



King County

King County 2015 Statement of State Policy

Biodiversity Conservation & Habitat Protection and Restoration

King County encourages state resources for implementation of habitat protection and restoration projects in approved Water Resource Inventory Areabased salmon recovery plans and the Puget Sound Action Agenda. We support streamlining of federal and state permitting requirements and other incentives for public and private parties to carry out projects that will restore habitat for listed endangered species as well as the consideration of multiple species and their habitats. We support the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's work to support high priority local parks and open space projects. We support incentives to protect working farm and forest lands and regionally significant open space and habitat. We support proposals to link state funding of infrastructure improvements and other amenities to agreements by cities to receive development rights.

Climate Change and Energy

We support state policies, incentives, and investments that will help King County to achieve the countywide goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050. We support alignment of state transportation funding and incentives with Vision 2040 recommendations for focused growth in urban centers. We seek grant funding and continued incentives for research and development of renewable energy technology (e.g., community solar programs) as well as appropriate roles for waste-to-energy technology. We support adoption of a statewide low carbon fuel standard that gradually lowers pollution from transportation fuels. We support establishment of market price on carbon and with reinvestment a substantial share of revenues in support of local efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including support for expanded transit service.

Economic Development

We encourage state efforts to partner with local governments and provide them with tools needed to build strong, diverse, and sustainable economies. We support collaborative regional economic development promoting growth and economic diversification through strategic public-private partnerships such as those identified in the sector-based Central Puget Sound Regional Economic Strategy. King County also encourages increased funding for Associate Development Organizations to implement this and other economic strategies to retain existing businesses as they expand, and strategically recruit new businesses that will help diversify our economy further. We support global economic development efforts to market our entire region on the global stage to attract companies, investments and workers to this region.

In areas related and crucial to economic development success, we support continued funding of infrastructure programs and improvements that facilitate the mobility of people and freight, promote domestic and international trade and in-bound investment, and provide family wage jobs for our residents. Also, we seek state support for local, rural and regional economic development in keeping with the character, goals, and advantages of the particular areas. Further, we support funding of product commercialization, growing businesses and research and development to keep our economy growing and create employment opportunities for our residents.

King County also strongly supports education and workforce development programs for youth and adults including adequate K-12 and higher education funding, re-entry programs, and continued funding

for dislocated worker retraining programs—matched to industry skill needs—at community and technical colleges. We support education funding that strengthens the in-state pipeline of skilled workers to enable our industries to thrive and expand while providing family-wage jobs for King County and Washington residents. In that vein, we support programs that will afford more residents the opportunity to obtain the education and training to open up family-wage jobs to them. This ladder of prosperity will lift up communities, lessen income inequality, and provide a stronger stream of workers for the companies expanding here and those we attract. Specifically, we support funding of efforts supporting improvements to child development outcomes through better pre-natal and early childhood health and education. We support maintenance and construction of infrastructure that facilitates efficient, safe and cleaner movement of people, freight and goods to promote domestic and international trade. We support rural economic development policies and programs that maintain the character of rural areas and sustain rural lifestyles.

Elections

King County supports modifications to state election law that would provide cost savings and improved customer service. We also support consideration of policies to ensure greater efficiencies without compromising access to voting, democracy or customer service.

Emergency Management & Flood Hazard Reduction

We support integrated approaches to major river flood hazard reduction, including development of regional standards for levee maintenance and capital projects through the Corps of Engineers' Systemwide Improvement Framework process that both protect public safety and meet state and federal requirements for protecting listed species. We support an increased state role in providing support for major flood hazard mitigation projects, particularly those that meet multiple objectives of reducing future flood damages, protecting existing development, protecting habitat, and providing open space benefits (Floodplains by Design capital appropriation last session is an example). We support state investment in infrastructure including roads and bridges where hydraulic impacts cause flooding and other public safety risks. We support clarification of immunity and liability for flood control prevention and navigation projects. We support state development of integrated state goals, programs, and regulations for floodplain management. We support state involvement in emergency management and additional regional tools to support emergency preparedness and disaster response. We also support efforts to prevent harassment of E-911 operators and continued steps toward full implementation of E-911 programs. We support additional state and local government work to map and regulate landslide hazard areas. We seek stronger state requirements for disclosure, reporting, and emergency planning for transport of crude oil by rail and barge to the maximum extent possible under federal and state law.

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.

