



King County

Vision, leadership and innovation in housing and community development



YouthBuild and Habitat for Humanity - An innovative partnership that offers on-the-job training in construction trades for at-risk youth and young adults while creating affordable homeownership opportunities for lower-income households

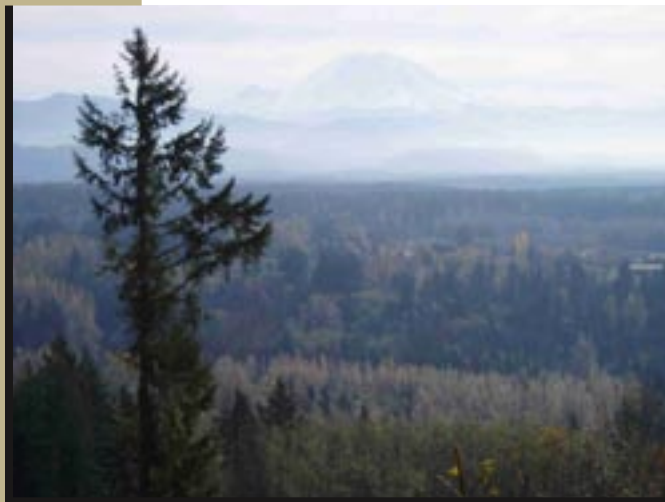
Vision – For more than a dozen years, King County Executive Ron Sims has championed regional efforts to develop affordable, workforce and supportive housing, end homelessness, improve blighted neighborhoods, create opportunities for home ownership, balance the demand for housing with the need to protect our environment, and address economic and social justice inequities.



King County is the 14th largest county in the nation, and contains 39 city jurisdictions, including the City of Seattle. With an overall population of 1.8 million, King County is home to about 20 percent of Washington state's population and alone accounts for more than 40 percent of the state's jobs. The County government has a workforce of over 14,000 employees and an annual budget of \$5 billion.



Ron Sims at Snoqualmie Tree Farm - preserving 90,000 acres of open space



View from Taylor Mountain

Productive Partnerships – Executive Sims has done this work in partnership with many others – whether business leaders or housing authorities, legislators or homeless individuals. King County has had the ability to pull together stakeholders from a variety of perspectives on any given issue to resolve differences and find common ground in order to address the priority at hand – preserving and creating affordable and workforce housing and a healthy place to live. Providing leadership to implement needed change, commitment to helping those most in need, innovation to create new and different ways of doing business, and fostering the sense of community that makes King County such a great place to live, County Executive Ron Sims has provided the stewardship to achieve extraordinary progress in the arenas of housing and community development.

Quality of Life – King County's quality of life and the health of its citizens depends on preserving open space and providing recreational opportunities. Having the foresight to combine smart growth, housing development and preservation of a pristine natural environment has been an unwavering commitment. The results have been ensuring all the environmental benefits of 175 miles of regional trails and more than 190,000 acres of open space and forests. This also includes pocket parks near housing developments, connecting trails for outdoor leisure and alternative transportation options, and putting development in our urban areas near employment and business hubs.



Live-Work units at Greenbridge - affordable housing and work units in an urban area

LEADERSHIP

Affordable Housing Development – 5,632 units funded throughout the county to date, including 358 ownership units. King County provides oversight and management to regional housing and community development partnerships, managing an annual budget of over \$19 million in federal funds and approximately \$20 million more from a variety of local housing fund sources. Under the direction of Executive Sims, the county has joined with local cities, housing authorities, nonprofits, developers, and others to create low-income housing, affordable and workforce housing, accessible units specially designed for seniors and persons with developmental disabilities, housing for veterans and their families, supportive housing with onsite services such as mental health and substance abuse treatment, and opportunities for homeownership.



Located in Bellevue, Harrington House provides 10 affordable transitional housing units for homeless pregnant teens with onsite case management and other services.



