Conservation, Natural Resources and Habitat Protection and Restoration

King County is committed to conservation and restoration efforts and the health of the Puget Sound. The County seeks federal funding for programs such as the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) to implement habitat protection and restoration projects. PCSRF is the cornerstone of funding for salmon recovery in Washington State and has supported more than 10,000 projects that have resulted in significant improvements in habitat condition and availability. We also support efforts to designate Puget Sound as a “Great Waterbody” to make it a formal Clean Water Act program through such legislation as the Puget Sound Recovery Act.

We support US Army Corps investments in improvements to the Hiram Chittenden Locks, a critical passage for juvenile salmon and an essential navigation link between Puget Sound and Lake Washington. Finally, we support funding sources such as the Clean Water State Revolving Fund which helps protect our natural resources by investing in clean water infrastructure and continued federal funding for the Army Corp’s Ecosystem Restoration Projects including the work underway on the Duwamish-Green Riverway.

Climate Change and Energy

King County supports federal assistance for local governments to meet climate change goals and is supportive of the President’s efforts under the National Climate Action Plan. In addition, the County supports federal decisions that include the complete lifecycle costs and benefits of coal and oil mining, transport and export. We also support improving oil train safety by eliminating the use of DOT-111 tank cars in the transport of highly flammable crude oil.

We support federal grants through the Department of Transportation, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency that provide for alternative fuel vehicle investments. The County is working towards replacing our transit fleet with hybrid electric buses, developing additional electric-car charging infrastructure, and purchasing more alternative fuel vanpool fleet vehicles. We are committed to reducing greenhouse gasses from County fleets; hybrid buses now comprise 50 percent of our bus fleet. Further, we support programs that incentivize transit use by our citizens, including the tax credit for employer-provided transit passes and the reauthorization of the Commute Trip Reduction program.

Economic Development

We encourage federal efforts to partner with local governments and provide them with tools needed to build strong, diverse and sustainable economies. We encourage federal support to help develop economic strategies to retain existing businesses and strategically recruit new ones in key industrial clusters in which the region has a competitive advantage. We support policies that promote trade including the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank.

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Emergency Management and Flood Hazard Reduction
King County supports integrated approaches to major river flood hazard reduction, including development of regional standards for levee maintenance that both protect public safety and meet state and federal requirements for protecting listed species and maintaining levees. We appreciate the language in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act on levee vegetation and look forward to working with the Army Corps on implementation. King County and its partners are working towards completion of the System Wide Improvement Framework (SWIF) in the Green River Valley and support additional engagement from the federal agencies involved to provide regulatory certainty.

The County believes revisions to the National Flood Insurance Program levee certification program are necessary to reflect the true risk that remains even with the presence of a levee. King County supports extending the exemption from income tax to state and local flood mitigation funds to eliminate the current disincentive for homeowners to elevate their homes. Currently only funds from FEMA for home elevations are exempt from federal income tax.

King County supports reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act which provides funds to work with rural communities to reduce the risk of damage from wildfires and also provides funding for rural roads.

Equity and Social Justice
King County believes that every person has the right to live, work, learn, feel safe and play free from discrimination. We support legislation that prevents discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations and lending practices. We also support efforts to reduce and reverse disproportionate outcomes in the areas of race and social justice. The County is committed to reducing recidivism in our community and supports federal programs to that end. Further, we support equal and fair pay for all working people and specific efforts and actions to reduce gender pay disparity.

King County is home to thousands of immigrants whose work benefits our cities, county and state. We believe that comprehensive immigration reform will improve the safety and security of our nation and provide a clear path to citizenship for hard-working immigrants who already contribute to our communities and our economy.

Health Care and Support
We support policies that ensure our citizens receive timely care in an appropriate setting. We support repealing the exclusion of Institutions for Mental Disease from Medicaid reimbursement or revising the policy to allow for short-term stays of less than 30 days. This change will increase access for patients who need short-term access to psychiatric or detoxification services.

The County supports legislation to maintain Medicaid coverage for inmates who are otherwise eligible to receive Medicaid and other federal health benefits until they are convicted, sentenced and incarcerated. This will help us break the cycle of recidivism and reduce health disparities by providing and continuing coverage to a population of low-income adults with substantial physical, mental health and substance abuse needs.

King County develops and implements creative and effective strategies and programs that prevent the leading causes of poor health, ensure access to appropriate and quality physical and behavioral health

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services, and promote individual health and interventions to reduce health disparities. Supporting and expanding this work requires stable funding at the federal level for our public health, mental health and chemical dependency prevention and support infrastructure. Critical components of our system of regional public health include preparedness funding, CDC disease control and prevention, and Maternal Child Health Block Grants.

King County is proud of its efforts to lead the Coverage is Here King County campaign. To date, more than 195,000 King County residents have enrolled in health insurance plans because of the Affordable Care Act. Additionally, the County supports the activities funded by the Public Health and Prevention Fund, which advances the overall health of King County residents.

We support steps that will reduce use of tobacco and tobacco by-products including cigars, and support FDA authority to regulate all tobacco products. Nicotine poisonings have sharply increased especially among children as e-cigarettes which deliver liquid nicotine have become more widely available. King County supports federal legislation such as the Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act that would require child resistant packaging on these products.

The County also seeks to promote integration of care by revising federal substance abuse privacy laws, originally designed in 1972, to align more closely with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009.

Homelessness and Housing

King County is the administrative lead for the Committee to End Homelessness. The committee’s success is built on existing strong collaborations between local, state and federal governments, and community non-profit workers. We support maintaining and expanding funding and regulatory initiatives for affordable, appropriate housing at the federal level for homeless and low income residents of King County.

