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## CHAPTER 7 PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

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The quality of life in King County is directly linked to the quality of 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 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 ((e))County’s role as a regional leader in acquiring and protecting its system of ((e))County-owned parks, forests, natural areas, trails and other open spaces. In addition to protecting these natural resources, the ((e))County promotes a high quality of life by supporting cultural opportunities such as music, theater, ethnic heritage museums, literary activities, public art collections, urban historic districts, ((and)) rural landmarks, and Indian tribal cultural and historic resources.

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## 11 I. Parks, Recreation and Open Space

12 The Growth Management Act requires cities and counties to identify open space corridors within and between  
13 ~~((U))urban ((Growth A))~~ areas, including lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of  
14 critical areas. The ~~((e))~~ County's designation of open space includes those lands that are part of the King County  
15 open space system as well as state parks and natural resource conservation areas and federal wilderness areas in  
16 unincorporated King County. See the Land Use Map ~~((is))~~ located at the end of Chapter 1, Regional Growth  
17 Management Planning. The Growth Management Act states that counties are the providers of regional services  
18 and local rural services, while cities are the appropriate providers of local urban services. As the regional  
19 government, King County manages a regional open space system of parks, regional trails, natural or ecological  
20 areas and working resource lands. While the cities are the managers of local parks, trails and open space lands in  
21 the incorporated portions of the Urban Growth Area, King County will continue to be the provider of local  
22 parks, trails and open space lands in the Rural Area, ~~((and))~~ Natural Resource Lands, and the urban  
23 unincorporated area.

24  
25 ~~((Population growth and associated development continue to transform the county's landscape as forested and  
26 open lands have been converted to urban uses resulting in the fragmentation of wildlife corridors and riparian  
27 habitat, as well as the depletion of working resource lands and open vistas.))~~ The policies in this section provide  
28 guidance for the open space system of lands the ~~((e))~~ County owns and manages to protect and restore the health  
29 of natural systems, provide recreational opportunities, shape community character, and help sustain agriculture  
30 and forestry economics. Additional benefits ~~((of the open space and regional trails systems))~~ beyond recreation  
31 include providing transportation alternatives as well as health benefits from physical activity and access to the  
32 outdoors for those who have mobility disabilities. Large forested parks and natural areas help maintain air  
33 quality, water quality and quantity, and help mitigate the effects of climate change. Parks and green spaces also  
34 provide stress relief, rest and relaxation and contribute to improved mental health and well-being. The policies  
35 also reinforce the ~~((e))~~ County's focus on linking components of the open space system with an emphasis on  
36 completing the regional trails system, connecting riparian habitat, and reducing forestland fragmentation.

37  
38 Regional recreation and multiuse parks serve a countywide population and provide high-quality, developed  
39 facilities that support multiple events, large group gatherings, and special events. Passive parks serve less formal,  
40 organized or intense activities. Local ~~((rural))~~ park sites provide for active and passive recreation close to home.  
41 The Regional Trails ~~((System))~~ network forms the foundation for King County and other agencies' shared use  
42 path networks that reach broadly throughout the county linking cities, other counties, and the state, and offering  
43 extensive recreation opportunities. In addition to service recreational users, ~~((F))~~ the Regional Trails ~~((System is  
44 also an essential part of King County's multimodal transportation system, providing))~~ network also provides  
45 interconnected ~~((nonmotorized travel))~~ active transportation options. Local trails provide circulation within  
46 local communities and access to the larger ~~((R))~~ Regional ~~((T))~~ Trails ~~((system))~~ network.

47

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48 Natural areas and working forest sites can provide opportunities for informal, low intensity and low impact  
 49 activities which enable the understanding, appreciation and significance of natural resources. Passive recreation  
 50 use of these sites requires little infrastructure, although amenities such as backcountry trails and trailhead  
 51 facilities may be needed to accommodate appropriate types and levels of public use. Natural areas often contain  
 52 undeveloped or un-developable acreage that is managed primarily to support habitat to provide ecological  
 53 benefits and contribute to biodiversity. Forested areas provide carbon sequestration and reduction in greenhouse  
 54 gas emissions, and play a role in adaptation to climate change.

55

56 For the purposes of the King County open space system, “regional” means sites and facilities that are large in  
 57 size and serve communities from long distances and multiple jurisdictions. “Local” means sites and facilities  
 58 that serve unincorporated communities and are smaller sites servicing close-to-home park and recreation needs.

