~~highly~~ developed facilities ~~to that~~ support multiple events, large group gatherings and special events. Passive parks serve less formal, organized or intense activities. Local rural park sites provide for active and passive recreation close to home. The Regional Trails System forms the ~~backbone foundation for county~~ King County and other ~~trails~~ agency's shared use path networks that reach broadly throughout the county ~~from the north to south and east to west linking with trails of~~ cities, other counties and the state, and offering extensive recreation opportunities. The Regional Trails System is also an essential part of King County's multimodal transportation system, providing interconnected nonmotorized travel options. Local trails provide ~~recreation,~~ circulation within ~~the local~~ community communities and access to the larger regional trail system.

~~Natural areas and some parks contain undeveloped or un-developable acreage that remains in a natural or near natural state and supports habitat and other ecologically significant attributes. Natural areas provide ecological benefits, contribute to biodiversity, and enable access for solitude and the appreciation of the county's environmental resources. Together these sites enhance environmental and visual quality and meet regional and local rural recreation needs. Natural areas and working forest sites can provide opportunities for informal, low intensity and low impact activities which enable the understanding, appreciation and significance of natural resources. Passive recreation use of these sites requires little infrastructure although amenities such as backcountry trails and trailhead facilities may be needed to accommodate appropriate types and levels of public use. Natural areas often contain undeveloped or un-developable acreage that is managed primarily to support habitat to provide ecological benefits and contribute to biodiversity. Forested areas provide carbon sequestration and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and play a role in adaptation to climate change.~~

**P-101            For the purposes of the King County open space system: “regional-parks” shall ~~mean~~ be used to define sites and facilities that are large in size, have unique features or characteristics or significant ecological value, and serve communities from many jurisdictions; and “local-parks” shall ~~mean-define~~ sites and facilities that serve unincorporated communities predominately in the rural area.**

## A. The Regional Open Space System of Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Working Resource Lands

The policies in this chapter provide the basis to develop a contiguous and functional open space system, connecting and including ~~active and passive recreation and multiuse parks, trails, natural areas, and working forest resource~~ resource lands and regional trails. The components of this vital system contribute to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of county residents. Other publicly-owned lands such as Farmland Preservation and Flood Hazard Management properties also contribute to the system and its environmental benefits. The Open Space System Map shows these publicly-owned open space lands and provides the basis for identifying the linkages necessary to strengthen the physical and functional connectivity of the county's open space system. The following policies reinforce the importance of the county's open space system, and guide planning and management of appropriate recreational opportunities that best meet regional and local rural needs, preserve ecologically significant resources and protect working resource lands.

**P-102** King County shall be a regional leader in the provision of a regional open space system consisting of parks, regional trails, natural areas, ~~working natural resource lands~~, and flood hazard management lands. The regional network of open spaces provides benefits to all county residents including: recreation facilities, conservation of natural and working resource lands, improving air and water quality, flood hazard management and related programs and services, thereby contributing to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of county residents.

**P-103** King County will preserve wildlife corridors, ~~and~~ riparian habitat, contiguous forest land, as well as open space areas separating Urban and Rural Areas as part of its open space system.

## B. Components of the Regional Open Space System

King County's regional open space system contains lands with many functions including: active and passive recreation; special purpose sites such as pools and trails; natural areas, ~~including waterways, greenways, and forested areas~~ with educational, scientific, wildlife habitat, cultural or scenic values; working resource lands including agriculture and forest lands; and community-defining systems, including physical and or visual buffers between areas of urban and rural development. Many sites within the open space system serve more than one function, but each site generally serves a primary role within the system.

### 1. ~~Regional Recreation Sites, Multiuse Sites and Trails~~

#### Regional Parks

King County's regional recreation parks and facilities accommodate a wide range of active and passive recreational activities. Recreation sites that make up a functional system include: highly developed sites with

organized, scheduled activities such as soccer and softball; passive or low impact recreation sites that include both physical activities and less intense activities such as informal play, trail use, and picnicking; and multiuse sites that include a combination of active recreation and passive recreation with less intensely developed facilities and natural areas.