We support the many federal initiatives that provide services to maintaining housing stability, including HOME, Community Development Block Grants, McKinney Homeless Assistance Grants, Low Income Housing Tax Credit Programs, Common Sense Housing Investment Act, Project Rebuild, the National Housing Trust Fund and Section 8 Rental Assistance. We also support connecting County investments supporting veterans with the federal government’s initiative to end homelessness for veterans. Programs such as Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing allow the County to do that.

Human Services

King County supports funding for human services programs that: help all children and youth grow and prosper socially and academically; offer paths to reduce or prevent involvement in the criminal justice system, crisis mental health and emergency medical systems; and provide a safety net of services and partnerships to support our most vulnerable residents. We further support initiatives that offer opportunities for independence, self-sufficiency and mobility for all residents, including those with developmental and other disabilities.

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We believe children should have access to healthy and nutritious foods where they live, play and learn and support building on the successes of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act in the next reauthorization.

King County strongly supports funding for the newly reauthorized Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) which allows the County to operate WorkSource Renton, a one stop employment center, as well as programs serving youth and dislocated workers.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provides funds that allow the County to invest in projects serving low-income households, neighborhoods and communities including homelessness prevention, shelter diversion and other crucial needs. We strongly support ongoing funding for CDBG.

Land Use and Built Environment

King County favors policies that support the integration of land use, transportation and public health through urban and suburban development standards, siting of hazardous land uses, transportation infrastructure, transit planning and building construction requirements. For example, King County supports efforts to invest in additional green infrastructure, using vegetation and natural processes to manage stormwater and combined sewer overflows.

Law and Criminal Justice

King County supports a fair and accessible justice system that keeps people safe in their homes and communities. The County seeks resources to protect and support our children through tools like the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants and Child Support Enforcement Grants. Further, the County supports continued funding for the Medicaid Administrative Match Program which allows the County to provide outreach and promote enrollment in Medicaid programs for court-involved youth and families.

To enhance public safety, we support changing federal policy to allow banks to work with state authorized marijuana businesses. Guidance from the Treasury Department last February has helped; however, we support legislative action that would add certainty for banks and legal marijuana businesses.

The County also supports efforts to ensure victims of crime receive the restitution due to them, through legislation such as the Crime Victim Restitution and Court Fee Intercept Act. The bill allows the Department of Treasury to intercept tax refunds to pay overdue court ordered fines, fees and victim restitution.

Stormwater and Water Quality

We support revising EPA’s community affordability standards to include a holistic view of implementation of the Clean Water Act, including evaluation of and prioritization of actions at a watershed and Puget Sound scale that allows local jurisdictions to achieve the greatest water quality improvements first.

In collaboration with our partners, we support an approach to the Lower Duwamish Cleanup that would enable high-priority clean-up actions to proceed and reduce human health risks as quickly as possible

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while minimizing construction impacts to local residents and businesses. Clean-up work should be subject to rigorous monitoring and adaptive management.

**Transportation**

Robust, multimodal mobility is critical to economic growth and community livability in King County and the nation. We support a surface transportation reauthorization bill that supports these goals through both directly distributed and competitive federal funds. With nearly 1,700 miles of paved roads, 51 miles of unpaved roads, and 184 bridges under County management, we have a diverse and complex mix of infrastructure needs to support our many communities. The County supports preserving existing federal transportation funding. The federal government is a vital partner in our efforts to preserve and maintain the aging local and regional roadway infrastructure, replace transit busses and ferries and many other modalities that connect rural, suburban and urban communities.

In addition, the County supports a change in Federal Highway Administration policy that requires competitive bidding for all federally funded projects to allow the use of County maintenance crews. This would give the County the ability to conduct timely temporary and permanent repairs to transportation infrastructure damaged by storm events.

As the operator of one of the largest bus systems in the United States, King County strongly supports federal efforts to fund public transportation improvements nationwide and to maintain existing transit mobility while growing both bus and light rail rapid transit systems. We support innovative opportunities for transit-oriented development that serves a number of complementary goals, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, focusing density into urban areas, and providing for a range of affordability levels for County residents.

King County seeks federal support for the regional effort to design and develop key connections and compatible uses for the Eastside Rail Corridor which integrates economic development, transportation and utility needs.

We support legislation to reduce greenhouse gas levels caused by transportation, including legislation that gives transit vehicles priority in the design and operation of federal roads. So that we may replace our transit fleet with hybrid electric buses, develop electric car charging infrastructure and purchase alternative vanpool fleet vehicles, we support federal transportation programs that provide for those investments, such as including local governments in the tax credit for purchase of electronic vehicles and continuing the subsidy of alternative fuel vehicles.

The King County International Airport, or Boeing Field, is one of the busiest primary, non-hub airports in the nation. King County strongly supports maintaining the FAA’s Airport Improvement Program, which provides funds for critical activities such as including a new Air Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) station, and resources for a new airport master plan.

**Waste Reduction and Recycling**

We support development of holistic product education, stewardship, recycling and take-back programs for products for which improper disposal is likely to result in hazardous waste or water quality contamination, including pharmaceuticals and medicines, computers and other electronics, carpet and

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fluorescent lighting. We support resources to reduce and regulate toxics in the environment, as well as the ability to exercise local authority over toxics in alignment with other laws and standards.

We support policies that would prohibit the export of electronic waste to developing nations that lack the capacity to recycle these products in an environmentally sound manner, such as the Responsible Electronics Recycling Act. To reduce exposure of children, consumers, and workers to toxic chemicals used in consumer products and manufacturing processes, King County supports improved regulation of toxic chemicals and reform of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA).