



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Motion 16898

Proposed No. 2025-0172.3

Sponsors Quinn

1 A MOTION approving the 2025 Strategic Climate Action
2 Plan, submitted in compliance with K.C.C 18.25.010, and
3 superseding Motion 14449, Section B.

4 WHEREAS, King County's first Strategic Climate Action Plan was adopted in
5 December 2012, and

6 WHEREAS, the King County executive transmitted an update to the plan in June
7 2015, which the King County council adopted in November 2015, and

8 WHEREAS, the King County executive transmitted an update to the plan in
9 August 2020, which the King County council adopted in May 2021, and

10 WHEREAS, K.C.C 18.25.010 requires that updates to the plan shall occur at least
11 every five years and that the executive shall transmit updates to the council for adoption
12 by motion, and

13 WHEREAS, with this motion, the executive has transmitted to the council as
14 Attachment A to this motion the updated plan called for in K.C.C 18.25.010, and

15 WHEREAS, climate change is occurring and is a paramount challenge with
16 fundamental and far-reaching consequences that put our people, economy, and
17 environment at risk, and

18 WHEREAS, impacts of a changing climate do not affect all King County
19 residents in the same way. Experiences will vary based on income, health, age, and place
20 of residence. Climate change impacts can magnify existing health issues and limited

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21 access to resources that are already experienced disproportionately by Black, Indigenous,
22 and people of color, and

23 WHEREAS, the 2020 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report stated
24 that measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions must be enacted with greater urgency
25 to avoid long-lasting or irreversible changes to the global climate system, and

26 WHEREAS, the 2023 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report states
27 that deep, rapid, and sustained mitigation and accelerated implementation of adaptation
28 actions in this decade is needed to reduce projected losses and damages for humans and
29 ecosystems. Limiting human-caused global warming will require net-zero carbon
30 dioxide emissions and further delays in taking action will lock in changes, reduce
31 feasibility, and increase costs and damages as every increment of global warming will
32 intensify multiple and concurrent hazards in all regions of the world, and

33 WHEREAS, preparing for climate change impacts is also urgently needed given
34 the accelerating pace of climate change and the time required to increase the resilience of
35 communities, infrastructure, and natural systems, and

36 WHEREAS, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan charts a five-year framework
37 for climate action, integrating climate change considerations into all areas of county
38 operations and in our work with King County cities, partners, communities, and residents,
39 and

40 WHEREAS, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan identifies countywide and
41 county operations sources of greenhouse gas emissions, and quantifies the emissions
42 reductions from implementing key strategies, and

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43 WHEREAS, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan establishes specific goals,
44 performance measures and related targets, and actions to advance the goal of reducing
45 countywide sources of emissions fifty percent by 2030, seventy-five percent by 2040, and
46 ninety-five percent by 2050, compared to a 2007 baseline, and

47 WHEREAS, analysis completed during the development of the 2025 Strategic
48 Climate Action Plan indicates that the identified actions, when combined with anticipated
49 action by federal, state, and local governments, are projected to fall short of reaching the
50 established countywide emissions goals, and

51 WHEREAS, King County remains committed to achieving deep emissions
52 reductions and will continue to work in partnership with cities, regional collaborators,
53 state and federal agencies, community stakeholders, and the private sector to identify,
54 implement, and advocate for the additional strategies necessary to close the gap with the
55 County's adopted climate commitments, and

56 WHEREAS, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan establishes specific goals,
57 performance measures and related targets, and priority actions for county services and
58 operations to reduce emissions consistent with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas
59 emissions eighty percent by 2030 and ninety-five percent by 2050, compared to a 2007
60 baseline, and

61 WHEREAS, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan targets are built in the
62 understanding that climate change is a threat multiplier and creates complex challenges
63 particularly for communities affected by historical and current inequities, and who have
64 limited resources to adapt, and

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65 WHEREAS, King County and partners in the King County-Cities Climate
 66 Collaboration, comprising twenty-two cities and the Port of Seattle, and representing
 67 eighty-seven percent of the population of the county, are partnering to advance those
 68 shared goals, and

69 WHEREAS, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan strengthens the county's
 70 commitment to prepare county operations and the community for the impacts of climate
 71 change on our infrastructure, natural environment, and health and safety, and

72 WHEREAS, meaningful and equitable progress on climate change requires
 73 addressing the impacts of systemic racism and achieving racial justice, and

74 WHEREAS, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan is developed with an
 75 environmental and climate justice framework in partnership with frontline communities
 76 disproportionately impacted by climate change and in a manner consistent with
 77 Ordinance 16948, which establishes the county's fair and just principle, and

