



**King County**  
**Metropolitan King County Council**  
**Committee of the Whole**

**STAFF REPORT**

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<b>Agenda Item No.:</b> 6	<b>Date:</b>	<b>2 June 2008</b>
<b>Briefing No.:</b> 2008-B0135	<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Rebecha Cusack Nick Wagner</b>

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**SUMMARY**

This briefing will be presented by the co-chairs and several members of the 2007-2008 King County Charter Review Commission. They will summarize the highlights of the commission's final report and recommendations and will answer questions from councilmembers.

**BACKGROUND**

The Charter Review Commission ("CRC") transmitted its Final Report and Recommendations ("CRC Report") to the Council on Friday, May 30. A copy of the report is attached to this staff report.

Cognizant that the King County Charter has served the county well for almost 40 years and that the November 2008 ballot is likely to be crowded, the CRC is recommending 12 charter amendments for consideration by the Council. Ten are substantive, and two are technical. The proposed amendments are summarized on pages 6-7 of the CRC Report and are described in detail on pages 15-23. The actual text of the proposed amendments can be found on pages 30-38 of the report. In connection with some of the amendments, the CRC is also recommending amendments to the King County Code; the text of those amendments can be found on pages 40-44 of the report.

Two of the proposed amendments—those concerning Elected Officials and Collective Bargaining (an issue raised by the Sheriff) and Open Space Protection—are the subject of minority reports (CRC report, p. 39); however, most of the CRC recommendations were adopted unanimously.

The CRC does not recommend that all of its proposed charter amendments be placed on the ballot this year. Instead, the CRC suggests three phases—six amendments in 2008, three in 2009, and three more in 2010—as described in detail on page 14 of the CRC report. They reasoned that, besides avoiding the risk of overcrowding the 2008 ballot, the 2009 election will have more of a "county" focus than the 2008 election, when the races for President and Governor are likely to receive the most attention.

In addition to the proposed charter amendments, the CRC makes two recommendations that do not call for charter amendments. These recommendations, which concern Instant Runoff Voting and the King County Library System, are described on pages 24-25 of the CRC Report.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- On June 16, charter review will be the subject of a COW Town Hall meeting in District 7. This will be an opportunity for King County citizens to address the Council on the CRC recommendations. Charter Review Commission members will make a brief presentation of their recommendations, followed by a question and answer period and the usual opportunity for public comment.
- Council staff will brief councilmembers on the proposed charter amendments, options for phasing the amendments onto the ballot over time,<sup>1</sup> and a proposed timeline by which the Council would need to act in order to place amendments on the 2008 general election ballot.
- The **charter deadline** for Council action to place proposed amendments on the November 2008 ballot is **September 19**; however, King County Elections staff have requested that the Council act earlier, so that elections staff will have more than the minimum 45 days before the election. This is intended to allow sufficient time for processing the amendments, resolving any issues that might arise, and laying out the many different styles of ballot in King County.

## **INVITEES**

King County Charter Review Commission  
Mike Lowry, Commission Co-chair  
Lois North, Commission Co-chair  
Commission Members  
Mark Yango, Charter Review Coordinator  
Corrie Watterson Bryant, Project Manager  
Becky Spithill, Project Manager  
Mike Sinsky, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

## **ATTACHMENT**

1. CRC Final Report and Recommendations
2. Phasing of Proposed Charter Amendments

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<sup>1</sup> Attachment 2 is a worksheet that can be used for that purpose.

King County Charter Review Commission  
Final Report and Recommendations

[included separately in meeting packet]



## Phasing of Proposed Charter Amendments

Proposed Amendment	CRC recommendation			Alternative scenario		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Anti-discrimination	X					
Budget allotments <sup>1</sup>			X			
Budget timeline	X					
Charter amendment by citizen initiative		X				
Commission procedures <sup>2</sup>			X			
Elected officials and collective bargaining (Sheriff's issues)	X					
Election deadlines		X				
Open space protection	X					
Qualifications of elected officials	X					
Regional committees	X					
Transitional provisions			X			
Unincorporated areas representation		X				
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>			
I-25 (election of elections director)	X					
I-26 (nonpartisan elections)?	X					
Public campaign finance?						
Economic and revenue forecasts?						
<b>TOTAL</b>						

<sup>1</sup> Amendments listed in italics are ones that councilmembers have mentioned as priorities.

<sup>2</sup> Includes: (1) Council confirmation of CRC appointments and (2) requirement of Council action on CRC recommendations. Only the former is a council priority.