59

60 ~~((P-101) For the purposes of the King County open space system: “regional” shall define~~  
 61 ~~sites and facilities that are large in size, have unique features or characteristics~~  
 62 ~~or significant ecological value, and serve communities from many jurisdictions;~~  
 63 ~~and “local” shall define sites and facilities that serve unincorporated~~  
 64 ~~communities predominately in the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands.))~~

65

## 66 **A. ~~((The Regional))~~ King County's Open Space System of Parks, Trails,** 67 **Natural Areas and Working Resource Lands**

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

78

79 **P-102 King County shall be a regional ~~((leader in the provision of a regional))~~ provider**  
 80 **of an open space system consisting of regional and local parks, regional and**  
 81 **backcountry trails, natural areas, working resource lands, and flood hazard**  
 82 **management lands. The regional network of open space((s)) should provide((s))**  
 83 **benefits to all county residents equitably including: recreation facilities,**  
 84 **conservation of natural and working resource lands, improving air and water**  
 85 **quality, ~~((flood hazard management))~~ and related programs and services, thereby**

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86 contributing to the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of county  
87 residents.

88

89 **P-103** King County ~~((will))~~ shall preserve wildlife corridors, riparian habitat, contiguous  
90 forest land, as well as open space areas separating ~~((U))~~ ((A)) areas from the  
91 Rural Area~~((s))~~ and Natural Resource Lands as part of its open space system.

92

## 93 **B. Components of ~~((the Regional))~~ King County's Open Space System**

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

100

### 101 **1. Recreation Sites**

#### 102 **Regional Parks**

103 King County's regional ~~((recreation))~~ parks and facilities accommodate a wide range of ~~((active and passive))~~  
104 recreational activities. Recreation sites that make up a functional system include: highly developed sites with  
105 organized, scheduled activities such as soccer and softball; ~~((passive or low impact recreation sites that include~~  
106 ~~((both physical activities and less intense activities such as))~~ informal play, trail use, and picnicking; and multiuse  
107 sites that include a ~~((combination of active recreation and passive))~~ spectrum of recreation ~~((with less intensely~~  
108 ~~developed facilities and natural areas))~~ opportunities. ~~((Regional recreation parks serve a broad spectrum of~~  
109 ~~users. These parks and their facilities include those not generally viable for serving individual communities alone~~  
110 ~~due to site or specialized facility requirements or the unique nature of the offering requiring a broader user base~~  
111 ~~to support them.))~~ Regional parks include recreational facilities that rely on a broad user base, require a large  
112 area, include a specialized facility, or offer a unique experience.

113

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

118

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

123

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124 **P-105** King County should facilitate affordable and culturally((-)\_accessible  
125 educational, interpretive, and aquatic programs on ((e))County-owned properties  
126 that further the enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the natural,  
127 cultural, and recreational resources of the park system and the region.  
128

129 **P-106** King County should facilitate and seek regional and national programs and  
130 special events at regional sites and facilities.  
131

## 132 **2. Local Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces**

133 In the Rural Area, the large geographic area and dispersed populations, individual lots, low residential density  
134 and economies of site management dictate fewer and smaller individual park sites than in urban areas. Nearby  
135 regional parks and other open spaces also provide recreational opportunities in the Rural Area and Natural  
136 Resource Lands. King County’s role in the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands ((will)) reflects rural levels  
137 of service. King County also provides local parks in unincorporated urban areas and the County's role in these  
138 parks reflect urban levels of service. These vital local parks, local trails, and recreational facilities contribute to  
139 the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of county residents.  
140

141 **P-107** King County shall provide local parks, trails and other open spaces in ~~((the Rural~~  
142 ~~Area))~~ unincorporated areas. Local parks, trails and other open spaces that  
143 complement the regional system should be provided in each community ~~((in~~  
144 ~~Rural Areas))~~ to meet local recreation and open space needs and enhance  
145 environmental quality and ~~((visual quality))~~ view corridors.  
146

147 **P-108** King County should provide local parks within ~~((rural))~~ unincorporated  
148 communities with fields and other facilities that provide opportunities for active  
149 sports. These facilities shall be in addition to and compatible with King County’s  
150 regional parks.  
151

152 **P-108a** King County shall consider equity in the development and acquisition of its open  
153 space system to help reduce health disparities and promote environmental  
154 justice.  
155

