



King County 2017-2018 Legislative Agenda



OUR TOP INITIATIVES



Protect public safety and justice

King County, like all counties, is forced to cut essential public services in order to close an ever-widening general fund structural gap between the cost to provide essential services and the revenue available to pay for them.

With 75% of King County's general fund paying for public safety and criminal justice programs, the structural gap is devastating our ability to ensure the health and safety of our residents. Local governments need local control to protect public safety and justice.

Replace the arbitrary 1% cap with a growth limit directly tied to inflation + population growth.



Stabilize local public health services

Funding changes and repeated budget reductions over the past 16 years have left the state and local public health systems struggling to meet their basic responsibility to provide essential public health services to all Washingtonians.

King County's ability to address latent tuberculosis in about 100,000 residents has been limited, the county has experienced record numbers of communicable disease outbreaks, and infectious disease programs have reduced outreach to people who may be infected with syphilis, hepatitis B, pertussis and gonorrhea.

Fund foundational public health services, make \$54 million down payment to improve statewide system efficiency and fill critical gaps at the local level; and fund critical state public health programs, \$6 million.

King County seeks to partner with Washington State in the following ways:

Homelessness & Affordable Housing

To comprehensively confront our homeless and opioid crisis in King County, we need a multi-faceted state partnership that both addresses the immediate emergency and the root causes.

- **Protect and expand existing funding for homelessness response.** Remove the 2018 sunset on the Document Recording Fee and increase funding to preserve rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing efforts.
- **Increase supply of affordable housing.** Invest \$200 million in the Housing Trust Fund to increase affordable housing supply. Provide cities and counties with additional tools to preserve and expand affordable housing.
- **Prevent opiate overdoses by expanding access to medication assisted treatment to transition people safely off heroin or prescription opiates.** Eliminate the cap on treatment slots, streamline siting of treatment facilities, and increase funding for distribution of medication.
- **Ensure homeless programs and services are data driven.** Reauthorize unaccompanied minors over the age of 13 to consent to share their information with HMIS, with appropriate protections.
- **Increase local communities' capacity to respond to mental health crisis.** Make targeted new investments in step-down programs and crisis diversion facilities to help reduce stays at state hospitals and prevent discharges into homelessness.

Local roads and infrastructure

As an economic hub, thousands of individuals and millions of dollars' worth of goods are transported daily via King County's infrastructure. The county seeks partnerships with the state to protect and develop infrastructure assets.

- Identify a suitable revenue source to address long term regional and local road needs and **address chronically underfunded county regional and local road projects.**
- **Invest at least \$5 million in the Eastside Rail Corridor** to create a seamless 22 mile pedestrian/bicycle trail.
- **Invest in the Floodplains by Design grant program** to provide funding for critical floodplain management projects.
- **Protect public health by funding an alternative wastewater system in Fall City.**
- **Keep people and goods moving during Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement** construction by extending \$15.3 million for King County Metro mitigation funding, consistent with the state's MOU.

Better communities

Provide fiscally responsible, quality-driven local and regional services that will create safe and sustainable communities, accessible justice and voting systems, and equitable opportunities for all residents.

- **Eliminate the non-supplant restriction**, allowing special levies to fund existing services and programs.
- Strengthen state laws, and provide support to organizations and programs, that **deter and counteract hate-motivated criminal activity.**
- Continue to ensure access to **affordable health care coverage** for low-income Washingtonians.
- **Improve voting access** and electoral processes to make government more representative of the public.
- **Enhance accountability** by expanding King County Library System Board of Trustees to seven members.
- Enable law enforcement agencies to build departments more reflective of their communities by **extending employment opportunities** to legal permanent residents.
- Facilitate the exchange of useful, **timely data on instances of safe transfer of newborns** and newborn abandonment to better programs and services.
- **Protect against lead poisoning** by screening children and testing drinking water systems.
- Ensure all workers can take care of themselves and their families by **adopting and funding a statewide paid family leave program.**