



King County

2024 Federal Legislative Priorities

Investing in a Green Economy and Workforce

Transition to a net zero transportation system.

- Secure transportation grant funding to support multi-modal, active transportation and other innovative solutions throughout the Puget Sound area, including RapidRide bus rapid transit and the Eastrail Corridor.
- Electrify our transit system and prioritize clean transit and mobility services to meet rising demand in ethnically diverse and working-class areas that have been historically marginalized.
- Invest in bridge safety and resilience by bringing county bridges into compliance with federal standards and supporting our partners to complete critical repairs to bridges integral to the regional transportation network.
- Leverage new federal support for electric vehicles (EV) and a national electric vehicle infrastructure network.
- Support efforts to develop and expand availability of sustainable aviation fuel and diversify our fuel economy.

Grow an equitable and green economy.

- Accelerate the implementation of King County's Green Job Strategy by providing funding for workforce development and apprenticeship programs as a path to economic recovery and to meet the needs of an expanding green economy.
- Expand quality broadband access and affordability by making subsidies available to low-income residents and broadband investments in affordable housing.
- Invest in a sustainable, equitable childcare sector by ensuring all families have access to high quality early care and education opportunities.

Build a Sustainable and Resilient Future

Protect and restore the natural environment for the health and sustainability of our communities and Puget Sound.

- Invest in our aging regional wastewater treatment infrastructure to ensure it can continue to meet the health and clean water needs of our growing region, protect the Puget Sound and comply with state and federal mandates.
- Improve water quality and fish habitat in the regional watershed by replacing and repairing roads and culverts and investing in green stormwater infrastructure and combined sewer overflow controls to reduce the impact of stormwater on our rivers, lakes and Puget Sound.
- Enhance ecosystem resilience to climate change by restoring habitat and habitat connectivity, protecting and preserving high quality habitat, reducing pollutant loading and protecting critical regulations like NEPA and the Clean Water Act.
- Protect and restore forests in King County through improved forest management, restoration and reforestation, acquisition of forestland and support for small forest owner stewardship.

- Pass the Farm Bill, as a means to help increase investments in local agriculture production as a source of food security for our region and provide increased access to affordable fresh foods for our low-income communities.

Make sustainability accessible.

- Support energy and environmental justice through subsidized utility programs, low-income residential weatherization, and energy-efficient retrofits.
- Incentivize the development of building and zoning codes focused on climate change preparedness and climate equity to ensure vulnerable populations have access to safe and resilient housing and workplaces.
- Support and invest in a waste-free circular economy that incentivizes waste prevention, ends single use and modernizes landfill management.

Prepare the region for climate impacts.

- Support equitable, culturally contextualized emergency preparedness, response and recovery planning and capital to prepare for climate impacts and natural disasters.
- Invest in flood protection, multi-benefit floodplain management and modernize the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Invest in wildfire risk reduction, including community wildfire planning and support for forest restoration and vegetation management on public and private lands.

Bolster Public and Behavioral Health Crisis Response

Maintain and strengthen the national public health infrastructure.

- Support full funding of the Prevention and Public Health Fund to ensure reliable, sustainable public health funding for local public health agencies to improve local ability to respond to public health emergencies and ongoing public health needs.
- Ensure access to quality, affordable health care by extending funding for community health centers and for community and health equity programs and grants, reducing out-of-pocket health care costs and increasing Medicare reimbursement rates.
- Protect access to a full range of reproductive health care and family planning services, without barriers and unnecessary restrictions.
- Invest in infrastructure improvements to Harborview Medical Center, a comprehensive healthcare facility dedicated to providing care to the most vulnerable in the region.

Bolster resources and access to behavioral health treatment.

- Enhance resources for community-based responses to behavioral health crises, including resources and training for first responders.
- Support and sustain the healthcare and behavioral health workforce, including increasing Medicaid flexibility for behavioral health care across all service types to match Medicare rates.
- Build on progress made toward addressing the opioid/fentanyl crisis by supporting the Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access Act to expand access to medications for opioid use disorder and fully fund the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

- Update the IMD exclusion to allow Medicaid to cover short term stays in psychiatric hospitals to strengthen the overall behavioral health system and provide Medicaid recipients with more treatment options.
- Preserve and increase long-term residential behavioral health care capacity, including assisted living facilities, transitional homes and supportive housing units.
- Increase veterans' programs, especially those targeting suicide prevention and homelessness.

Support Core Community Needs

Expand affordable housing and address homelessness

- Provide local governments flexibility and planning resources to diversify the housing stock by incentivizing the construction of missing middle housing, and implementing programs, like inclusionary housing, to build and preserve affordable housing.
- Increase and improve federal programs that help build or preserve affordable housing, including Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Low Income Housing Tax Credits, HOME Program grants, the National Housing Trust Fund and other programs to leverage private-sector investments in affordable housing and preservation.
- Expand community-based housing such as Medicaid-funded home services and fully fund Project-Based Rental Assistance, Homeless Assistance Grants, Housing Choice Vouchers and expand these programs to cover individuals with developmental, behavioral and physical health disabilities.
- Help families, youth, and veterans avoid homelessness by providing resources for rental assistance, rapid rehousing, and reemployment services.

Dismantle Systemic Racism and Injustice

- Pass fair and humane immigration reform legislation that provides a path to citizenship for undocumented community members, including DACA recipients, makes asylum seekers immediately eligible to work, and increases federal investments to support new arrivals.
- Develop and implement initiatives that improve gender equity, prevent sexual assault and harassment, reduce juvenile detention and disproportionality in the criminal legal system, combat human trafficking, and guarantee protection for all people including those in the LGBTQ community.

Enhance Public Safety

- Support federal funding for the King County Sheriff's Office Air Support Unit to allow the unit to continue providing public safety and law enforcement air support to the region.
- Support training, equipment and recruitment and retention programs for law enforcement that help to ensure public safety in King County is conducted in a way that reflects our core values.
- Support policies that increase law enforcement accountability, provide resources to build relationships and trust with underrepresented communities and enhance transparency.
- Fund local programs to address the gun violence epidemic, support community-based violence interventions, and continue to promote common-sense gun laws to protect communities.
- Continue efforts to expand support services for survivors of gender-based violence, including through the Office on Violence Against Women and through the Victims of Crime Act program.