Breaking ground for Copper Lantern Homes - affordable homeownership in Kenmore

Multi-jurisdictional coordination – To respond to the need for housing and supportive services countywide, King County has pursued a collaborative approach with its many stakeholders. The county is the official applicant to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for federal housing and community development funds, on behalf of a King County Consortium that consists of most of the cities in the region. Guidance on the expenditure of those funds is provided by an inter-jurisdictional Joint Recommendations Committee, created through interlocal cooperation agreements and coordinated by the county. Decisions are reached on regional priorities and approval of proposals, helping to increase accessibility to a range of housing opportunities countywide.

Creating dedicated fund sources for housing development – Years of ground work and legislative advocacy paid off when the State Legislature approved a bill in 2002 to create a local dedicated revenue source for affordable housing through a surcharge on document recording fees for housing transactions. This revenue allowed the creation of a new Regional Affordable Housing Program. King County was active in advocating for an additional recording fee surcharge to be used specifically for the purpose of implementing local plans to end homelessness. Both funds are coordinated by the county and together they contribute an average of \$10 million annually for regional housing development and supportive housing opportunities.



Ron Sims (placing window) working with Habitat for Humanity in Snoqualmie

LEADERSHIP

Opening doors to the dream of homeownership –

Executive Sims believes in helping people of all incomes achieve the dream of owning their own home. He worked to create partnerships with Habitat for Humanity to build and renovate single family homes, and joined with the Washington State Housing Finance Commission to create House Key programs countywide to help people buy their first home through deferred payment

assistance loans (up to \$30,000) with a 4% simple interest rate. The loan becomes due only when the borrower sells or refinances the home or pays off the first mortgage.

Building Green – Balancing the demand for housing with the need to preserve our valuable natural resources, Executive Sims led an effort to encourage environmentally responsible sustainable development practices. Incentives and discounts in “Green Tools” programs include free green building and low impact development technical assistance and consultation; a dedicated “green track” for green building projects; cost-sharing and fee discounts for use of low-impact best practices such as converting to native-vegetated landscapes; and a range of grants and hands-on training opportunities for developers and homeowners.

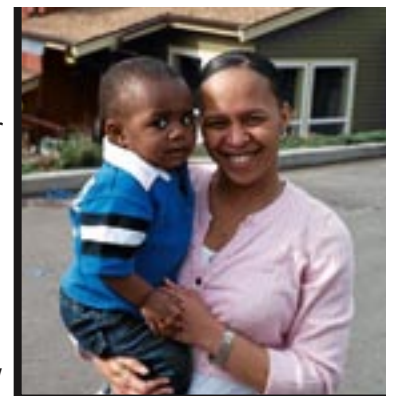
Fair Housing / Predatory Lending Protection – In 2001, Executive Sims joined the City of Seattle and local non-profit agencies to form the Seattle-King County Coalition for Responsible Lending. The coalition launched a major consumer protection public information campaign offering training and materials in many languages – helping countless households avoid predatory loans and the loss of their homes. The coalition continues to sponsor workshops to work with distressed homeowners caught up in the lending crisis. In addition to



Building Green - Evans House in Seattle provides 75 studio units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless and mentally ill adults, including 4 units set-aside for persons with developmental disabilities. It was built using energy efficiency and sustainability standards, as well as universal design elements for accessibility.

fostering responsible lending activities, Executive Sims has long been a leader in furthering fair housing efforts in the region through education and enforcement.

Equity and Social Justice – Asking the community to join together to eliminate long-standing inequalities and work toward fairness and equity for all, Executive Sims launched the King County Equity and Social Justice Initiative in 2008. The goal is for all county residents to live in “communities of opportunity” – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, sexual orientation or disability. The Executive’s initiative includes community education and involvement as well as a thorough examination and action plan for improving county services and practices to improve equal access to affordable housing, healthcare, education, and opportunities for all.



Equity and Social Justice Initiative - Creating communities of opportunity for all county residents

COMMITMENT

Serving those most in need has always been a priority for Executive Sims, as shown by these initiatives to help our most vulnerable individuals and families gain both housing and stability.