## 156 **3. Regional Trails ((System)) Network**

157 The Regional Trails ~~((System))~~ network is a major element of the county’s greater open space system that  
158 provides opportunities for recreation and ~~((nonmotorized transportation))~~ active transportation, as well as  
159 corridors often used by wildlife. This system contributes to the health and well-being of ~~((both county residents))~~  
160 trail users and the environment. King County is home to one of the largest ~~((nonmotorized))~~ regional trail  
161 networks in the North America. King County and local jurisdictions collectively offer ~~((approximately))~~ over  
162 300 miles of shared-use (multi-purpose) paved and unpaved paths connecting communities and linking Puget

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163 Sound urban areas with Rural Areas, Natural Resource Lands and the Cascade Mountains. ~~((These facilities are~~  
 164 ~~classified as shared use paths by the Federal Highway Administration and are a component of the federally-~~  
 165 ~~designated regional transportation plan administered by the Puget Sound Regional Council. The)) King County  
 166 government stewards some 175 miles of the overall network. The remaining portions of the network are  
 167 managed by local cities, the Port of Seattle, and Washington State.~~

168

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

178

179 While intended originally as recreational amenities and linear parks, the regional trails in King County have  
 180 evolved to provide not only extensive recreation, but also important active transportation opportunities, and  
 181 social and cultural venues. Today, thousands of daily trips are made on paths such as the Burke-Gilman Trail  
 182 between suburban cities and Seattle.

183

184 Recreation remains the primary use, but ~~((an increasing number of those))~~ some trips are made for work and  
 185 school, combining the healthy recreational benefits of cycling and walking with the workday commute. The  
 186 trails are also used for a variety of special activities that enrich life in the central Puget Sound region, from  
 187 art-related treks to community fundraisers to long-distance cycling events.

188

189 Regional trails in King County now include ~~((not only))~~ decades-old popular routes like the Burke-Gilman  
 190 Trail~~((, but also))~~ and trails networking many landscapes and destinations. Routes follow abandoned railroad  
 191 lines, water pipeline and power line corridors, river levees, and other special features or they may establish their  
 192 own alignments as they seek out practical courses between destinations. More interconnections provide more  
 193 travel opportunities. Paths access parks and scenic landscapes, but they also now serve urban centers, major  
 194 transit facilities, and other important everyday destinations. Future facilities will continue to provide the joint  
 195 benefits of recreation and regional mobility. More information regarding King County's Regional Trails  
 196 ~~((System))~~ network including the proposed future regional trails plan, the Regional Trails Needs Report, can be  
 197 found in ~~((the Appendices))~~ Appendix C2.

198

199 **P-109 King County shall complete and maintain a regional trails ((system)) network,**  
 200 **((linking trail corridors to form a countywide network)) to provide recreational**  
 201 **opportunities and to allow for transportation and wildlife corridor uses to**

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202 contribute to the health and wellbeing of both trail users and the environment.  
 203 King County ((will)) shall continue to primarily own the land necessary for the  
 204 operation and management of the trail ((system)) network and pursue  
 205 public-private funding opportunities for development and maintenance, while  
 206 ensuring opportunities for access for all King County residents.  
 207

208 Policies related to the planning, development, and management of the Regional Trails ((System)) network can be  
 209 found in the King County ((Parks)) Open Space Plan; Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas, a functional plan of the  
 210 King County Comprehensive Plan. Additional policies can also be found in Chapter 8, Transportation.  
 211

212 **((Eastside Rail Corridor)) Eastrail**

213 ~~((The Eastside Rail Corridor)) Eastrail~~ provides a ~~((rare and))~~ unique opportunity to develop a major north-  
 214 south, dual use ~~((recreational trail and public transportation))~~ corridor in support of active transportation and  
 215 transit mobility ~~((through transit, nonmotorized and active transportation, including access to transit outside the~~  
 216 ~~corridor))~~, consistent with its federal railbanked status. The owners share ~~((other))~~ multiple objectives for the  
 217 corridor including accommodating utilities, parks, recreation, and cultural amenities, and encouraging equitable  
 218 access to these facilities, and to housing and jobs, in support of economic opportunity for all King County  
 219 residents. ~~((The corridor will be the focus of regional trail planning and development by King County Parks))~~  
 220 King County is actively developing the regional trail component of Eastrail, connecting regional growth centers,  
 221 urban communities, other regional trails, and both local and high-capacity transit. The trail will connect to  
 222 existing major regional trail corridors including the Mountains to Sound/I-90 Trail, State Route 520 Trail,  
 223 Sammamish River Trail, Lake to Sound Trail, and others. ~~((The trail will provide opportunities for safe~~  
 224 ~~recreation and mobility as a component of King County's Regional Trails System and provide opportunities for~~  
 225 ~~environmental benefits to the region.))~~ The trail will help enhance the quality of life of the region's residents by  
 226 providing important recreation and mobility options for adjacent land uses.  
 227

