



King County

Ron Sims

King County Executive

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May 15, 2006

Cheryle A. Broom
King County Auditor
Room 1033
COURTHOUSE

Dear Ms. Broom:

I applaud the dedication that you and the Auditor's Office staff members have shown in advancing a countywide conversation on government accountability. I thank you for convening and leading the King County Performance Measurement Work Group for the past two years, and I am pleased to endorse the April 6, 2006, "**A Work Plan for Developing a Countywide Strategic Planning, Performance Measurement and Management System.**"

The Performance Measure Work Group's guidelines regarding performance measure and business plan review were included in the 2006 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) budget instructions. In tandem with those efforts, the Executive Office has also developed an intensified performance management system, known as KingStat. This program will further integrate performance measurement data into planning and management systems of the Executive Branch's operational departments. I am encouraged by the initial integration of such data and analysis into our department and countywide strategic planning and by the improvements that these efforts have made in our budget process.

Given the Executive Office launch of the KingStat pilot program this February, I am especially pleased that you have used the cross-jurisdictional work group to recognize the diverse performance measurement programs developed and used countywide. Each department and office faces its own unique circumstances, offering both challenges and exciting opportunities to roll performance measurement up into a countywide system. The Performance Measurement Work Group that you lead represents a critical dialogue and resource to reconcile these diverse approaches under a broader countywide umbrella.

During this past year, we have worked to implement the recommendations of the Performance Measure Work Group to the extent that is feasible given the county's limited resources. Already we have incorporated some of these recommendations into departments' business planning, and the KingStat program will further strengthen our ability to address the workgroup's recommendations:



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- **Focus on capacity building and support:** We will continue to provide training and guidance to departments as we seek steady improvement in reporting and measurement.
- **Balance expectations for improvement with resource availability:** We have invested resources into this initiative without compromising other essential county operations, and with the expectation that we can identify and address areas for improvement and better serve county residents.
- **Develop a countywide framework for collaboration:** As we progress from the department and division levels of analysis (identifying performance measures and goals) to the countywide level of analysis, the context for decision making remains to improve overall county services, improve the efficiency and effectiveness by which we deliver those services, and improve accountability to the public. We are working towards consistent and thoughtful countywide strategic planning.
- **Manage the detail:** Departments coordinate, and will continue to coordinate, with the work group, OMB staff, the Auditor's Office, and increasingly KingStat staff to refine measures and business planning processes. As this process continues, helpful measures are identified, important trends will become more evident and appropriate strategies can be developed and implemented.

I also believe for performance management to have a sustained and lasting impact on county operations and effectiveness, that it is important to work in collaboration with labor as we integrate performance management into standard operating procedures. We also want to recognize that some of the work plan elements, such as recognition for achievements, may be the subject of bargaining or at least discussions with labor.

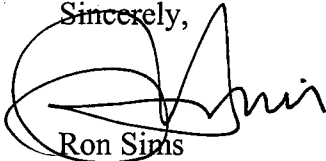
I understand that changes to the work plan will occur as programs such as KingStat evolve, and as we better see the links between agencies' separate performance measurement endeavors. I am very pleased to have recently hired Michael Jacobson as my new Performance Measurement Director within the Executive Office. His expertise on this topic, experience with the county, and active participation on your Performance Measure Work Group will help greatly to build improved relationships and advance a performance management agenda in the Executive departments that is consistent with countywide goals of accountability and effective public service.

At the heart of performance measurement philosophy and activity is truly a desire to serve the residents of King County more effectively. For this, I thank the members and staff of the Performance Measure Work Group, who have worked with your facilitation on collective recommendations regarding how to make our public service more effective and efficient.

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As the work group's summary report highlights, successful planning that utilizes performance measurement analysis is a result of a sustained, determined, and thoughtful effort. There is still much to be done to fully integrate performance measurement into the county's overall strategic planning, and I look forward to further input from the work group as we continue this very successful collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Sims". The signature is stylized with a large, circular flourish on the left side and a trailing "in" at the end.

Ron Sims
King County Executive

cc: Kurt Triplett, Chief of Staff, Office of the King County Executive (OKCE)
Sheryl Whitney, Assistant County Executive, OKCE
Bob Cowan, Director, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
David Lawson, Internal Audit Manager, OMB
Michael Jacobson, Performance Measurement Director, OKCE