Regional ~~active and multi-use recreation~~ parks serve a broad spectrum of users. These parks and their facilities include those not generally viable for individual communities due to site or specialized facility requirements or the unique nature of the offering requiring a broader user base to support them.

**P-104                    King County shall provide regional parks and recreational facilities that serve users from multiple neighborhoods and communities. Regional parks include unique sites and facilities that should be equitably and geographically distributed.**

Educational and interpretive programming promotes appropriate and enjoyable use of the park system, public awareness of the park system's resources and values, and builds support and stewardship for the system and its resources. Programming and special events provide activities and entertainment that attract people to the parks.

**P-105                    King County should facilitate educational, interpretive and aquatic programs on county-owned properties that further the enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the natural, cultural and recreational resources of the park system and the region.**

**P-106                    King County should facilitate and seek regional and national programs and special events at regional sites and facilities.**

## **2.        Local Parks**

In the Rural Area, the large geographic area and dispersed populations, individual lots, low residential density and economies of site management dictate fewer and smaller individual park sites. Nearby regional parks and other open spaces also provide recreational opportunities in the Rural Area. King County's role in the Rural Area will reflect rural levels of service. These vital local parks, local trails, and recreational facilities contribute to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of county residents.

**~~P-109~~P-107                    King County shall provide local parks, trails and other open spaces in the Rural Area. Local parks, trails and other open spaces that complement the regional system should be provided in each community in Rural Areas to meet local recreation needs and enhance environmental and visual quality.**

**~~P-110~~P-108                    King County should provide local parks within rural communities with fields and other facilities that provide opportunities for active sports. These facilities shall be in addition to and compatible with King County's regional parks.**

### **3. Regional Trails System**

The Regional Trail System is a major element of the county's greater open space system that provides opportunities for recreation and nonmotorized transportation, as well as corridors often used by wildlife. This system contributes to the health and well-being of both county residents and the environment. King County is home to one of the largest nonmotorized regional trail networks in the North America. King County and local jurisdictions collectively offer approximately 300 miles of shared-use (multi-purpose) paved and unpaved paths connecting communities and linking Puget Sound urban areas with rural lands and the Cascade Mountains. These facilities are classified as shared use paths by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and are a component of the federally-designated regional transportation plan administered by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). The King County government stewards some 175 miles of the overall network. The remaining portions of the network are managed by local cities, the Port of Seattle, and Washington State.

Regional trails are non-motorized facilities used for bicycling, walking, jogging, skating, horseback riding where appropriate, and other activities. The paths provide both recreational opportunities and mobility options, connecting users in neighborhoods and communities with schools, parks, employment, and other important destinations. Regional trails may be paved or soft-surface (gravel) or a combination of both. The network reaches more than 30 cities throughout King County, and use is extensive. It has been estimated that 12 million bicycle and pedestrian trips are made on the network in King County annually. These paths serve a wide range of land uses, both urban and rural. They link urban centers, business districts, neighborhoods, universities, schools, parks, and transportation centers. They run through cities, along waterfronts and scenic shorelines, through river valleys and farmlands, and into the Cascade forests.

While intended originally as recreational amenities and linear parks, the regional trails in King County have evolved to provide not only extensive recreation, but also important active transportation opportunities, and social/cultural venues. Today, thousands of daily trips are made on paths such as the Burke-Gilman Trail between suburban cities and Seattle. Recreation remains the primary use, but an increasing number of those trips are made for work and school, combining the healthy recreational benefits of cycling and walking with the workday commute. The trails are also used for a variety of special activities that enrich life in the central Puget Sound region from art-related treks to community fundraisers to long-distance cycling events.