228 **((P-110a)) P-110** ~~((The Eastside Rail Corridor regional trail shall be developed))~~ King County shall  
 229 develop Eastrail in coordination with the other trail owners, other jurisdictions,  
 230 local and state agencies, utilities with property interests, and nonprofit and  
 231 private partners to enhance regional recreation and mobility and connectivity  
 232 between regional growth centers, urban communities, other regional trails, and  
 233 local and high-capacity transit, consistent with a commitment to dual use  
 234 (recreational trail and public transportation), and consistent with federal  
 235 railbanking. ((The trail will enhance the quality of life by providing important  
 236 recreation and mobility options for adjacent land uses.)) The trail corridor shall  
 237 include high-quality landscaping and environmental features, where appropriate,  
 238 to enhance the trail experience and to provide ecological benefits to the region.  
 239

240 **((P-110))** ~~King County shall include the planning and development of a regional trail in the~~  
 241 ~~Eastside Rail Corridor, to enhance regional recreation and mobility. This facility~~

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242 ~~will be planned and developed in coordination with other owners of BNSF's~~  
243 ~~former interests, and in close coordination with King County Department of~~  
244 ~~Transportation and other state and local agencies, in support of the commitment~~  
245 ~~to dual use (recreational trail and public transportation), consistent with federal~~  
246 ~~railbanking, and multiple objectives of King County and the other owners. ((The~~  
247 ~~trail will be identified in King County's regional trails plan, the Regional Trails~~  
248 ~~Needs Report, as a priority capital facility.~~

249

250 ~~P-110b The Eastside Rail Corridor regional trail shall be developed to the most current~~  
251 ~~regional trail standards, ensuring safe recreation and mobility in accessing trails,~~  
252 ~~streets, and transit consistent with a commitment to dual use (recreational trail~~  
253 ~~and public transportation), and consistent with federal railbanking. The trail~~  
254 ~~corridor will include high quality landscaping and environmental features where~~  
255 ~~appropriate to enhance the trail experience and to provide ecologic benefits to~~  
256 ~~the region.~~

257

#### 258 **4.) Multi-Use Sites**

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

261

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

265

### 266 **5. Natural Areas**

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

273

274 Preserving these areas in partnership with other agencies, Indian tribes, private groups and individuals will  
275 provide multiple values including environmental and economic benefits of air and water quality, surface water  
276 management, aquifer recharge, ~~((and))~~ fish and wildlife habitat preservation and enhancement, and preservation  
277 of Indian tribal cultural and historic resources.

278



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- 279 P-111 ~~((King County will manage its))~~ Management of natural areas owned by King  
 280 County shall ((to)) protect, preserve, and enhance important natural resource  
 281 habitat, biological diversity, and the ecological integrity of natural systems.  
 282
- 283 P-112 ~~((King County shall recognize and protect t))~~ The natural character and ecological  
 284 value of its natural areas owned by King County shall be protected. These areas  
 285 are important for preserving fish and wildlife and their habitat, native vegetation,  
 286 ~~((and))~~ features of scientific and educational value, and Indian tribal cultural and  
 287 historic resources. Development and public use may be limited to preserve the  
 288 natural state and reduce disturbance of the natural and cultural resources. Site  
 289 improvements should be focused on providing educational and interpretive  
 290 opportunities. Public access should be directed to the less fragile portions of a  
 291 site to ensure continued protection of the ecological resources.  
 292

293 **6. Working Resource Lands**

294 The ((e))County's open space system includes lands owned by King County that are managed as working farms  
 295 and forests. The ((e))County has purchased these properties ~~((in fee or less than fee ownership))~~ with the  
 296 intention of conserving the resource use on the site. County ownership and management of these lands  
 297 conserves the resource land base, allowing the resource activity to continue, while contributing to the local  
 298 ~~((rural))~~ economy, providing healthy foods, reducing carbon emissions associated with importing food into the  
 299 region, providing education about agriculture and forestry, and providing passive recreational opportunities on  
 300 some properties. The ((e))County's policies to conserve farmland and encourage agriculture are discussed in  
 301 Chapter 3, Rural Areas and Natural Resource Lands.