78 WHEREAS, with this motion, the 2025 Strategic Climate Action plan responds to
 79 Ordinance 19041, which calls for the development of a community-driven strategy to
 80 achieve sustainable and resilient communities with the creation of the climate equity
 81 community task force, and co-development of the Sustainable and Resilient Frontline
 82 Communities section by the task force, and

83 WHEREAS, with this motion, the executive has transmitted to the council, as part
 84 of the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan, the biennial report as called for in K.C.C.
 85 18.50.010, and

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WHEREAS, with this motion, the executive has transmitted to council, as part of the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan, the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy, which is an update to the county's green jobs strategy, and as required by K.C.C. 18.25.010, and

WHEREAS, the executive has transmitted to the council, as part of the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan, the Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy, as Appendix F of Attachment A to this motion as called for in Ordinance 19881, Section 337, and

WHEREAS, the executive has transmitted to the council, as part of the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan, the Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy, as Appendix E of Attachment A to this motion, which was funded with a FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant and released in 2024, and

WHEREAS, the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan will next be updated in 2030, unless an update is needed sooner to respond to changing information about emissions sources, performance relative to targets, new technologies, or a changing regulatory context;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The 2025 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan, dated September 8, 2025, which is Attachment A to this motion and prepared in compliance with K.C.C. 18.25.010, is hereby approved as the guiding policy document for King County climate action and its work with partners.

B.1. King County will continue to work in partnership with other local governments, utilities, and community-based organizations to promote investment, programs, and policies that support, promote, and incentivize reductions in countywide

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108 greenhouse gas emissions, and prepare our operations and communities for the impacts of
109 climate change.

110 2. The 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan does not identify a feasible path to
111 meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets set in the countywide planning policies. The
112 executive should engage with the growth management planning council, the King
113 County-cities Climate Collaboration, and the partners named in section B.1. of this
114 motion to determine if changes to the targets are warranted as part of the next countywide
115 planning policies update.

116 C.1. Implementation of the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan will require
117 resources. Any funding requests are subject to approval through the county budget
118 process.

119 2. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan action GHG 61 calls on the county to
120 develop and implement a funding strategy for the plan's implementation. For each
121 Strategic Climate Action Plan action identified as needing "additional" or "new" funding,
122 strategy should include:

- 123 a. the amount of funding needed for implementation;
- 124 b. potential funding sources;
- 125 c. the expected timing of funding need; and
- 126 d. the anticipated relative climate impact of the action, with a high, medium, or
127 low classification.

128 3. No later than October 1, 2026, the executive should submit a report
129 containing the funding strategy in the manner described in section Q of this motion.

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130 D.1. Implementation of the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan will require
131 updates to the King County Code.

132 2.a The executive should prepare a report that contains a workplan for code
133 updates necessary to implement the actions in the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan.

134 b. For each action requiring a code update, the workplan should describe:

135 (1) a description of the update needed;

136 (2) the chapters of code likely involved; and

137 (3) the proposed month or quarter of transmittal to the council for
138 consideration.

139 c. The executive should consider the grouping of multiple related code updates
140 into single transmittal packages if warranted.

141 d. No later than April 2, 2026, the executive should submit a report containing
142 the workplan, and a motion accepting the report, in the manner described in section Q of
143 this motion.

144 E. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan action GHG 6 directs the executive to
145 report on ten climate outcome indicators as part of a publicly accessible online climate
146 dashboard. The climate outcome measures should be included on the home page of the
147 dashboard. The executive should, by January 31 of each year beginning in 2027, transmit
148 a report to the council with information on the current status of each climate outcome
149 indicator, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the report, in the manner described in
150 section Q of this motion.

151 F. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan actions GHG 26 (Advocate for state or
152 regional adoption of a zero-emission appliance standard) and GHG 27 (Implement a

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residential point-of-sale energy disclosure program) describe the potential for equity impacts from those actions, and state the executive's intention to reduce disproportionate impacts to frontline communities. Before acting, the executive should submit a report to the council that describes the executive's planned actions in detail, and how equity impacts are proposed to be addressed, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the report, in the manner described in section Q of this motion.

G. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan action GHG 41 calls on the county to undertake a battery energy storage system siting analysis in collaboration with utilities and King County cities. No later than December 31, 2026, the executive should submit a report detailing the results of the analysis, including recommendations for updated countywide battery energy storage system targets, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the report, in the manner described in section Q of this motion.

H. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan action GHG 57 (Improve quality and increase use of commercially produced compost) states that the county plans to build and operate a facility to produce a high-quality, plastic free, biosolids-based compost. In the early planning stages of this project, the executive should determine how any per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS, and heavy metals would be minimized in the finished product created at the facility, and consider corresponding changes to project design.