Regional trails in King County now include not only decades-old popular routes like the Burke-Gilman Trail, but also trails networking many landscapes and destinations. Routes follow abandoned railroad lines, water pipeline and power line corridors, river levees, and other special features or they may establish their own alignments as they seek out practical courses between destinations. More interconnections provide more travel opportunities. Paths access parks and scenic landscapes, but they also now serve urban centers, major transit facilities, and other important everyday destinations. Future facilities will continue to provide the joint benefits of recreation and regional mobility. More information regarding King County's Regional Trails System including the proposed future regional trails plan, the Regional Trails Needs Report, can be found in the Appendices.

**P-407P-109** King County shall complete a regional trail system, linking trail corridors to form a countywide network. King County will continue to primarily own the land necessary for the operation and management of the trail system and pursue public-private funding opportunities for development and maintenance.

Policies related to the planning, development, and management of the Regional Trails System can be found in the King County Parks Open Space Plan, a functional plan of the King County Comprehensive Plan. Additional policies can also be found in Chapter 8, Transportation.

### **Eastside Rail Corridor**

The Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) provides a rare and unique opportunity to develop a major north-south corridor that supports transit and non-motorized mobility, utilities, parks, recreation and cultural amenities, and encourages equitable access to these facilities in support of economic opportunity for all King County residents. The corridor will be the focus of regional trail planning and development by King County Parks, connecting regional growth centers, urban communities, other regional trails, and both local and high-capacity transit and as envisioned by the owners' vision for the corridor. The trail will connect to existing major regional trail corridors including the Mountains to Sound/I-90 Trail, SR520 Trail, Sammamish River Trail, Lake to Sound Trail, and others. The trail will provide opportunities for safe recreation and mobility as a component of King County's Regional Trails System and provide opportunities for environmental benefits to the region.

**P-110** King County shall include the planning and development of a regional trail in the Eastside Rail Corridor, to enhance regional recreation and nonmotorized mobility. This facility will be planned and developed in coordination with other owners, and in close coordination with King County Transportation and other state and local agencies, in support of the multiple objectives of King County and the other owners. The trail will be identified in King County's regional trails plan, the Regional Trails Needs Report (RTNR), as a priority capital facility.

**P-110a** The Eastside Rail Corridor regional trail shall be developed to enhance non-motorized connectivity between regional growth centers, urban communities, other regional trails, and local and high-capacity transit. The trail will enhance the quality of life by providing important recreation and mobility options for adjacent land uses.

**P-110b** The Eastside Rail Corridor regional trail shall be developed to the most current regional trail standards, ensuring safe recreation and mobility in accessing trails, street and transit. The trail corridor will include high-quality landscaping and environmental features where appropriate to enhance the trail experience and to provide ecologic benefits to the region.

### Multi-Use Sites

Each portion of a multi-use site will be developed and managed to support the level of use or conservation appropriate to that portion of the site.

**P-110c** Multi-use sites include lands that have areas of environmental value, but also may accommodate extensive public access and active and/or passive recreation opportunities.

Backcountry trails allow users to directly experience the county's beautiful natural environment as found in its forests, meadows, and marine and fresh water shoreline. These trails are intended for passive recreation and appreciation and enjoyment of a natural experience with forest and trees, streams and wetlands, and birds and wildlife. Where backcountry trails are developed on lands containing fishery and wildlife resources, development and management of such trails is undertaken so as to minimize the impacts on those resources.

**P-108** (Moved to P-118a)

## **2. Local Parks**

In the Rural Area, the large geographic area and dispersed populations, individual lots, low residential density and economies of site management dictate fewer individual park sites. Nearby regional parks and other open spaces also provide recreational opportunities in the Rural Area. King County's role in the Rural Area will reflect rural levels of service. These vital local parks, trails, recreational facilities and natural resources contribute to the physical, mental and emotional well being of county residents.