302

303 **Farmland**

304 ~~((The Farmland Preservation Program is a county program that preserves farmland through the purchase of~~  
 305 ~~development rights. The farms in the Farmland Preservation Program generally remain in private ownership.~~  
 306 ~~The county has purchased a farm outright in a few cases, with the intention of reselling the land without the~~  
 307 ~~development rights to a private farmer.))~~ The County occasionally acquires farmland, either to address farmland  
 308 access issues or as part of an acquisition for other purposes, such as habitat protection, food risk reduction, or  
 309 recreational access. Although the County usually intends to resell farmland to a private farmer while retaining a  
 310 Farmland Preservation Program easement, some farmland has strategic importance to advancing County  
 311 initiatives and priorities and will be retained in County ownership long-term. The ((e))County has developed a  
 312 program to lease farms ~~((to small-scale farmers))~~ until such time that the property ~~((can be))~~ is resold.

313

- 314 P-113 **Farmland owned by King County shall:**  
 315 **a. \_\_\_\_\_ ((e))Contribute to the preservation of contiguous tracts of agricultural**  
 316 **land; and**

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317 **b. ((make affordable farmland available for use by small-scale and new**  
 318 **farmers)) Provide access to farmland for beginning, low-income,**  
 319 **historically underserved, and socially disadvantaged farmers.**

320

321 **P-114 Farmers leasing properties owned by King County shall use ((A))agricultural**  
 322 **((B))best ((M))management practices, ((I))integrated ((P))pest ((M))management,**  
 323 **and other sustainable farming methods.**

324

325 **P-115 The use and management of farmlands owned by King County shall be**  
 326 **consistent with any requirements imposed by the funding program used to**  
 327 **purchase each property and shall serve to meet and enhance the objectives of**  
 328 **the King County Agriculture Program.**

329

### 330 **Forestland**

331 One goal of the King County Open Space System is the conservation of forestland, through acquisition of land or  
 332 conservation easements, to decrease threat of conversion resulting from development and fragmentation, as well  
 333 as promote the understanding of the importance of forest management, including restoration of the forests to  
 334 more natural conditions. The working forests owned by King County are generally very large parcels of land  
 335 (several hundred acres or more) that support sustainable forest management practices and contribute to the  
 336 retention of a contiguous forest.

337

338 These properties contain valuable fish and wildlife habitat, provide environmental services (such as stormwater  
 339 management, clean air and water and carbon sequestration), and help mitigate the impacts of climate change, as  
 340 well as provide high-quality passive recreation, scenic vistas, and educational~~((/))~~ and interpretation  
 341 opportunities.

342

343 **P-116 Working forest land and conservation easements owned by King County shall**  
 344 **provide large tracts of forested property in the Rural Forest Focus Areas, the**  
 345 **Forest Production District, and Rural Area. ((that will)) These areas shall remain**  
 346 **in active forestry, protect areas from development, or provide a buffer between**  
 347 **commercial forestland and adjacent residential development, and may provide**  
 348 **ecological or recreational benefits.**

349

350 **P-117 Management goals for working ((F))forest land owned by King County shall ((be**  
 351 **used to sustain and enhance environmental)) include enhancing ecological**  
 352 **benefits and functions, ((demonstrate progressive)) demonstrating best forest**  
 353 **management ((and research)) practices, ((and provide)) providing passive**  
 354 **recreation opportunities, and generating revenue ((for the)) facilitate sustainable**  
 355 **management of ((the working forest lands)) those sites.**

356

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357 ~~((P-118~~ ~~Forest land owned by King County shall provide a balance between sustainable~~  
 358 ~~timber production, conservation and restoration of resources, and appropriate~~  
 359 ~~public use.))~~  
 360

## 361 **7. Backcountry Trails**

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

370

371 **P-118a King County ~~((will))~~ shall continue to provide and manage a backcountry trail**  
 372 **system on its lands in collaboration with other public and private landholders**  
 373 **and consistent with its Trail Programmatic Permit.**

374

## 375 **8. Other Open Spaces**

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

383

384 **P-118b King County shall encourage and pursue partnerships and mutually beneficial**  
 385 **agreements with public agencies, Indian tribes, nonprofit and community**  
 386 **organizations, and the private sector to fund, program, manage, and steward**  
 387 **sites and facilities for public recreation and natural resource protection**  
 388 **consistent with the classification, role, and use of said sites and facilities.**

389

390 King County has acquired lands and manages facilities along major river and stream systems for the primary  
 391 purpose of floodplain management and flood hazard management. Major streams and rivers are vital  
 392 components of the ~~((e))~~ County's open space system, therefore the flood hazard management lands contribute  
 393 critical links in the ~~((e))~~ County's open space network. ~~((The King County Flood Control District will continue~~  
 394 ~~to maintain flood hazard management land and facilities within available funding levels.))~~ The ~~((e))~~ County will  
 395 also seek innovative measures for maintaining and improving flood hazard management, reducing maintenance

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396 costs, integrating flood hazard management and recreational opportunities, and achieving wildlife habitat  
397 protection and salmon recovery.

