



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**July 23, 2012**

**Ordinance 17381**

**Proposed No. 2012-0210.1**

**Sponsors** McDermott, Lambert, Dunn,  
Ferguson, Hague, Patterson and von  
Reichbauer

1 AN ORDINANCE providing for the submission to the  
2 qualified electors of King County at a special election to be  
3 held in King County on November 6, 2012, of a proposition  
4 to support continuation of the regional automated  
5 fingerprint identification system program by renewing and  
6 replacing authorization of an expiring property tax levy in  
7 excess of the levy limitation contained in chapter 84.55  
8 RCW, for a consecutive six-year period, at a first year rate  
9 of not more than \$0.0592 per one thousand dollars of  
10 assessed valuation for collection beginning in 2013, with  
11 subsequent maximum levy collections being increased by  
12 the greater of one percent or the percentage increase in the  
13 consumer price index as long as that amount does not  
14 exceed three percent, for the purpose of funding the  
15 continued operation of the regional automated fingerprint  
16 identification system and related technology and services,  
17 which expand crime scene and arrest identification

18 capabilities for all criminal justice agencies in King  
19 County.

20 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

21 SECTION 1. Findings:

22 A. To expand and enhance upon the limited identification services provided by  
23 individual city agencies or at the state level, in 1986 the voters of King County approved  
24 funding for the purchase of a shared regional automated fingerprint identification system  
25 ("AFIS") computer which matches unknown fingerprints to known fingerprints. King  
26 County's AFIS database holds over seven hundred thousand fingerprint records, over  
27 three hundred thousand palmprint records and approximately thirty-six thousand  
28 unidentified crime scene fingerprints. The King County AFIS is a regional system with  
29 service available to every city and unincorporated area in King County.

30 B. The AFIS computer is used for two primary purposes:

- 31 1. To quickly identify arrested individuals, and prevent the wrongful release of  
32 those who use false names to evade arrest warrants or hide criminal records; and
- 33 2. To search fingerprints and palmprints collected from crime scenes to identify  
34 unknown suspects and aid in convictions.

35 C. The county first purchased the shared AFIS computer after the voters of King  
36 County approved a property tax levy for that purpose in November 1986. The ballot  
37 measure was authorized by Ordinance 7747. The technology at the time did not include  
38 palmprint searching. Since 1986, the voters of King County have continued to endorse  
39 this service by approving renewal property tax levies ranging from \$0.0200 to \$0.0665

40 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation to support, expand, and enhance AFIS  
41 services as needed. The levy history is as follows:

42 1. Five-year renewal levy approved in November 1990. The ballot measure was  
43 authorized by Ordinance 9603;

44 2. Five-year renewal levy approved in November 1995. The ballot measure was  
45 authorized by Ordinance 11948;

46 3. Five-year renewal levy approved in September 2000. The ballot measure was  
47 authorized by Ordinance 13894. Through careful fiscal management, the county  
48 accumulated a fund balance, which sustained AFIS program operations through 2006  
49 without a concurrent property tax levy; and

50 4. Six-year renewal levy approved in September 2006. The ballot measure was  
51 authorized by Ordinance 15537. Again, careful fiscal management accumulated a fund  
52 balance, which this time was returned to taxpayers through reduced levy rates in 2011  
53 and 2012.

54 D. The 1986 AFIS computer, partially updated in 1999, was completely replaced  
55 with a new system in 2011. This new system introduced palmprint searching for the first  
56 time in King County, and has improved matching capabilities and increased storage  
57 capacity. Since its installation, nineteen identifications have been made on cold cases  
58 and from palmprints left at crime scenes.

59 E. On December 31, 2012, the 2006 AFIS levy, which was adopted at a rate of  
60 \$0.0568 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation, will expire. This ordinance  
61 proposes a renewed AFIS levy at a rate of \$0.0592 per one thousand dollars of assessed

62 valuation starting in 2013. Without renewed revenue, funding for this program will run  
63 out in June 2013, ceasing operations.

64 F. Large cities and metropolitan areas around the country have realized great  
65 benefit from having their own AFIS technology. King County is one of only two  
66 counties in the state of Washington with its own AFIS computer, and it is the only county  
67 with a shared regional model that provides services to all local law enforcement agencies.  
68 King County owns the only palmprint database in the state. It is larger than the one used  
69 by Washington State Patrol, although King County AFIS staff have the ability to search  
70 that database as well. The AFIS program has made one hundred eighty palmprint 'hits' or  
71 identifications since the 2011 implementation of the new AFIS computer. In 2011, the  
72 AFIS program searched more than seventy-four thousand fingerprint records and  
73 processed almost nineteen thousand pieces of evidence. The program identified almost  
74 four thousand latent crime scene prints, and over seven hundred thirty individuals who  
75 had given false names when arrested.