**P-109** (Move to #P-107)

**P-110** (Moved to P-108)

## **3.4. Natural Areas Parks (Ecological Sites)**

The King County open space system includes many sites whose primary purpose is to conserve and restore ecological value. These sites may allow varying types of public use that do not harm the ecological resources of the site. These sites include many scenic and environmental features of King County's landscape, which play a role in protecting a diversity of vegetation and fish and wildlife important to the beauty and character of the region. King County will focus on linking natural areas to create regional open space corridors of greenways and waterways along the major natural systems such as rivers and shorelines.

Preserving these areas in partnership with other agencies, private groups and individuals will provide multiple values including environmental and economic benefits of air and water quality, surface water management, aquifer recharge, and fish and wildlife habitat preservation and enhancement.



- P-111** King County will manage its natural areas to protect, preserve and enhance important natural resource habitat, biological diversity, and the ecological integrity of natural systems.
- P-112** King County shall recognize and protect the natural character and ecological value of its natural areas. These areas are important for preserving fish and wildlife and their habitat, native vegetation, and features of scientific and educational value. Development and public use may be limited to preserve the natural state and reduce disturbance of the natural resources. Site improvements should be focused on providing educational and interpretive opportunities. Public access should be directed to the less fragile portions of a site to ensure continued protection of the ecological resources.

#### **45. Working Resource Lands**

The county's open space system includes lands that are managed as working farms and forests. The county has purchased these properties in fee or less than fee ownership with the intention of conserving the resource use on the site. County ownership and management of these lands conserves the resource land base, allowing the resource activity to continue, while contributing to the local rural economy, providing healthy foods, reducing carbon emissions associated with importing food into the region, providing education about agriculture and forestry, and providing passive recreational opportunities on some properties. The county's policies to conserve farmland and encourage agriculture are discussed in Chapter 3.

##### **Farmland**

The Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) is a county program that preserves farmland through the purchase of development rights. The farms in the FPP generally remain in private ownership. The county has purchased a farm outright in a few cases, with the intention of reselling the land without the development rights to a private farmer. The county has developed a program to lease farms to small-scale farmers until such time that the property can be resold.

- P-113** Farmland owned by King County shall contribute to the preservation of contiguous tracts of agricultural land and make affordable farmland available for use by small-scale and new farmers.
- P-114** Farmers leasing properties owned by King County shall use Agricultural Best Management practices, Integrated Pest Management and other sustainable farming methods.
- P-115** The use and management of farmlands owned by King County shall be consistent with any requirements imposed by the funding program used to purchase each

property and shall serve to meet and enhance the objectives of the King County Agriculture Program.

## **Forestland**

~~One element of the King County Forestry Program is the conservation of forestland through acquisition to allow continued forest management on the property. One goal of the King County Open Space System is the conservation of forestland through acquisition of land or conservation easements to decrease threat of conversion resulting from development and fragmentation, as well as promote the understanding of the importance of forest management, including restoration of the forests to more natural conditions.~~ The working forests owned by King County are generally very large parcels of land (several hundred acres or more) that support sustainable forest management practices and contribute to the retention of a contiguous forest. ~~These properties contribute to environmental protection, high quality passive recreation, the public understanding of forestry, and scenic vistas.~~ These properties contain valuable fish and wildlife habitat, provide environmental services (such as stormwater management, clean air/water and carbon sequestration), help mitigate the impacts of climate change as well as provide high-quality passive recreation, scenic vistas and educational/interpretation opportunities.

