



King County Councilmember
Claudia Balducci

Annual District 6 Newsletter

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Dear friends and neighbors,

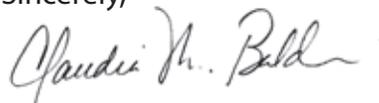
It has been an honor to represent you and the Eastside on the King County Council this past year - my first year on the Council.

This newsletter is a quick snapshot of some of my work on behalf of our district and plans for the year to come.

2017 promises to be a year like none other, with dramatic changes in our national policies that are already having profound impacts on our country. I look forward to joining with you and continuing to represent District 6 through the ongoing regular business of the county and whatever challenges may come.

To keep informed about activities at King County, please sign up for my e-newsletter by following the web address to the left. Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or needs you may have.

Sincerely,



King County Councilmember,
District 6



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Making Our Communities Stronger

Expanding Transit Service

One of the most frequent requests I hear from constituents is for more and better transit service. 2016 was a big year for Eastside transit service, as we continue to make progress toward that goal. **Light rail is finally under construction to the Eastside** and will connect



Redmond/Overlake, Bellevue and Mercer Island to Seattle and the rest of the light rail spine with service starting in 2023. With voter approval of the Sound Transit 3 proposal last November, we will see major new transit on the Eastside within just two years after the opening of East Link light rail:

- Light rail extended to downtown Redmond
- I-405 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) between Lynnwood and Renton/Burien serving Kirkland and Bellevue
- SR522 BRT connecting to both I-405 and I-5 serving Woodinville, Bothell and the communities north of Lake Washington

ST3 will also make the Eastside the only part the region with two light rail lines, adding a second light rail line connecting Kirkland, Bellevue and Issaquah in the later years of the plan.



On the Metro bus front, the Eastside will see added bus service funded in the 2017-2018 King County budget, including the **addition of service hours on routes 255 through Kirkland**

and 311 in Woodinville. In addition, as the Chair of the Regional Transit Committee, I worked with representatives from cities to improve and approve the County's long range plan for bus service, *Metro Connects*. This new plan sets the blueprint for continued expansion of our transit system – including 20 new Rapid Ride lines county wide and continued growth of the flexible “alternative services” that provide transit service in some of our harder-to-serve locations, similar to the shuttle service we now see on Mercer Island and in Redmond. We will be working throughout 2017 to further improve transit across the Eastside, including the addition of **more**

battery buses to our Eastside routes, reducing our carbon footprint and making our fleet more energy efficient.

On a personal note, I was deeply honored to be recognized by Transportation Choices, the state's most passionate and effective transportation advocacy group, as their 2016 Transportation Heroes Hall of Fame inductee. This is an incredible acknowledgement and I am committed to earn this recognition many times over the years to come.



Housing Affordability and Homelessness

We have seen fantastic growth and economic development in recent years, but that also means many of our friends and neighbors are being priced out of East King County. In 2016, we saw the average price of a home on the Eastside reach nearly \$740,000 and rents continue to climb. Maintaining housing affordability is critical for many reasons, including helping our seniors and working families to stay in their homes; making it possible for our young residents to start out and gain independence; and minimizing the traffic impacts when people have to drive unreasonable distances to their destinations. This year I was happy to support Transportation Oriented Development (TOD) legislation **approving \$84 million in bond funding to increase the number of affordable homes all over King County** along light rail and bus routes, including in Bellevue's Spring District. I was proud to join the King County Housing Authority, the State, City of Bellevue and other jurisdictions to **save Highland Village in East Bellevue** so that 86 families were able to remain in their current homes.



Photo: Groundbreaking of Athena Housing in Kirkland.

Over the past year we have been making progress toward providing emergency shelter on the Eastside. At the County, I joined my colleagues in adopting a budget that includes significant new funds to support homeless shelter efforts, including additional money to support partners who are attempting to open badly needed shelters in Bellevue and Kirkland.

Best Starts for Kids

Last Fall, the Council adopted a plan for how to spend the nearly \$400 million raised by the voter-approved Best Starts for Kids levy, which is dedicated to prevention services to make sure children have the best foundation possible to succeed. I was proud to advocate for funding and flexibility for important and needed human services on the Eastside. **The first major investment in this exciting new effort is a youth and family homelessness prevention program successfully piloted by LifeWire**, an Eastside agency which supports domestic violence survivors. This program proved to be very cost effective way to keep families from becoming homeless in the first place, by doing little things like helping with short term transportation or rental needs. More investments will roll out as the year goes on.



