

**KING COUNTY
LAND CONSERVATION
INITIATIVE**



**KING COUNTY OPEN SPACE
EQUITY CABINET**

Recommendations to
King County Executive and Council



"While we live in a region with a strong history of protecting open spaces, not all of our communities have experienced the benefits of past investments. There are many neighborhoods in which the past history of inequities, discrimination, injustices, and limited regional investment is evident today and affects the daily life of the residents."

- Land Conservation Initiative
Advisory Group Final Report 2017

Preface

This report shares our recommendations related to parks and open space funding policies and programs. But our involvement and commitment over the last year, as members of the newly formed King County Open Space Equity Cabinet, is about much more than parks and open spaces. It is about improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Accessible parks, open space, and the quality of our neighborhoods' physical environment is but one determinant of that.

We care deeply about the livability of our communities, and all 14 determinants of equity that come together to create the conditions for a fair and just society where we and our neighbors are able to thrive.¹

In 2010 the King County Council passed landmark Equity and Social Justice legislation – Ordinance 16948 – that codified these determinants of equity; since then the County Executive and Council have developed and adopted the Equity & Social Justice Strategic Plan. This began the County's effort to invest upstream and tackle the systemic issues around race, governance, and empowering communities historically left behind from public infrastructure investments such as transportation, public health and safety, education, and investments in a community's physical environment such as parks and open spaces.

Similarly, the City of Seattle's Race & Social Justice Initiative, launched prior to 2010, seeks to eliminate racial disparities and achieve racial equity in the City of Seattle. This movement envisions community organizations, philanthropy, governments, and other institutions working together to end institutional racism.

Ten years later, progress is being made, but there are miles to go. Disparities still exist, and without change at the program and implementation levels these disparities will persist and compound. We know that to affect change we must work together across sectors, which is why this work with our government partners to make upstream investments in our communities is critical. We are confident that our close coordination and collaboration with County staff and the Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) Advisory Committee is just the beginning of what we hope will be a sustained effort to eliminate open space disparity gaps for communities within King County.

We are 21 residents representing 12 different community-based organizations located throughout King County. Below we share a bit of our individual stories and why we are committed to this particular cause – a cause to authentically embed an equity-based approach into how the region invests in its open space infrastructure to redress the disparities in access

¹ The Determinants of Equity are defined in King County Ordinance 16948 as: the social, economic, geographic, political and physical environment conditions in which people in our county are born, grow, live, work and age that lead to the creation of a fair and just society.

There are 14 Determinants of Equity defined in Ordinance 16948; they can be found at the following link: <https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/OldOrdsMotions/Ordinance%2016948.pdf>

to parks and open spaces, and thus allow our communities to share in the health and wellbeing benefits these open spaces provide.

In the face of future climate uncertainty, it is our communities that are the most vulnerable and will bear the brunt of climate change in our region. The recent United Nations International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2018 report demonstrates how little time we have to make big changes. Over the next decade we need to build resilience into the physical environment of our communities. Adding parks and green spaces where there are none is an important way to do that.

We envision open space that provides accessible green spaces in dense urban environments near the multifamily apartments and residences where we live; it is as much about this as it is about rural forest and farmland protection. These urban green spaces provide us a place to gather, a place of respite, land upon which air and surface water pollutants are filtered, and land upon which trees and green space mitigate the urban heat island effect – a collective natural backyard for those of us not fortunate enough to have one, like the other three-quarters of King County residents.² Having these accessible green spaces will improve our physical, emotional, and community health; and they are important to the resiliency of our neighborhoods given the changing climate and a future of extreme weather events.

In the work to make these open space infrastructure investments, it is our collective responsibility to not inadvertently induce the displacement of low-income residents living in these areas. We know that prioritizing the health and resiliency of our communities means making smart open space investments paired with affordable housing policies and strategies. This will require linking community leadership with land use policies and open space investments – both in cities and the County’s unincorporated urban areas. This report further explores this dynamic, providing recommended actions going forward that consider housing affordability alongside open space and public health. These actions must come in parallel with prioritization of open space investments where needed the most.

² One quarter of King County’s residents, roughly 500,000 people, do not live within ready access to a publicly owned park, green space, or trail. Most of these residents live in communities with the greatest and most acute needs.