I.1. Increasing the use of solar photovoltaic panels on private homes and businesses is key to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in King County. However, changes to state law could further incentivize private solar deployments.

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175 2. Unlike many other states in the country, Washington requires county
176 assessors to include the value of solar installations when determining a property's taxable
177 value. That can act as a disincentive for homeowners and businesses to invest in solar
178 energy. The executive should advocate to the Washington state Legislature for
179 legislation authorizing an exemption or exclusion of the added value of solar energy
180 systems from property tax assessments.

181 3. The executive should also advocate to the legislature for changes to state
182 building and energy code requirements applicable to solar deployment, ensuring that they
183 are no more restrictive than necessary to protect life safety.

184 J.1. The executive should prepare and transmit a report on the environmental
185 impacts associated with King County's information technology operations, including
186 current practices and potential future scenarios.

187 2. The report should include, but not be limited to:

188 a. an inventory of the county's current information technology environmental
189 footprint, using national or regional data only where more-specific data cannot be
190 obtained. That should include:

191 (1) energy use, water use, and emissions of county-owned data centers and IT
192 hardware;

193 (2) energy use, water use, and emissions associated with contracted third-
194 party cloud services; and

195 (3) embodied carbon and lifecycle emissions from procurement and disposal
196 of IT hardware;

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197 b. an assessment of how greenhouse gas emissions and water impacts would
198 differ under at least three scenarios:

199 (1) continuation of current practices;

200 (2) moderate growth in overall information technology and artificial
201 intelligence use by the county, including generative artificial-intelligence applications as
202 well as other emerging artificial-intelligence technologies used for analytics, monitoring,
203 or automation; and

204 (3) high growth in artificial intelligence use;

205 c. a review of strategies to reduce information technology and artificial-
206 intelligence-related environmental impacts, including, but not limited to:

207 (1) procurement of lower-emission or renewable-powered cloud services;

208 (2) efficiency standards for county information technology operations;

209 (3) water-efficient cooling technologies; and

210 (4) opportunities for artificial intelligence applications to reduce emissions in
211 other County operations; and

212 d. recommendations for how emissions associated with county information
213 technology operations should be explicitly identified and incorporated into future
214 community-scale and county operational greenhouse gas emissions inventories.

215 3. No later than March 31, 2027, the executive should file the report, and a
216 motion acknowledging receipt the report, in the manner described in section Q of this
217 motion.

218 4. Findings from the report should be incorporated into future greenhouse gas
219 inventories and used to inform development of actions and performance measures in
220 future strategic climate action plans.

221 K.1. Consistent with Strategic Climate Action Plan reporting of greenhouse gas
222 emissions, the executive should expand on reporting for the marine sector to explicitly
223 account for emissions associated with cruise ships docking at ports within King County,
224 in consultation with the Port of Seattle and the Puget Sound Maritime Air Forum. In
225 preparing future greenhouse gas inventories, the executive should:

- 226 a. review current best practices and methodologies for cruise ship emissions
227 accounting, including the most recent Puget Sound Maritime Air Emissions Inventory,
228 and including both direct emissions approaches and indirect emissions approaches;
- 229 b. document and compare results across multiple methodology approaches,
230 including rationale and data sources to provide context on the scale of emissions and the
231 effect of methodological choices; and
- 232 c. select the methodology, or combination of methodologies, that best reflects
233 current best practices and provides the most meaningful information for understanding
234 and addressing emissions associated with cruise ships docking at ports within King
235 County.

236 2. Findings from the analysis should be used to inform development of climate
237 actions and performance measures in future strategic climate action plans.

238 L. Biochar is a stable, carbon-rich material produced by heating organic biomass
239 in low oxygen that, when applied to soils, can durably sequester carbon, reduce nitrous
240 oxide emissions, and improve soil health. The executive should evaluate whether biochar

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241 should be incorporated as a greenhouse gas mitigation tool for King County and whether
242 a pilot program using biochar is feasible. Such a program could include converting a
243 portion of clean woody debris, invasive plant removals, and other suitable organics into
244 certified biochar for use in county restoration, agriculture, and resilience projects.

245 M. To further the reductions in vehicle miles traveled necessary to meet Strategic
246 Climate Action Plan goals, and to better connect Vashon-Maury Island residents with the
247 King County Water Taxi, the executive should explore transit options, including on-
248 demand or shuttle service, for Vashon-Maury Island, consistent with Metro transit
249 department service guidelines.