Community Highlights

Vans

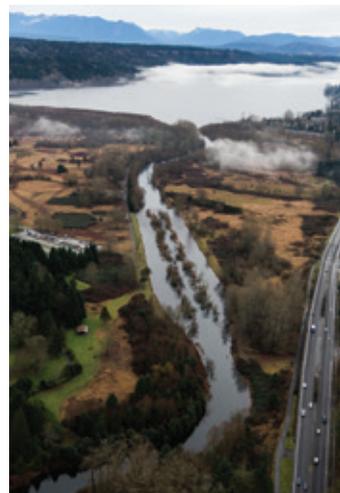
Since 1995, the County Council has donated "retired" vans from Metro's Vanpool fleet to local cities and nonprofit organizations to provide transportation for low-income, elderly, young people and disabled residents.



This year, I was proud to be able to support LifeWire, the Mercer Island and Bellevue Boys and Girls Clubs, and Hero House by donating vans so they can provide critical transportation needs to the communities they serve.

Willowmoor Progress

As a member of the Flood Control District Executive Committee, I voted in June to move ahead with a project to reduce flooding along Lake Sammamish. **The Willowmoor project will reconfigure the transition zone where the Lake drains into the Sammamish River**, splitting the existing channel in two to increase the rate water can drain from the Lake, while also preserving recreational opportunities and creating a friendly habitat for migrating salmon.



Willowmoor is at the north end of the Lake – you have walked past it if you use the Marymoor dog park. Read more about the project on my blog: kccclaudiablog.com

True Blood House

Kirkland's historic "Trueblood House," a residence listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a well preserved wood-framed home built in 1889 for Kirkland's first physician, Dr. William Buchanan. Due to Kirkland's incredible growth, the Trueblood House found itself in need of a new location.



photo credit: Washington Trust for Historic Preservation

In December, I shepherded legislation to create a Preservation Action Fund, which **will be used to help the Trueblood House be relocated to a permanent new home.**

Coming in 2017 at King County

The King County Council will be busy in 2017 working on a myriad of issues to manage growth, enrich our communities and lift up those in need. Some of the most notable things coming next year are:

- **King County Vets and Human Services Levy:** A renewal of the levy will likely go to voters in 2017 to assist veterans, military personnel, families, and other people that are in need.
- **New Regional Trail Segment:** In May, we are scheduled to open a new bicycle and pedestrian trail segment on the Eastside Rail Corridor between South Kirkland and the 520 regional trail in Bellevue.
- **Best Starts for Kids Rollout:** Continuing to support our youngsters on the path for long term success.
- **Light Rail Construction:** Light Rail is on its way to Bellevue and beyond! Sound Transit will continue constructing the new Eastlink line in 2017 to open for service in 2023. To follow its progress of construction, visit SoundTransit.org.
- **Regional Affordable Housing:** Working with my colleagues on Council and the County Executive to convene a regional task force to address the pressing issue of our rapidly shrinking supply of affordable housing in King County.

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Making Our Communities Stronger

The Council's Budget Leadership Team

In September, I was appointed to the Council's leadership team to craft the 2017-2018 County Budget, a real honor for a first year Councilmember. We worked hard to provide our core public safety and transportation services, while addressing the pressing needs in our community and responding to strong feedback from the public. I am proud to say that this budget will provide better access to transit, help our neighbors in need, support active and healthy living, and protect lives and property. Check out my blog for more details at kccclaudiablog.com.



In addition to looking at the big picture needs of the county, I am excited about some of the great projects and services we will be funding in District 6:

- \$2 million to support the development of an aquatics and recreation facility in the Bellevue/Redmond/Kirkland area
- \$50,000 investment for the I-90 Trail on Mercer Island
- \$7.6 million in funding for the Eastside Rail Corridor
- \$50,000 to help complete the capital vision for the Bellevue Youth Theater
- \$200,000 for small grants to District 6 programs that will help youth and older adults get and stay active
- Restored funding to domestic violence, sexual assault, older adult and civil legal aid programs, including the Eastside Legal Assistance Program