MEMBERS OF THE KING COUNTY OPEN SPACE EQUITY CABINET

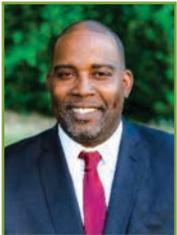
We wish to thank the King County Executive, the Land Conservation Initiative Advisory Group, the CFT Advisory Committee, and King County staff for the opportunity to serve our communities through equitable development and distribution of open space.

We dedicate this report to the residents of King County.



The Open Space Equity Cabinet truly embodies the spirit of community. Together, we have developed a path forward to begin to address critical open space needs and health disparities within our communities. These Open Space investments will help to build resiliency in the face of climate change and environmental injustice.

- Lylianna Allala, Co-Chair of the King County Open Space Equity Cabinet



I have committed myself to work on projects that generate social change. The Open Space Equity cabinet work is building a formula for transformational change across communities in King County that gets us closer to living up to our region's legacy of seven generations of sustainability.

- De'Sean Quinn, Co-Chair of the King County Open Space Equity Cabinet



Too often, those who do not have the ability to volunteer or take time out from work or family, are disengaged from policy and resource decisions. Access to relevant open space is a key to supporting healthy people and communities. The Open Space Equity Cabinet will create more inclusive engagement through changes in policy which will result in more equitable investment in underserved parts of King County.

- Tony To, Executive Director, HomeSight



This report builds on the distinct ability of communities of color to articulate how to build healthy communities through the notion of "open space." The work of this Cabinet is another way to teach our institutions how we are necessary and relevant voices if we truly seek inclusion of others. Utilize this report as an opportunity to think bold, act respectfully and learn from the wisdom of communities.

- Sili Savusa, Executive Director, White Center Community Development Association



"We must protect the forests for our children, grandchildren and children yet to be born. We must protect the forests for those who can't speak for themselves such as the birds, animals, fish and trees."

- Qwatsinas (Hereditary Chief Edward Moody), Nuxalk Nation

- Niesha Fort-Brooks, Global To Local & member of the King County Conservation Futures Advisory Committee



Access to green, open, clean spaces has traditionally been linked to wealthier neighborhoods leaving some communities behind with very limited investment. These communities have historically experienced environmental threats living in unhealthy conditions. As a member of the Open Space Equity Cabinet I am very proud King County has established a space for community voice to affect actions and establish new policies to make a change where needed the most.

- Paulina Lopez, Executive Director Duwamish River Clean-Up Coalition and resident of South Park



Shamsa founded Living Well Kent Collaborative in 2014. She is a consultant who works with nonprofits to build collaborative, adaptive, innovative and sustainable partnerships. She has a master's degree in organizational systems in leadership from Saybrook University Leadership Institute of Seattle and a bachelor's in human resources from Evergreen State College.

- Shamsa Issak, Executive Director, Living Well Kent



Gabriela Quintana is a consultant working on public policy issues, race and equity structures an organization culture and change. On a personal level, Gabriela is a busy mom to a seven year old boy, a resident of Tukwila Washington and an avid photographer.

- Gabriela Quintana



My mission has been to support the healing of Native people and our communities. I have witnessed how open space feeds the soul and heals the heart of those who have experienced great trauma in their lives. I am honored to help make King County a more equitable place to live, and I appreciate being able to help move the King County Equity & Social Justice Strategic Plan forward through the Land Conservation Initiative

- Jeff Smith, United Indians of All Tribes Foundation representative & Executive Director, Nakani Native Program



The efforts of the Equity Cabinet to ensure that King County Open Space be inclusive of those most impacted because of historical racism, I found to be impressive and comprehensive. My experience as an active member of the Equity Cabinet has been and continues to be rewarding and important work to address disparities and make real change in policies towards positive outcomes.

**- Ellany Kayce, Board Chair, Nakani Native Program
(Enrolled Tlingit Nation/Raven-Frog)**



It has been an honor to serve our communities through working with the Open Space Equity Cabinet. As our beautiful region continues to expand human populations, it is vital that we advance more equitable access to the green spaces that enrich our wellbeing in myriad ways.

- Susan Balbas, Executive Director, Na'ah Illahee Fund



Environmental equity and sustainability should go hand-in-hand when we define environmentally sustainable society.