76 G. King County's AFIS program is proven as essential to law enforcement, and is  
77 recognized for its exceptional service. The program's regional model has provided  
78 excellent and effective crime-solving support to all the criminal justice agencies in King  
79 County since its inception in 1988. The current AFIS program provides for many shared  
80 services, including:

- 81 1. The purchase, maintenance, and staff operation of the AFIS computer;
- 82 2. The purchase, maintenance, training and support for forty-eight Livescans,
- 83 which are devices installed at thirty-five law enforcement agencies throughout King

84 County for the purpose of collecting better quality prints and transmitting them  
85 electronically for a faster and more efficient response;

86           3. The collection of high quality fingerprints in county jail facilities, and  
87 fingerprint examiners available twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, for the  
88 quick identification of arrested individuals;

89           4. Examiners who collect prints from crime scenes, process them chemically  
90 and photographically for better clarity, search them in AFIS, and make identifications of  
91 unknown potential suspects or store the unidentified prints for continual search as new  
92 records are added to the system; and

93           5. Training on fingerprint collection and crime scene processing, and customer  
94 support for all law enforcement agencies.

95           H. The AFIS program has met all goals set forth in the current levy, well below  
96 the budget projections made in 2006. Some of these goals included:

97           1. Procurement, implementation, and support of a new AFIS, replacing the  
98 twenty-year-old original system with a more efficient and effective model capable of both  
99 fingerprint and palmprint searching and storage;

100           2. Purchase of additional criminal Livescan fingerprint capture stations, and  
101 upgrade of image resolution for print clarity, at high volume sites; and

102           3. A pilot for remote hand-held fingerprint capture devices that allow officers to  
103 search the regional AFIS from the field, and a study on the benefits and impacts of  
104 fingerprint capture stations in the courts.

105           I. With the oversight of the AFIS advisory committee, the AFIS program has  
106 prepared a new six-year financial and operational plan. The recommended levy

107 maintains current services, streamlines staffing, and replaces an aging regional  
108 laboratory, all at a rate that is less than the voters passed in 2006. It also identifies  
109 several areas of reductions and efficiencies. The financial plan includes:

110           1. A reduction of eleven positions and other savings equating to approximately  
111 \$6.75 million over six years, with no corresponding reduction in services. This was  
112 achieved by identifying efficiencies and refining staffing models;

113           2. Continued support for the remote fingerprinting initiatives started under the  
114 2007-2012 levy; and

115           3. Replacement of the county's latent processing lab, which is substantially  
116 undersized to handle the volume of work it supports. The new lab will provide more  
117 space to allow different chemical processes to be performed separately and  
118 simultaneously without concerns of cross-contamination. It will also address safety  
119 concerns that are present in the current laboratory, which resides in an outdated building.

120           J. The AFIS program produces publicly available annual reports that provide  
121 status updates on program initiatives and accomplishments. The success of the regional  
122 AFIS program has been a result of regular collaboration with law enforcement agencies  
123 across King County.

124           K. Under state law, a levy lid lift is limited to a maximum term of six years if the  
125 levy provides for a specified index to be used to determine the limit factor. The proposed  
126 levy is limited to six years.

127           **SECTION 2. Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this  
128 ordinance unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

129           A. "AFIS" means automated fingerprint identification system.

130           B. "AFIS computer" means the automated fingerprint identification system,  
131 which is the computer system that utilizes AFIS as its foundation, and through modular  
132 design incorporates other databases of criminal identification records, and related  
133 equipment, technology, networks, and interfaces employed by trained staff for capturing,  
134 storing, and comparing criminal identification records based on friction ridge analysis, or  
135 successor technology.

136           C. "AFIS program" means the acquisition, implementation, maintenance and  
137 operation of the regional AFIS computer. It also means the countywide effort of trained  
138 personnel who, through fingerprints, palmprints, and other identification methods:  
139 identify detained persons; identify suspects of crimes from fingerprints and palmprints  
140 left on evidence at crime scenes; assist in the conviction of criminals through identifying  
141 this crime scene evidence; train law enforcement on crime scene evidence collection and  
142 identification methods; support accurate and complete criminal history records; conduct  
143 field research aimed at improving and enhancing program services; and otherwise  
144 enhance public safety as consistent with this ordinance and permitted by law.

145           D. "Levy" means the levy of regular property taxes, for the specific purpose and  
146 term provided in this ordinance and authorized by the electorate in accordance with state  
147 law.

148           E. "Levy proceeds" means the principal amount of funds raised by the levy, any  
149 interest earnings on the funds and the proceeds of any interim financing following  
150 authorization of the levy.

151           F. "Limit factor" means the greater of one percent or the percentage increase in  
152 the consumer price index as long as that amount does not exceed three percent. The

153 consumer price index is defined as the ratio of the most recent June Consumer Price  
154 Index to the immediately previous June Consumer Price Index (final published CPI-W  
155 Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, as calculated by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics,  
156 or its successor) expressed as a multiple of one hundred percent to achieve the result of  
157 one hundred percent plus inflation.