Health Care: Investing in Prevention

King County develops and implements creative and effective strategies and programs that prevent the leading causes of poor health, promote the integration and ensure access to appropriate and quality physical and behavioral health services, and support improved health and well-being prevention initiatives to create community conditions to reduce health inequities. Supporting and expanding this work requires stable funding at the state level for our prevention and support infrastructure related to public health, mental health, chemical dependency, and human services.. Addressing health inequities in our community requires investments in resources and initiatives that will give all our residents access to affordable health care, including prescription drug coverage, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, comprehensive mental health services, and other community supports.

The County seeks support for initiatives that will protect the health of our communities and provide environmental safeguards ensuring the safety of our residents. We support steps that will encourage healthy eating and active living standards that will prevent obesity and reduce use of tobacco and new tobacco products, and that provide for local discretion over these policy and regulatory areas. We support continued state resources to facilitate full and successful implementation of federal health reform, which will expand health care and behavioral health access and preventive care to all Washingtonians.

Homelessness & Housing

King County is the administrative lead for the Committee to End Homelessness. Our success in making homelessness rare and brief in King County is built on existing strong collaborations between local, state and federal governments and community nonprofit providers and having the tools to measure the effectiveness of our investments. We support maintaining and expanding funding and initiatives for affordable appropriate housing at the state and local level for homeless and low income residents of King County. Housing and supportive services help county residents remain successfully housed and prevent future homelessness. A Medicaid supportive housing services benefit is needed to assist people living in supportive housing. King County also supports flexibility in administration and investment of hotel/motel revenues to increase affordable housing consistent with state law.

Complementing the housing strategy is the provision of tools to reduce homelessness for families, individuals, and youth through early support and intervention, including consideration of ways to prevent discharging youth and adults directly into homelessness from state institutions. We support modifications to the Homeless Management Information System toward its improved operation. We support robust funding for the Housing Trust Fund, which provides a powerful tool for local agencies' creation and support of affordable and homeless housing. We support the Housing & Essential Needs program and all of its components.

Human Services

King County supports funding for health and human services programs that provide prevention services to help all children and youth grow and prosper socially and academically, offer paths to reduce or prevent involvement in the criminal justice, 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 our residents of all ages.

We support programs that assist individuals with developmental disabilities, including early intervention, school transition and employment funding. We support community mobilization and

prevention programs to prevent and treat substance abuse and violence. We support state resources to maintain access to mental health facilities and psychiatric beds. We support the 2-1-1 system to help link people to appropriate human services. We support the ability under current law to use a portion of Mental Illness and Drug Dependency funds to supplant general fund programs including human services, and we support the extension of that flexibility.

Infrastructure and Transportation

The roads system in unincorporated King County is critically important to people who live and travel in the county, but it is aged and deteriorating. Funding mechanisms supporting both roads and transit are fundamentally flawed, and the County struggles to provide basic levels of service. New state revenues and local financing tools should prioritize resources for preserving local and regional roads and bridges and sustainable funding sources for public transportation. Substantial investments are needed to restore roads and bridges, maintain them in good condition, and meet new transportation demands. However, the county's available funding falls far short of the need. The unincorporated-area road system owned and managed by the county includes 1,691 miles of paved roads, 51 miles of unpaved roads, 184 bridges—including several jointly owned with cities—and other related services and facilities within the 2,130 square miles of total land area in King County. As a result of annexations, county tax resources are shrinking while 50% of county roads' traffic is made up of urban users. King County seeks state funds to support county roads projects and facilities and will continue to pursue opportunities in state revenue packages, state competitive grants, and other means that will help meet the great unmet needs of our county and regional facilities.

As the operator of one of the largest bus systems in the United States and the carrier for over 60% of all transit riders in the state, King County believes that a stable and well-funded transportation system is important to the economic prosperity and projected growth of our region. As we plan for the future it is clear that transit must play a larger role in moving people. We support efforts to provide public transit with more diverse, stable, and robust funding sources. We support the state's plans for a strong transit component as being critical to the designs for the Alaskan Way Viaduct and SR 520 corridors. We support mechanisms that facilitate smooth operation of the transit system, including fare card data management and fare enforcement. We support better integration of land use and transportation. We support efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled and to reduce greenhouse gas levels.

We support continued funding of the Commute Trip Reduction program and the Regional Mobility Grant program, as well as state policies that encourage innovation in carpool and vanpool programs. We encourage policy that facilitates transit's effective operation, including policies governing rental or lease of rights-of-way as well as equitable reimbursement for Medicaid-eligible non-emergency trips. We support efforts to expand the use of tolling and congestion pricing to address our infrastructure needs and manage traffic. We support legislative efforts to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

King County supports a cooperative relationship with the State in providing for the ferry service needs of the residents of King County, including the effective use of toll credits and federal funds toward maximizing our county investments. We also support efforts to assure compatible land uses adjacent to airport facilities.