Head Start children “break ground” for the Kent Family Center (King County Housing Authority 2003)

Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

– The Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) regional partnership has created or has in the pipeline more than 3,349 units of housing – more housing units for homeless people than most cities and counties across the country anticipate creating in ten years – and has provided the services needed to help formerly homeless people re-stabilize their lives.

On any given night in King County, more than 8,500 people are sleeping in temporary housing, shelters or on the street. In 2005, the community came together to craft a plan to end homelessness in our region. King County served as a founding member of the CEH and provides oversight and leadership to the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan. Serving as co-chair of the Governing Board is King County Executive Ron Sims, whose early commitment to helping homeless people began as an evening lay minister for Operation Nightwatch on Seattle’s streets.

Homeless highlights include:

🏠 Recognizing the need to marry housing with supportive services such as mental health and substance abuse treatment, King County and the CEH embraced the concept of “housing first.” Moving people as quickly as possible into housing along with services has helped to stabilize thousands of lives.



Katherine House in Kent provides eight beds of transitional housing for women being released from jail who are also recovering from substance abuse. Supportive services help them become self sufficient and reunite with their children.

COMMITMENT

Homeless highlights:

◆ A truly innovative and nationally recognized Notice of Funding Availability brings together the major regional funders – the county, cities, United Way, local housing authorities and others – who agree to coordinate priorities and available funds for homeless housing in one notice, use a joint application, and coordinate funding decisions, in order to streamline the process and fund complete homeless housing projects; \$36 million was awarded for 2008 and \$23 million for 2007.

◆ The best way to reduce homelessness is to prevent it from happening in the first place. King County quadrupled funding for eviction prevention and mortgage assistance in 2007-08 to help families in need due to the economic crisis. Overall, homeless



Volunteers prepare a meal at Angeline's Center for Homeless Women. YWCA Opportunity Place provides 105 studio and 40 one-bedroom apartments, a career resource center, and onsite health services and counseling. It also houses Angeline's Center, offering homeless women a place to shower, eat, do laundry and relax during the day and provides shelter beds at night.



The nationally recognized 1811 Eastlake Project

prevention programs have helped thousands of at-risk households remain stable in their own homes.

◆ Joining with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, King County is working to end family homelessness. A multi-year project called Sound Families helped 1,487 local families, most of whom had been homeless more than once. Full time employment for participants tripled and 89% were able to secure permanent housing upon their exit from the program. Building on lessons learned, a new multi-year grant will begin in 2009, focused on helping homeless families in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties.

◆ Despite many critics, Executive Sims backed the controversial 1811 Eastlake Project that moved 75 chronic alcoholics off the streets of Seattle and into safe housing, giving them access to treatment but not requiring it as a condition for housing. The project proposed to help high risk persons reduce their need for emergency services and lower criminal justice costs, and it did. In its first year, the 1811 cut medical expenses by 41%; reduced sobering center use by 87%; and reduced jail bookings by 45% for a total savings of more than \$2.5 million.



The Willows in White Center provides housing and hope for homeless mothers with mental illness, offering onsite treatment and counseling, parenting skills training, and the chance to reunite with their children. (Community Psychiatric Clinic)

COMMITMENT



Local veterans participate in an information fair at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Building, built in 2007 with proceeds from the Veterans and Human Services Levy

Veterans and Human Services Levy –

Responding to the needs of aging and returning veterans, military personnel and their families as well as other low-income households, King County voters approved a property tax measure in 2005 that raises \$13 million a year for seven years to help individuals and families countywide. Capital dollars have created 375 units of permanent housing, and service dollars are improving access to behavioral health and other supportive services. The levy is helping to reduce and prevent homelessness and incarcerations, and stabilizing individuals and families across the region.

Mental Illness and Drug Dependency – Lack of access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services is one of the highest risk factors to homelessness. Without treatment, many are unable to find or keep a job or pay for housing, ending up on the streets or in temporary shelters. Their health declines and they become involved in the emergency medical and criminal justice systems.