**P-116      ~~F~~Working forest land and conservation easements owned by King County shall provide large tracts of forested property in the Rural Forest Focus Areas, ~~and the Forest Production District (FPD) and Rural Area~~ that will remain in active forestry, protect areas from development or provide a buffer between commercial forestland and adjacent residential development.**

**P-117      Forest land owned by King County shall be used to sustain and enhance environmental benefits, demonstrate progressive forest management and research, and provide revenue for the management of the working forest lands.**

**P-118      Forest land owned by King County shall provide a balance between sustainable timber production, conservation and restoration of resources, and appropriate public use.**

## **6. Backcountry Trails**

Backcountry trails are not a separate open space category, rather they are facilities located within King County's multi-use sites, forest lands and natural areas. These trails allow visitors to directly experience the county's beautiful natural environment as found in its forests, meadows, and marine and fresh water shoreline. Unlike multi-purpose regional trails that network urban and rural landscapes throughout the county, these soft-surface are intended for passive recreation and appreciation and enjoyment of a natural experience with forest and trees, streams and wetlands, shorelines and birds and wildlife. Where backcountry trails are developed on lands containing fish and wildlife resources, development and management of such trails is undertaken so as to minimize the impacts on those resources.

**P-408P-118a** King County will continue to provide and manage a backcountry trail system on its lands in collaboration with other public and private landholders and consistent with its Trail Programmatic Permit.

## **57. Other Open Spaces**

Preservation of open space in the county reaches beyond the county owned system. Large areas of the county are owned and managed by federal agencies, the state, and other local jurisdictions that manage the land for environmental protection, resource production, or a wide range of recreational opportunities. Additionally, open space benefits are often provided by private land owners managing their land in ways that protect the environment, conserve natural resources, or provide scenic vistas. King County acquires property for other reasons, such as flood hazards or providing needed public facilities. These lands can also provide open space conservation benefits.

King County has acquired lands and manages facilities along major river and stream systems for the primary purpose of floodplain management and flood hazard management. Major streams and rivers are vital components of the county's open space system, therefore the flood hazard management lands contribute critical links in the county's open space network. The King County Flood District will continue to maintain flood hazard management land and facilities within available funding levels. The county will also seek innovative measures for maintaining and improving flood hazard management, reducing maintenance costs, integrating flood hazard management and recreational opportunities, and achieving wildlife habitat protection and salmon recovery.

## **C. Achieving the Open Space System**

Parks and other county-owned open space lands ensure a quality of life today and a legacy to future generations. In King County, many types of open spaces and fish and wildlife habitat remain in private ownership and may be subject to future development. To ensure that these lands and resources are protected and to offer an alternative to acquisition, the county offers landowners a wide variety of tools to preserve their property. Policies outlining strategies for using these tools can be found in Chapters 3, 4, and 7.

Cooperation, coordination and partnerships with public agencies, private groups and individuals are necessary to develop the regional parks and open space system, to meet existing needs for park and recreation facilities and to accommodate the needs of growth. The Mountains-to-Sound Greenway, along the I-90 corridor, is a successful model for coordination of efforts by public and private entities to protect the backbone of the county's open space system.

King County will achieve the multiple benefits of resource protection and recreation by building partnerships and coordinating with providers and user groups of the parks and open space system. Working together, stewardship

can be fostered and these lands and facilities can be enhanced, restored and operated more economically and efficiently to benefit all county residents.

## **1. Priorities**

P-119 Open space lands should be acquired to expand and enhance the open space system as identified in the King County Open Space Plan: Parks, Regional Trails and Natural Areas, ~~or when needed to meet adopted local park and recreation guidelines, or to protect contiguous tracts of working resource lands or ecological resources under the Acquisition Criteria in the King County Open Space Plan.~~

P-120 ~~Trails~~ Regional trail corridors should be acquired when identified in King County's Trails Plans, the Regional Trails Needs Report or other trails plans ~~when identified as part of a regional community trail network.~~

~~P-121 King County shall consider equity in the location, development and acquisition of its open space system to help in the reduction of health disparities and in the promotion of social and environmental justice.~~

## **2. Criteria**

P-122 Lands preserved for public parks, regional trails or other open space should provide multiple benefits whenever possible.

P-123 Decisions on acquisition and development of park, regional trail, and other open space sites should consider funding needs for long term maintenance and operations.