250 N. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan action Prep 21 (Facilitate and support
251 community-led strategies and initiatives to address extreme heat) includes the option of
252 developing a new grant program or modifying existing funding offerings to financially
253 support community-led heat solutions. Before initiating a new grant program, the
254 executive should transmit a proposed ordinance to establish grant processes and protocols
255 for the program in the manner described in section Q of this motion. Program design
256 should include rural communities and vulnerable populations such as seniors and people
257 with disabilities. The proposed grant process should involve recommendation of
258 individual grant awards by the executive and confirmation of the awards by the council.

259 O. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan action Prep 29 (Expand urban tree canopy
260 and partnerships across jurisdictions) includes updating King County's code for tree
261 removal and retention for urban unincorporated areas and rural towns. The two-year
262 update process described in the Tree Code Update Report attached to Motion 16667
263 should begin in 2026, and should also include establishment of a canopy coverage goal or

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goals for urban unincorporated areas and rural towns. A proposed ordinance containing updated tree regulations should be transmitted to the council no later than December 31, 2028. The regulations should be consistent with the canopy goals established through the update process. The proposed ordinance should be transmitted in the manner described in section Q of this motion, except that it should be transmitted to the lead staff for the local services and land use committee or its successor instead of the lead staff for the transportation, economy, and environment committee or its successor.

P.1. The King County-Cities Climate Collaboration, also known as K4C, is essential for coordination of climate efforts between King County and other governments within the county. It is the responsibility of all local governments to ensure that government policies at every level support bold, aggressive climate action. The executive should therefore take the following actions, and report on findings and recommendations for the actions in the 2027 report requested under section P.2. of this motion:

a. strongly advocate for all King County jurisdictions to join K4C, and should explore ways to incentivize and reward partner jurisdictions for joining K4C and carrying out bold climate actions as part of the K4C framework; and

b. look to models such as the affordable housing committee of the growth management planning council and waterworks grant program as ways to show regional leadership and work with partners for increased impact in climate action, including the work to explore jurisdictional GHG reduction targets and actions planned under 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan Action GHG 5.

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286 2.a. Consistent with Ordinance 17285, which authorized the Interlocal
287 Agreement for K4C, the executive is requested to coordinate with staff of the
288 transportation, economy and environment committee, or its successor, in developing the
289 annual work plans and budget for K4C under the interlocal agreement.

290 b. The executive is requested to submit by January 31, 2026, and every year
291 thereafter, the K4C annual work plan and budget to the council for acceptance by motion,
292 in the manner described in section Q of this motion.

293 c. The executive and representatives of K4C should plan to present to the
294 transportation, economy, and environment committee, or its successor, in conjunction
295 with committee action on the annual work plan and budget.

296 Q. The executive should electronically file the reports and legislation requested
297 by this motion with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and
298 provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead
299 staff for the transportation, economy, and environment committee, or its successor.

300 R. The executive should be prepared to provide quarterly briefings to the
301 transportation, economy, and environment committee on the state of climate action,
302 including, but not limited to, updates on any impacts federal policy is having on
303 the county's climate funding or overall climate goals.

304 S. The executive should explore the use of the county's existing bonding
305 authority to issue one or more bonds to finance renewable energy or climate resilience
306 projects that advance the goals of the Strategic Climate Action Plan. In structuring any
307 such an issuance, the executive should ensure that the proceeds are directed toward
308 projects that not only deliver measurable climate and environmental benefits, but that are

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309 also carried out under strong labor standards, including fair wages, safe working

310 conditions, and the use of skilled local workers.

311 T. Motion 14449, Section B, is superseded by section P of this motion.

Motion 16898 was introduced on 7/1/2025 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 10/21/2025, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Balducci, Barón, Dembowski, Dunn, Mosqueda, Perry,
Quinn, von Reichbauer and Zahilay

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Signed by:

Girmay Zahilay

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Girmay Zahilay, Chair

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

Melani Hay

8DE1BB375AD3422...

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: A. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan - Part 1 dated October 21 2025, A. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan - Part 2 dated October 21 2025, A. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan - Part 3 dated October 21 2025, A. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan - Part 4 dated October 21 2025, A. 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan - Part 5 dated October 21 2025

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Motion 16898 with Attachment A (Parts 1-5) Dated October 21, 2025

As the combined document of Motion 16898 and its Attachment A is too large to load into mkcclegisearch (Legistar) as one document, please click the link below to view Attachment A, in Parts 1 – 5 Dated October 21, 2025:

[Motion 16898 Attachment A \(Parts 1-5\) Dated October 21, 2025](#)

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Clerk of the Council at:

clerk@kingcounty.gov

Or

206-477-1020