Plymouth on Stewart in downtown Seattle offers beautiful apartments with onsite supportive services to house and help chronically homeless people with mental illness

To break that cycle, in 2007 King County approved a one-tenth of one cent sales tax increase to improve availability of treatment services and enhance local mental health and drug courts. The action plan allocates capital dollars toward development of supportive housing, 296 units so far, service dollars to subsidies and treatment to support people to be successful.



INNOVATION

Working to remove barriers and increase incentives to build affordable and workforce housing, King County implemented a number of innovative and creative programs to spur development of thousands of affordable housing units for individuals and families throughout the region.



Greenbrier Heights, formerly county surplus land, offers 50 apartments for seniors and disabled persons; 50 apartments for families earning below 50% of median income; and 70 homes sold at prices between \$115,000 and \$231,000 – as well as community spaces, play areas, and walking trails.

Credit Enhancement Program – Over 1,400 affordable units to date. Lending the financial backing of the county to affordable housing financing, this innovative program created in 1997 under Executive Sims' leadership allows the county to lend its strong credit rating to an eligible housing project through a contingent loan agreement, thereby reducing financing costs for the development of affordable rental or ownership housing units. King County's credit enhancement portfolio of 10 projects is performing very strongly - with not one default to date - and a cost savings of over \$17.6 million for those projects.

Surplus Property Program – Over 400 units created, with hundreds more in the pipeline. Thanks to the leadership of then-councilmember Ron Sims, in 1996 King County amended its code to prioritize the sale of surplus land to developers willing to build housing affordable to households earning 115% of area median income (AMI) or less. Among the projects completed: 12 homes built by Habitat for Humanity and HomeSight and sold to low income households at prices between \$131,000 and \$200,000; the Tashiro Kaplan project featuring 50 artist lofts for low and very-low income artists and their families, located in a mixed use building with a street level art gallery; and the award-winning

Greenbrier Heights project. Currently, five county-owned properties totaling 69 acres of urban land are seeking proposals for development as part of the Executive's Sustainable Communities and Housing Pilot Project to encourage community development, stimulate the local economy, create jobs and supply hundreds of affordable workforce housing units. This is another example of the county creating new ways of doing business, streamlining the permitting process, providing incentives for sustainable development, and implementing housing industry recommendations.



Lauren Heights family housing in the Issaquah Highlands

INNOVATION



Klahanie in Issaquah offers affordable family housing in a master planned development

Master Planned Development Program – Over 2,500 affordable/workforce units created to date. In order to increase affordable housing in East King County, where housing costs are very high, the county adopted provisions in 1993 requiring that master planned developments contain at least 30% of units affordable to households earning no more than 120% of area median income (AMI) at a range of affordability levels from 50% AMI to 120% AMI. Developments have been completed with affordable units in Redmond, Snoqualmie Ridge, and the Issaquah Highlands.

Development Incentives – Over 130 affordable/workforce units created to date. Offering incentives to developers who agree to create affordable housing at a range of income levels, the county implemented density bonuses and impact fee waivers in 1993.

Transit Oriented Development Program – Over 1,600 affordable/workforce units completed or near completion. Combining affordable housing, environmental stewardship and growth management together with accessibility to a public transportation hub makes the Transit Oriented Development Program unique. One example is the nationally recognized Village at Overlake Station in Redmond, home of Microsoft, with 308 rental housing units affordable to households earning 60

percent of median income (\$35-40,000 per year) including 30 handicap accessible units, a child care facility, and also providing parking for a park-and-ride transit center encouraging bus, vanpool, carpool and bicycle commuting. New projects open in 2009 and others are under development at transit hubs around the county.



Village at Overlake Station in Redmond

INNOVATION



Ellsworth House, funded in 1999, provides 58 one bedroom units of permanent low-income housing for seniors on Mercer Island. Each is supported by a federal project-based housing rental subsidy, ensuring affordability to persons at or below 50% of area median income.