P-124 A variety of measures should be used to acquire, protect, manage and develop regional and local parks, regional trails and open space. Measures can include: county funding and other funding mechanisms, grants, partnerships, incentives, regulations, dedications and contributions from residential and commercial development based on their service impacts and trades of lands and shared development activities.

## **3. Managing the System**

As the caretaker of 200 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, more than 200 miles of backcountry trails, ~~26,000~~ 28,000 acres of open space, and 145,000 acres of conservation easements, King County is one of the region's important providers and managers of public lands. As such, the principles and policies that guide

stewardship and management of these lands and resources are critical to ensure these assets continue to contribute to the region's quality of life now and for future generations.

- P-125 Management of the regional open space system of parks, regional trails, natural areas and working resource lands is guided by the King County Open Space Plan: Parks, Trails and Natural Areas. ~~That plan includes policies on the management of parks and trails, natural areas, and working resource lands.~~
- P-126 Development and management of parks, regional trails and open space sites should be consistent with the purposes of their acquisition and in consideration of their funding sources.
- P-127 Open space lands shall be classified to identify their role in the open space system and the purpose of the acquisition as recreation site, trail, natural area park, multiuse site, or working ~~resource~~ forest land. They will also be classified as regional or local open space land.
- P-128 King County will adopt an entrepreneurial approach to managing and operating the open space system and work aggressively to implement multiple and appropriate strategies to fiscally sustain ~~fiscally~~ the open space system.
- P-128a King County shall develop management plans (such as master plans, forest stewardship plans or site management guidelines) that outline goals and objectives and management recommendations for sites within the open space system as appropriate and as budget and staffing resources allow.

#### 4. Coordination and Partnerships

- P-129 King County shall be a leader in establishing partnerships with cities, adjacent counties, tribes, state and federal agencies, school and special purpose districts, community organizations, non-profit organizations, land owners and other citizens. The county and these partnerships should work to promote and protect all aspects of environmental quality and address social and economic justice goals and to complete the regional parks and open space system through joint planning and management of ~~linking local and regional lands sites~~ and facilities.
- P-130 In the Urban Area, King County shall work in partnership with other jurisdictions to facilitate annexation and transfer of local parks, and local trails ~~and other open spaces~~ to cities or other providers to ensure continued service to the community.



P-131 King County should work with cities to share operational and maintenance costs of parks and other open spaces in unincorporated areas in which a substantial portion of the users are from incorporated areas.

P-132 King County will encourage and support volunteer efforts to maintain and enhance programs, sites and facilities.

## **5. Public Participation**

P-133 King County will encourage and seek input, advice and participation from the public in decisions about management of the open space system that relate to key issues such as funding, planning, acquisition, development and stewardship.

P-134 King County will work to invite and involve a wide variety of interests via a diversity of individuals, groups and agencies consistent with the County's economic and social justice policies.

P-135 King County will use a variety of methods to ensure public involvement from all county residents such as public meetings, advisory groups, surveys, web and social media postings, news releases, park site signage, mailing lists, newsletters and through various community groups (including Community Service Areas). These methods will allow for early, continuous and broad public participation.

## **II. Cultural Resources**

Cultural resources make a significant contribution to the quality of life in King County. Arts and heritage organizations, public art and historic and archaeological properties contribute to the region's economic vitality, play an essential role in cultural tourism, and contribute significantly to the county's overall quality of life. As King County grows, the need to protect, support and enhance cultural opportunities and resources is essential in order to sustain livability.

King County plays an important role in supporting the region's cultural life. 4Culture, a County-chartered Public Development Authority serves as the county's cultural services agency. Created by the county as a county-chartered Public Development Authority, 4Culture has operational responsibility for advancing the work of the cultural community in King County by advocating for, supporting, promoting, and enhancing:

- arts;
- heritage;

- preservation; and
- public art.

4Culture's historic preservation program provides funding, advocacy, assistance and support in preserving and conserving the county's historical and archeological resources through projects and programs including: interpretation, community education and outreach, cultural tourism, and rehabilitation of historical resources. The King County Historic Preservation Program (HPP), housed in the County's Department of Parks and Natural Resources, also plays an important role ensuring that historic properties throughout King County are protected and enhanced.