398

399 **C. ((Achieving)) Sustaining and Growing the Open Space System**

400 Parks and other ((e))County-owned open space lands ensure a quality of life today and a legacy to future  
401 generations. In King County, many types of open spaces and fish and wildlife habitat remain in private  
402 ownership and may be subject to future development. King County's Land Conservation Initiative guides the  
403 collaborative strategy to accelerate the preservation of natural lands, working farms and forests, urban green  
404 space, and trails in the next 30 years. To ensure that these lands and resources are protected and to offer an  
405 alternative to acquisition, the ((e))County offers landowners a wide variety of tools to preserve their property.  
406 ((Policies outlining strategies for using these tools can be found in Chapters 3, Rural Areas and Natural Resource  
407 Lands, 4, Housing and Human Services, and 7, Parks, Open Space and Cultural Resources.))

408

409 Cooperation, coordination and partnerships with public agencies, private groups and individuals are necessary to  
410 develop the regional parks and open space system, to meet existing needs for park and recreation facilities and to  
411 accommodate the needs of growth. The Mountains-to-Sound Greenway National Heritage Area, along the I-90  
412 corridor, is a successful model for coordination of efforts by public and private entities to protect the backbone of  
413 the ((e))County's open space system. King County will achieve the multiple benefits of resource protection and  
414 recreation by building partnerships and coordinating with providers and user groups of the parks and open space  
415 system. Working together, stewardship can be fostered and these lands and facilities can be enhanced, restored  
416 and operated more economically and efficiently to benefit all county residents.

417

418 **1. Priorities**

419 **P-119** Open space lands should be acquired to expand and enhance the open space  
420 system as identified in the King County Open Space Plan: Parks, ((Regional))  
421 Trails and Natural Areas.

422

423 **P-120** Regional trail corridors should be acquired when identified in King County's  
424 Regional Trails Needs Report or other trails plans.

425

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

429

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430 **2. Criteria**

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

433  
434 P-123 Decisions on acquisition and development of park, regional trail, and other open  
435 space sites should consider funding needs for public engagement, initial  
436 stewardship, site development, long((-)-)term maintenance, and operations.

437  
438 P-124 A variety of measures should be used to acquire, protect, manage, and develop  
439 regional and local parks, regional trails, and open space. Measures can include:  
440 ((€))County funding and other funding mechanisms, grants, partnerships,  
441 incentives, regulations, dedications, and contributions from residential and  
442 commercial development based on their service impacts and trades of lands and  
443 shared development activities.

444

445 **3. Managing the System**

446 As the caretaker of ((200)) 205 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, more than ((200)) 250 miles of backcountry  
447 trails, ((28,000)) 32,000 acres of open space, and ((145,000)) 150,000 acres of conservation easements, King  
448 County is one of the region's important providers and managers of public lands. As such, the principles and  
449 policies that guide stewardship and management of these lands and resources are critical to ensure these assets  
450 continue to contribute to the region's quality of life now and for future generations.

451

452 P-125 Management of the regional open space system of parks, regional trails, natural  
453 areas and working resource lands ((is)) shall be guided by the King County Open  
454 Space Plan: Parks, Trails and Natural Areas.

455

456 P-126 Development and management of parks, regional trails and open space sites  
457 should be consistent with the purposes of their acquisition and in consideration  
458 of their funding sources.

459

460 P-127 Open space lands shall be classified to identify their role in the open space  
461 system and the purpose of the acquisition as recreation site, regional trail,  
462 natural area ((park, multiuse site, or)), working ((resource land)) forestland, or  
463 multi-use site.

