

# Investing in **People** & Communities

## King County's 2016 Legislative Agenda



With its rural farmlands and forests, vibrant cities, and walkable neighborhoods, King County is a microcosm of Washington State. Today's global economy increases our common need to look beyond boundaries and to move toward a more regional approach to doing business. We are united with the local and regional governments serving Washington State's more than 7 million people in our efforts to provide the highest quality services, using the most efficient and innovative methods, and expending the appropriate level of public resources.

The King County Agenda is the result of strong partnerships that transcend political and geographic divides, with a shared objective of ensuring King County remains a thriving hub of economic development, job creation, and healthy communities benefitting all residents of our great state.

## OUR TOP INITIATIVES



### Fiscal Cliff

Communities need to feel safe and secure, but the state's existing revenue formula has prevented the funding of vital programs. It's a system rendered broken because it is not tied to local economic realities and the double-digit growth in county population. We can **ensure adequate local resources by revising the outdated revenue cap** to take into account inflation and population growth.



### Bridges & Roads

Every resident of Washington State deserves the ability to get to work, school, and back home to their family safely, quickly, and affordably. We must build off the successes of last year's transportation package and **deliver maintenance plans for our aging bridges and roads**.



### Public Health

A healthy and strong economy warrants healthy and strong individuals and families. For too long, local governments have lacked the resources to fund crucial public health programs. We need **dedicated and sustainable revenue sources to keep our residents healthy**.

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**King County**

# King County seeks to partner with Washington State in the following ways:

## Protecting vulnerable populations

*Provide access to basic health and wellness by maintaining core state support for health care, community-based mental health and substance abuse treatment, housing, food, and other safety net resources.*

- Treat and prevent both mental health and substance abuse through compassionate care and policies supportive of recovery, including tailored care to people in acute substance abuse crisis by creating an integrated involuntary commitment law, new secure detoxification facilities, and expanding access to opiate overdose prevention.
- Ensure implementation of the Homeless Youth Act's data-driven programs and services by reauthorizing minors to share their personal information with homeless providers.
- Stop human trafficking through effective public information, law enforcement and services to victims.
- Improve public safety and police accountability by facilitating the use of body cameras.
- Protect businesses and people from the risks of flooding, particularly by fully funding the Lower Russell Road project.
- Align vapor product regulations with tobacco regulations regarding youth access and tax statutes.

## Delivering better, smarter government

*Build on the success King County has had in controlling costs, investing in efficiencies, utilizing innovative tools and business practices, and providing high quality services to our residents.*

- Create better run governments by incorporating current technology, such as the electronic filing of transit fare infractions, public records and procurement, as well as providing website address in lieu of paper, and update informal bidding rates.
- Modernize outdated local road statutes to reduce local liability and improve maintenance and operations in a more cost-effective manner. Update statutes to increase local flexibility for vacating roads, eliminate orphaned roads, and allow more work to be done in-house.
- Assist more veterans in accessing local services like housing, employment, and counselling by providing greater local flexibility in defining eligibility criteria.
- Enhance public accountability by expanding King County Library System Board of Trustees from five to seven members.
- Improve voting access and electoral processes to make government more representative of the public.
- Accelerate the transition from coal to clean renewable energy while providing certainty to ratepayers on timing and cost.

## Providing all people an equal opportunity to thrive

*King County supports policies and investments that will create safe and sustainable communities, accessible justice systems, and equitable opportunities for all residents.*

- Meet local affordable housing needs by expanding incentives to preserve existing housing and authorizing additional revenue tools for affordable housing programs.
- Address laws that exacerbate disproportionality in our criminal justice system.
- Enable law enforcement agencies to build departments more reflective of the communities they protect by extending employment opportunities to legally permanent residents.
- Improve opportunities for rehabilitation by reducing barriers to employment and housing that stem primarily from past criminal convictions.
- Create economic opportunity and reduce inequity by funding meaningful jobs programs that open career paths for semi-skilled workers.
- Ensure paid family leave is a viable option for new families and adults with aging parents.
- Revise and extend solar energy incentives and fund programs that encourage investment in clean renewable energy.
- Update the annexation sales tax credit to save \$2 million while providing the 17,000 North Highline residents with adequate infrastructure, safety, and services necessary to thrive.