King County government can lead by example through stewardship and wise management of its own cultural resources. Historic public buildings and facilities, such as bridges and roads, can be preserved and continue to be used; other historic resources can be converted to public use. As set by policy ED-106, found in Chapter ~~9~~10, in order to enhance the region's quality of life and economic vitality, the county will engage in programs and projects to protect cultural resources and promote expanded cultural opportunities for the county's residents and visitors.

- P-201                    King County shall be a steward of cultural resources under its control. It shall identify and evaluate cultural resources, preserve public art works and significant historic properties, and interpret and provide public access to them whenever appropriate. County departments and divisions shall collaborate with the Historic Preservation Program to nominate eligible properties for landmark designation.**
- P-202                    King County shall consider equity and social and environmental justice in its promotion and protection of cultural resources.**
- P-203                    King County shall encourage preserving, reusing and recycling historic buildings in its facilities planning and other relevant actions.**

## **A.     Relationships**

County residents need arts and heritage opportunities. These include both attendance- driven programs and projects, as well as more localized, community-orientated opportunities of hands-on participation and education. The county's cultural system is comprised of regional and local arts and heritage organizations, individuals and venues. It also involves relationships with both public and private entities to preserve the region's history, as well as to enhance placement of art in public places. As such, cultural resource management crosses jurisdictional boundaries and involves countless public and private entities and artists throughout the region. The range and complexity of cultural activity in the region requires coordination and cooperation. King County, through its creation of 4Culture, provides this regional coordination and leadership.

While 4Culture is not a county department, the county and 4Culture maintain a unique cooperative relationship. Historically over 95% of 4Culture's budget has been funded by King County resources from either dedicated tax revenue or capital improvement project budgets. The council approves the executive's nominations for membership on 4Culture's board. Three councilmembers serve on 4Culture's board. The council annually receives briefings from 4Culture on its work program and to discuss plans for the coming year. Therefore, it is through 4Culture that King County maintains its regional role with regard to cultural resource management.

- P-204            King County shall support the retention and promotion of the region's cultural legacy, promote cultural education, and encourage the preservation and celebration of cultural diversity and creativity.**
- P-205            King County shall support and encourage development of regional cultural organizations, facilities, and services that address a countywide audience or are dedicated to unique and significant cultural themes or disciplines.**
- P-206            King County shall support and encourage community cultural organizations, facilities, and services to provide opportunities for local access and participation by all residents throughout the county.**
- P-207            King County shall encourage excellence and vitality in the arts by supporting opportunities for attendance at and participation in diverse arts and cultural activities throughout the county.**
- P-208            King County shall pursue its cultural resource goals by working with residents, property owners, cultural organizations, public agencies, tribes, schools and school districts, and others.**
- P-209            King County shall provide leadership in pursuing its cultural resource goals by actively advancing the protection, enhancement, and ongoing use of county-owned and other cultural resources, and by promoting intergovernmental cooperation and partnerships for the preservation and use of cultural resources.**
- P-210            King County shall partner with cities to protect and enhance historic resources and public art located within city boundaries and annexation areas.**

## **B. Arts, Heritage and Public Art**

The region's artistic environment parallels its natural features in variety and richness. Its arts organizations, artists and opportunities are widely known and valued for their diversity and excellence in music, theater, dance, literary activity, and visual arts.

Museums, historical societies, heritage groups, historians, archivists, folklorists and other heritage specialists enrich community life and provide rich cultural experiences for county residents and visitors. Without preservation and stewardship of local history by these groups, the county's rich history would be lost.