464

465 ~~((P-128)) King County will adopt an entrepreneurial approach to managing and operating  
466 the open space system and work aggressively to implement multiple and  
467 appropriate strategies to fiscally sustain the open space system.))~~

468

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- 469 P-128a King County should develop management plans (such as master plans, forest  
470 stewardship plans or site management guidelines) that outline goals and  
471 objectives and management recommendations for sites within the open space  
472 system as appropriate.  
473
- 474 P-128b King County's use of pesticides and fungicides ~~((will))~~ shall be based on  
475 integrated pest management principles.  
476
- 477 P-128c King County shall support activities at County parks that advance public health,  
478 provide clean environments, and avoid exposure to harmful products, such as  
479 tobacco and vaping products, ~~((in order))~~ to promote play, physical activity, and  
480 family and community connection.  
481

482 **4. Coordination and Partnerships**

- 483 P-129 Recognizing the value of open space in promoting social and economic health  
484 and wellness across the county, King County shall be a leader in establishing  
485 partnerships with cities, adjacent counties, Indian tribes, state and federal  
486 agencies, school and special purpose districts, community organizations,  
487 non((-))profit organizations, land((-))owners, and other residents. The ~~((e))~~ County  
488 and these partners should work to:  
489 a. Support and strengthen the linkages between rural, resource, and urban  
490 communities' use and maintenance of these open spaces;  
491 b. ~~((p))~~ Promote and protect all aspects of environmental quality, while  
492 addressing equity and racial and social justice goals to complete the  
493 regional parks and open space system through joint planning and  
494 management of local and regional sites and facilities.  
495
- 496 P-130 In the Urban Growth Area, King County shall work in partnership with other  
497 jurisdictions to facilitate annexation and transfer of local parks ~~((, and local trails))~~  
498 and other open space sites to cities or other providers to ensure continued  
499 service to the community.  
500
- 501 ~~((P-131))~~ ~~King County should work with cities to share operational and maintenance costs~~  
502 ~~of parks and other open spaces in unincorporated areas in which a substantial~~  
503 ~~portion of the users are from incorporated areas.))~~  
504
- 505 P-132 King County ~~((will))~~ shall encourage and support volunteer efforts to maintain  
506 and enhance programs, sites, and facilities.  
507

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508 **5. Public Participation**

509 P-133 King County ~~((will))~~ shall encourage and seek public input, advice and  
510 participation ~~((from the public))~~ in decisions about ~~((management of))~~ the open  
511 space system ~~((that relate to key issues such as funding, planning, acquisition,  
512 development and stewardship))~~ and to advance equitable access to parks and  
513 trails.

514  
515 P-134 King County ~~((will invite and involve a wide variety of interests via a diversity of  
516 individuals, groups and agencies))~~ shall engage the public using approaches  
517 consistent with the County's equity and racial and social justice goals and  
518 policies. King County ~~((will intentionally engage communities that are the most  
519 affected by proposals and plans))~~ shall provide equitable access for historically  
520 underrepresented and historically underserved populations in public  
521 engagement and access to the open space system.

522  
523 P-135 King County ~~((will))~~ shall use a variety of equitable engagement methods to  
524 ensure public involvement from all county residents, such as public meetings,  
525 advisory groups, surveys, web and social media postings, news releases, park  
526 site signage, mailing lists, newsletters, and through various community groups  
527 (including Community Service Areas). These methods ~~((will))~~ shall allow for  
528 early, continuous, and broad public participation.  
529

530 **II. Cultural Resources**

531 Cultural resources make a significant contribution to the quality of life in King County. Arts and heritage  
532 organizations, public art ~~((and))~~, historic and archaeological properties, and Indian tribal celebrations and  
533 traditional cultural events contribute to the region's economic vitality, play an essential role in cultural tourism,  
534 and contribute significantly to the county's overall quality of life. As King County grows, the need to protect,  
535 support and enhance cultural opportunities and resources is essential ~~((in order))~~ to sustain livability. King  
536 County plays an important role in supporting the region's cultural life. 4Culture, a County-chartered Public  
537 Development Authority serves as the county's cultural services agency. 4Culture has operational responsibility  
538 for advancing the work of the cultural community in King County by advocating for, supporting, promoting, and  
539 enhancing:

- 540 • arts;
- 541 • heritage;
- 542 • preservation; and
- 543 • public art.

544

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4Culture((s)) and the King County ((h))Historic ((p))Preservation ((p))Program work together to provide((s)) 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, housed in the County's Department of Natural Resources and Parks, also plays an important role ensuring))~~) and to ensure that historic properties throughout King County are protected and enhanced.

551

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 10, Economic Development, ~~((in order))~~ to enhance the region's quality of life and economic vitality, the ((e))County will engage in programs and projects to protect cultural resources and promote expanded cultural opportunities for the county's residents and visitors.