158         SECTION 3. Levy submittal to voters. To provide necessary funds for the  
159 AFIS program, the King County council shall submit to the qualified electors of the  
160 county a proposition to renew and replace an expiring levy and authorize a regular  
161 property tax levy in excess of the levy limitation contained in chapter 84.55 RCW for six  
162 consecutive years, commencing in 2012, with collection beginning in 2013, at a rate in  
163 this first year not to exceed \$0.0592 per one thousand dollars of assessed value, with  
164 subsequent years limited by the limit factor as defined in section 2 of this ordinance.

165         SECTION 4. Deposit of levy proceeds. All levy proceeds collected as  
166 authorized in this ordinance shall be deposited into and retained in a designated AFIS  
167 fund.

168         SECTION 5. Eligible expenditures. If approved by the qualified electors of the  
169 county, all proceeds of the levy authorized in this ordinance shall be used to pay the costs  
170 of the regional AFIS program, together with the necessary software and hardware  
171 operations and maintenance expenses. Eligible expenditures include the salaries,  
172 benefits, training, office and laboratory supplies and equipment, work space, contracted  
173 goods and services, related studies and research, administration and other costs incidental  
174 to the operation and enhancement of the regional AFIS program. Work space  
175 expenditures may include the lease or rental of property, or the purchase of land and any



176 construction or tenant improvements needed to house AFIS program technology, staff, or  
177 laboratory functions.

178 Eligible expenditures shall also include non-bonded debt and finance costs and  
179 the reimbursement of extraordinary expenditures incurred by the county after the  
180 effective date of this ordinance with regard to the AFIS program.

181 The AFIS levy is intended as supplemental funding to provide expanded crime  
182 scene and arrest identification technology and services on a regional basis. This levy  
183 shall not at any time provide general criminal justice funding or fund programs or  
184 purposes not otherwise consistent with this ordinance.

185 **SECTION 6. Call for special election.** In accordance with RCW 29A.04.321,  
186 the King County council hereby calls for a special election to be held in conjunction with  
187 the general election on November 6, 2012. The King County director of elections shall  
188 cause notice to be given of this ordinance in accordance with the state constitution and  
189 general law and to submit to the qualified electors of the county, at the said special  
190 county election, the proposition hereinafter set forth. The clerk of the council shall  
191 certify that proposition to the King County director of elections in substantially the  
192 following form, with such modifications as may be required by the prosecuting attorney:

193 The King County council has passed Ordinance \_\_\_ concerning this  
194 proposition for the automated fingerprint identification system (AFIS)  
195 levy. This proposition would replace an expiring levy and fund continued  
196 operation of the regional AFIS program, which provides enhanced  
197 forensic fingerprint and palmprint technology and services to identify  
198 criminals and aid in convictions. It would authorize King County to levy

199 an additional property tax of \$0.0592 (5.92 cents) per \$1,000 of assessed  
200 valuation in 2013 and annual increases by the percentage increase in the  
201 consumer price index or 1%, whichever is greater, with a maximum  
202 increase of 3%, for the five succeeding years. Should this proposition be:

203 Approved [ ]

204 Rejected [ ]

205 SECTION 7. AFIS advisory committee extension. If the levy is approved by  
206 the voters in accordance with section 6 of this ordinance, the AFIS advisory committee  
207 previously authorized by the voters shall be retained to review AFIS operations and  
208 expenditures and make recommendations concerning the AFIS program.

209 SECTION 8. Ratification. Certification of the proposition by the clerk of the  
210 King County council to the director of elections in accordance with law before the  
211 election on November 6, 2012, and any other act consistent with the authority and before  
212 the effective date of this ordinance are hereby ratified and confirmed.

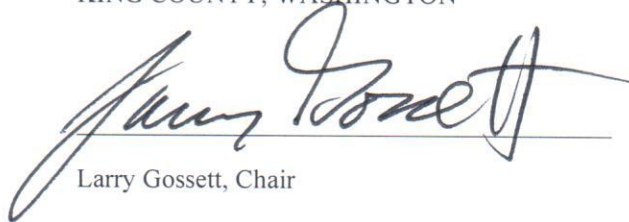
213 SECTION 9. Severability. If any provision of this ordinance or its application to

214 any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the  
215 application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.  
216

Ordinance 17381 was introduced on 6/18/2012 and passed by the Metropolitan King  
County Council on 7/23/2012, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague, Ms. Patterson,  
Ms. Lambert, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Dunn and Mr. McDermott  
No: 0  
Excused: 1 - Mr. Phillips

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



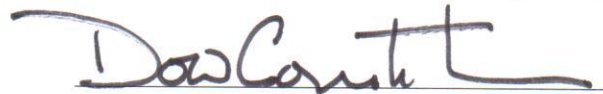
Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 24 day of JULY, 2012.



Dow Constantine, County Executive

RECEIVED  
2012 JUL 25 PM 3:53  
CLERK  
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

Attachments: None