**P-211                    King County shall support, preserve and enhance its heritage by encouraging opportunities for public attendance and participation in diverse heritage activities throughout the county.**

**P-212                    The King County executive and the King County council shall regularly seek advice from 4Culture on programs, policies and regulations that support, enrich and increase access to the arts, public art and King County's heritage.**

Public art means art for shared public space in King County, including King County buildings and infrastructure. King County's public art collection includes portable, permanently sited and architecturally integrated artworks that help define county buildings as cultural spaces. Public art also includes art installed or incorporated in places developed by others, but accessible to the public. Public art enhances community character and diversity, sparks imagination, and provides a direct cultural experience for county residents and visitors every day. For new or changing communities, public art is a powerful contributor to local character, sense of place and belonging. Public art can also help mitigate the adverse effects of new development.

**P-213                    King County shall incorporate public art in its construction and mitigation projects, as well as its undertakings involving public-private partnerships, and development authorities that include public funds or resources or have publicly accessible components.**

**P-214                    Maintenance and conservation shall be a consideration in the development and management of public art.**

## **C. Historic Preservation**

Preservation of historic properties provides multiple benefits. Historic properties maintain a tangible connection with the past and contribute to community understanding, character, and diversity. Preservation saves energy, conserves existing housing and commercial buildings, and retains historically significant open space. Historic properties also play a major role in attracting tourists.

The mission of the King County Historic Preservation Program (HPP), housed in the County's Department of Parks and Natural Resources, is to conserve existing historic housing, commercial buildings and other significant properties and foster heritage tourism throughout county. It provides technical and other assistance to cities lacking preservation programs. It also supports the work of the King County Landmarks Commission.

**P-215                    The King County executive and the King County council shall regularly seek advice from the Landmarks Commission on programs, policies and regulations that support and enhance preservation and protection of significant historic properties.**

Many municipalities do not have sufficient resources to administer an historic preservation program. As a result, the history of the region is endangered. Comprehensive and coordinated protection of significant historic properties is necessary in order to ensure that King County's history is preserved.

**P-216                    King County shall administer a historic preservation program to identify, protect and enhance historic properties throughout the region.**

Historic preservation is an ongoing process that requires identification, evaluation, designation and protection of significant properties, and attention to long-term enhancement and interpretation. Historic properties are often destroyed through neglect. Regular maintenance and other management practices that protect historic properties are critical to long-term preservation. King County government can lead by example through stewardship and wise management of its own historic properties.

**P-217                    King County shall acquire and preserve historic properties for use by county and other public agencies and shall give priority to occupying historic buildings whenever feasible.**

Review of development proposals and other actions affecting historic properties resources is necessary in order to eliminate or minimize adverse effects of development or changing land use. Archaeological sites are particularly sensitive and endangered because they are not visible and may be unexpectedly encountered. King County government can also protect historic properties through careful planning and review of its own undertakings, both directly and in partnerships with private parties and other agencies.



- P-218** King County shall establish comprehensive review and protection procedures for historic properties affected by public and private projects.
- P-219** King County may condition public and private projects in order to protect historic properties. King County agencies shall coordinate with the Historic Preservation Program to provide consistent review and mitigation for their projects and undertakings throughout the county.
- P-220** King County shall encourage land uses and development that retain and enhance significant historic properties and sustain historic community character. County building and zoning codes and other regulations and standards should provide flexibility to accommodate preservation and reuse of historic properties. Zoning actions should take into account the effects of zoning on historic properties.
- P-221** King County shall maintain an inventory of historic properties in order to guide its historic preservation decision making.

Preservation requires active support by governments and cooperation with property owners. Incentives such as tax reduction, revolving loans, transfer of development rights, expedited permitting, reduced permit fees, zoning flexibility, technical assistance and other measures can be used to encourage preservation. As set by policy ED-208, found in Chapter 910, the county shall assist businesses, property owners, and other jurisdictions in preserving and enhancing historic properties, including historic business districts, through a variety of incentives and economic development measures.

**Note: Moved to separate attachment**

**((Regional Trails Needs Report – Map and List of Projects))**