558

**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.**

565

**P-202                      King County shall consider equity and racial, social, and environmental justice in its promotion and protection of cultural resources.**

568

**P-203                      King County shall encourage preserving, reusing and recycling historic buildings in its facilities planning and other relevant actions. King County shall assist in encouraging interested parties in pursuing preservation, restoration, and repurposing projects, particularly in those doing repairs and/or upgrades themselves.**

574

## **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.



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584

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

592

593 **P-204 King County shall support the retention and promotion of the region's cultural**  
 594 **legacy, promote cultural education, and encourage the preservation and**  
 595 **celebration of cultural diversity and creativity.**

596

597 **P-205 King County shall support and encourage development of regional cultural**  
 598 **organizations, facilities, and services that address a countywide audience or are**  
 599 **dedicated to unique and significant cultural themes or disciplines.**

600

601 **P-206 King County shall support and encourage community cultural organizations,**  
 602 **facilities, and services to provide opportunities for local access and participation**  
 603 **by all residents throughout the county.**

604

605 **P-207 King County shall encourage excellence and vitality in the arts by supporting**  
 606 **opportunities for attendance at and participation in diverse arts and cultural**  
 607 **activities throughout the county.**

608

609 **P-208 King County shall pursue its cultural resource goals by working with residents,**  
 610 **property owners, cultural organizations, public agencies, Indian tribes, schools**  
 611 **and school districts, and others.**

612

613 **P-209 King County shall provide leadership in pursuing its cultural resource goals by**  
 614 **actively advancing the protection, enhancement, and ongoing use of**  
 615 **((e))County-owned and other cultural resources, and by promoting**  
 616 **intergovernmental cooperation and partnerships for the preservation and use of**  
 617 **cultural resources.**

618

619 **P-210 King County shall partner with cities to protect and enhance historic resources**  
 620 **and public art located within city boundaries and Potential ((a))Annexation**  
 621 **((a))Areas.**

622

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

624 The region’s artistic environment parallels its natural features in variety and richness. Its arts organizations,  
625 artists and opportunities are widely known and valued for their diversity and excellence in music, theater, dance,  
626 literary activity, and visual arts. Museums, historical societies, heritage groups, historians, archivists, folklorists,  
627 and other heritage specialists enrich community life and provide rich cultural experiences for county residents  
628 and visitors. Without preservation and stewardship of local history by these groups, the county’s rich history  
629 would be lost.

630

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

634

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

638

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

646

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

651

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

654

655 **C. Historic Preservation**

656 Preservation of historic properties provides multiple benefits. Historic properties maintain a tangible connection  
657 with the past and contribute to community understanding, character, and diversity. Preservation saves energy,  
658 conserves existing housing and commercial buildings, and retains historically significant open space. Historic  
659 properties also play a major role in attracting tourists. The mission of the King County Historic Preservation  
660 Program, housed in the County's Department of Natural Resources and Parks, is to conserve existing historic  
661 housing, commercial buildings and other significant properties and foster heritage tourism throughout county. It

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662 provides technical and other assistance to cities lacking preservation programs. It also supports the work of the  
663 King County Landmarks Commission.

664

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

669

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

673

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

676

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

682

683 **P-217 King County shall acquire and preserve historic properties for use by ((e))County**  
684 **and other public agencies and shall give priority to occupying historic buildings**  
685 **whenever feasible.**

686

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

692

693 **P-218 King County shall establish comprehensive review and protection procedures for**  
694 **historic properties affected by public and private projects.**

695

696 **P-219 King County may condition public and private projects ((in order)) to protect**  
697 **historic properties. King County agencies shall coordinate with the Historic**  
698 **Preservation Program to provide consistent review and mitigation for their**  
699 **projects and undertakings throughout the county.**

700

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701     **P-220**                   **King County shall encourage land uses and development that retain and enhance**  
 702                                   **significant historic properties and sustain historic community character. County**  
 703                                   **building and zoning codes and other regulations and standards should provide**  
 704                                   **flexibility to accommodate preservation and reuse of historic properties. Zoning**  
 705                                   **actions should take into account the effects of zoning on historic properties.**  
 706

707     **P-221**                   **King County shall maintain an inventory of historic properties ((in order)) to**  
 708                                   **guide its historic preservation decision making.**  
 709

710     Preservation requires active support by governments and cooperation with property owners. Incentives such as  
 711     tax reduction, revolving loans, transfer of development rights, expedited permitting, reduced permit fees, zoning  
 712     flexibility, technical assistance, and other measures can be used to encourage preservation. As set by policy  
 713     ED-208, found in Chapter 10, Economic Development, the ((e))County ((shall)) assist businesses, property  
 714     owners, and other jurisdictions in preserving and enhancing historic properties, including historic business  
 715     districts, through a variety of incentives and economic development measures.  
 716