King County embraces the state's commitment to reconnect the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) at I-405 (Wilburton) and seeks support to implement the shared multi-use vision of the regional partners for the ERC as a Corridor for the Ages.

Land Use, Growth Management and Annexation

King County supports the Growth Management Act as the primary means of planning for growth. We support the long-standing, strong state framework for comprehensive, countywide monitoring of the provision of urban services, the capacity to absorb future growth and the sufficiency of the size of the urban growth area. We support integration and streamlining of state land use and related statutes, as well as state funding to assist jurisdictions in meeting planning requirements. As unanimously recommended by the King County School Siting Task Force, we support changes in state laws, guidelines, policies and administrative procedures that would provide school districts with the incentives and tools to site schools in cities and towns. We support tools and incentives to facilitate annexations within urban growth areas and to help cities accommodate the transitional costs of annexations. We also support changes to state subdivision laws that would eliminate illegal practices or conflicts with local zoning. We support better integration of land use, transportation, and public health.

Law & Criminal Justice

We support a fair and accessible justice system that keeps people safe in their homes and communities. We support the use of court fees that appropriately balance the need for revenue with the need to eliminate barriers to court access. We support a state/local split of state-imposed court fees that are collected at the local level. King County supports the development of statewide court case management systems and data exchange that will meet the needs of the County and the many users of its criminal justice system. We support state funding for state mandated programs, including dependency court appointed special advocates. We support tools that allow counties to work with one another in developing effective systems to share criminal justice information, including an appropriate exchange of mental health commitment and firearms information. We support distribution of state resources for parents representation, court interpreters, and extraordinary criminal justice costs. We believe the state should bear responsibility for the costs of notice publication in dependency cases. We support legislation providing for continuation of federal benefits for qualifying mentally ill adult and juvenile inmates and detainees. We are committed to ending domestic violence and sexual assault for our residents. We continue to be concerned about human trafficking and will work to combat its practice.

Revenue, Finance, and General Government

King County strongly supports maintaining and enhancing local taxing and fee authority and local revenue options. We support fee-based tools to preserve the provision of services by the county assessor and new technology tools to provide more efficient service. King County supports efforts to develop financing tools for spay and neuter programs that support regional animal services objectives. We also support enhanced additional page recording fees to offset local governments' recording costs. We support giving counties the ability and discretion to accept partial payments of delinquent property taxes. We seek to preserve our ability to operate our own investment pool. We do not support unfunded mandates on the county. If state responsibilities are shifted onto local governments, we would seek new local governance authority and state financial support or new local revenue tools. Such a shift should be weighed carefully, and explored only after investigating ways to reduce state requirements as well as local governments' ability to absorb such responsibilities and costs.

King County supports expanding the banking and financial services options available to local governments in meeting their needs. This expansion should provide local governments with the option of using local and smaller financial institutions, while maintaining a high level of safety and security for

public funds. King County also supports amending RCW 39.58 to allow credit unions to accept public deposits in a manner consistent with the restrictions of banks and thrift institutions under this statute.

King County supports mechanisms or tools to streamline the public disclosure request process to ensure that is efficient and that unreasonable costs are avoided.

Stormwater, Water Quality and Puget Sound Partnership

We support more holistic implementation of the Clean Water Act, including evaluation and prioritization of actions at a watershed and Puget Sound scale. We support the holistic approach to updating the Human Health Criteria in the State Water Quality Standards including the focus on the toxics reduction strategy. We support optional programs that would allow state agencies to approve local stormwater programs as qualified local programs. We also support development of state certification for wetland ecologists. We support state technical assistance and regulatory approval for a wider range of tools and approaches for stormwater treatment and management. We seek refinement of NPDES water quality monitoring requirements to focus on value-added monitoring that is coordinated across permit holders consistent with recommendations of the Stormwater Monitoring Workgroup. We support funding and implementation of the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda consistent with the 2014 Puget Sound Partnership Funding Strategy. The Funding Strategy focuses on habitat protection and restoration, stormwater, and restoration of shellfish beds, and calls for a more integrated approach to funding for water quality, habitat, flood hazard, and transportation projects. We seek continued state investment, inspection, monitoring, and repair of failing on-site septic systems as well as strengthened local authority to establish sustainable local funding to address health risks from failing on-site septic systems. We support regulatory streamlining and other incentives for public and private projects that will restore functioning shoreline and mitigate stormwater impacts.

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, water quality contamination or other solid waste impacts, including pharmaceuticals and medicines, computers and other electronics, paint, carpet, batteries, telephone books, and mercury and fluorescent lighting sources.