King County Comprehensive Plan – The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a policy framework for housing. The goal is to allow the maximum prescribed number of housing units to be realized on each property within the Urban Growth Area (UGA). In 2000, Executive Sims made a decision to facilitate growth within the UGA, in exchange for tightening controls in the rural area and provide incentives and support development where it can best be served by existing facilities and services. The Comprehensive Plan allows single-family detached homes, townhomes, duplexes and apartments in all urban residential zones; applies a minimum density requirement to all urban residential zones of four or more homes per acre; encourages a variety of housing types and lot patterns through clustering, flexible setbacks, and a mix of attached and detached housing; integrates nonresidential uses such as schools, libraries and small-scale retail into urban residential neighborhoods; supports redevelopment that improves the overall character of existing neighborhoods; offers surplus

county-owned property for affordable housing; and promotes incorporation of the principles of healthy communities, sustainability, and greenhouse gas emissions mitigation in affordable housing development.

2005 Affordable Communities Award – King County was the first county in the nation chosen to receive a Robert L. Woodson Jr. Affordable Communities Award presented by HUD in 2005 in recognition of the county's ongoing work and leadership in reducing regulatory barriers to affordable housing development.



Laurelwood Garden in Federal Way - Renovated by the King County Housing Authority to provide 92 households with affordable housing, a safe place for children to play, and a sense of community.

COMMUNITY

Community Development Block Grant funding helps communities in so many ways – from the creation of much needed community facilities, housing and shelter to infrastructure improvements in low to moderate income neighborhoods and more. King County manages millions of dollars each year for projects that improve and strengthen our communities.



Salvation Army Food Bank in Renton offers a demonstration kitchen to show how to use food bank items in nutritious meals

Community Development Block Grant

CDBG Investments	Total	Number of Projects	Benefit
1996 Flood Funding	\$2,933,842	14 projects	Flood relief infrastructure
Acquisition	\$20,258,208	56 housing and facility projects; 26 shelter projects	Acquisition of property for affordable housing, shelter or community facility projects
Economic Development	\$1,950,007	92 small businesses assisted; jobs created; 4 enterprise projects funded	Loans and technical assistance to small businesses, employment
Community Facilities – low to moderate income areas	\$11,219,509	105 projects completed	Development, repair, or expansion of vital community facilities - community centers, senior centers, family centers, playgrounds, food banks
Public Improvements – low to moderate income areas	\$12,323,347	86 projects completed	Infrastructure improvements - water systems, sewers, sidewalks, parks
Relocation Activities	\$145,878	122 households assisted	Assistance for households displaced due to affordable housing development activity
Removal of Architectural Barriers	\$920,798	23 projects completed	ADA accessibility/barrier removal - wheelchair ramps, sidewalk/park improvements, restroom renovations

COMMUNITY



Jim Wiley Community Center at Greenbridge in White Center

Greenbridge – An aging public housing development is gone and in its place a vibrant new community is emerging. As part of the Executive’s initiative to invest in White Center, the redevelopment of Park Lake Homes called Greenbridge is creating not just beautiful and affordable homes, but a vital community as well. King County’s investment of \$10 million is helping to create both housing and vital parks and infrastructure, in partnership with the King County Housing Authority and its federal HUD Hope VI grant. Over 100,000 square feet of community space includes a renovated community center with a Boys and Girls Club, community college classes, family services, a career development center co-located with a branch library, and an early learning center. A \$550,000 grant from Starbucks gave the park across from Greenbridge a makeover based on

community input. Attention to the environment has yielded the creation of a trail system and parks, planting of drought tolerant trees and landscaping, bioswales designed to clean and filter storm water, and the salvaging and recycling of materials during the demolition phases. Extensive collaborations with King County’s permitting agencies streamlined



the process. Housing will include low-income rental units and affordable home ownership provided by Habitat for Humanity, as well as market rate housing – about a thousand housing units in all.



King County

Department of Community and Human Services

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