- Allan Kafley, Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS)



I have been a volunteer since 2013 for recycling programs in King County, as well as with Para Los Ninos in Burien. I am proud to be a member of the Open Space Equity Cabinet and its great leaders working to achieve positive change to our environment, our health, and our community.

- Patricia Palomino, Para Los Ninos Leadership Program



As a community leader I am very happy and proud to advocate for more parks and green spaces for the residents of King County

- Azucena Aguado Mtz de Muñoz, Para Los Ninos Leadership Program



Serving and assisting change in my community is my passion. Our communities deserve to have easy access to open and free spaces for families and friends to gather.

- Veronica Huerta, Para Los Ninos Community Organizer and Leadership Academy



**Kim Powe,
Puget Sound Sage**



**Lupita Torrez,
Executive Director
Para Los Ninos**



**Mozart Guerrier,
Executive Director 21 Progress**



Leda Chahim



**Sandra Simarra,
Para Los Ninos
Leadership Academy**

**OTHER MEMBER (not pictured)
Hoda Abdullah, Living Well Kent**



With the Open Space Equity Cabinet, King County has formally acknowledged that communities know best what they need most. It has been a privilege to help the Cabinet find innovative ways to ensure that the benefits of nature are shared by everyone living in King County.

- Sean M Watts, SM Watts Consulting, LLC, consultant to the Open Space Equity Cabinet

**For more information:
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“Change occurs at the speed of trust”

- *Ellany Kayce, member of the Open Space Equity Cabinet*

I. Introduction & Background

The Open Space Equity Cabinet was formed in 2018 following final recommendations from the King County Land Conservation Initiative (LCI) Advisory Group. The LCI is a vision and plan to protect 65,000 acres of the County's remaining high conservation value lands within the next 30 years, and to ensure access and proximity to green space for all King County residents.

In its final report to the King County Council, the LCI Advisory Group stated unequivocally that "While we live in a region with a strong history of protecting open spaces, not all of our communities have experienced the benefits of past investments. There are many neighborhoods in which the past history of inequities, discrimination, injustices, and limited regional investment is evident today and affects the daily life of the residents."

The LCI Advisory Group had four specific recommendations for the County to take action on as it works to implement the early stages of the LCI:

- Equity must be an over-arching theme across the entire Initiative. Land protection is a region-wide benefit; the County and cities must ensure these benefits accrue to all residents.
- Set a base level of investment in open space equity by dedicating at least \$160 million specific to the task of eliminating disparities in access to public open spaces and trails in communities with the greatest and most acute needs.³ This dedicated funding is in addition to all the rest of the funding raised in the Initiative for which these priority equity areas are equally eligible.
- Advance Open Space Equity work in 2018 and 2019 to engage cities and communities about the opportunities through the LCI, and to establish community readiness in two or three initial priority equity areas.
- Establish an Open Space Equity Cabinet to help set policy, and oversee and monitor progress towards the addition of green spaces in priority equity areas.

One quarter of King County's residents, roughly 500,000 people, do not live within ready access to a publicly owned park, green space, or trail.⁴ Most of these residents live in communities

³ \$160 million is based on property values, land appreciation, and inflation for acquisitions of land to create new parks in communities across King County that lack open spaces and parks as shown on the map on page 4, and was determined to be the base-level amount needed for land acquisition to eliminate these disparities.

⁴ The Trust for Public Land, through its extensive work nationally over many years, identifies open space accessibility in urban areas as a park or green space that is within a 10 minute walk of where people live. Farther than this the frequency of use significantly drops off, and so do the social and health benefits that accompany readily accessible open space.

with the greatest and most acute needs. That is to say, many of these communities have the region’s lowest household incomes, the greatest health needs, and have historically lacked public infrastructure investments. We refer to these communities in this report as “low income and historically underserved communities.”⁵

Residents of these communities have had no choice but to live in these locations for a myriad of reasons including lower housing costs, historic racially restrictive covenants and red-lining.⁶ This geographic and demographic reality has not occurred by accident. Decades of inequities and injustice has seen these communities receive limited investments in public infrastructure. This, in turn, has deprived residents who live in these communities of the opportunities for advancement enjoyed by wealthier and less racially diverse communities.

The map on page 4 illustrates the geographic distribution of communities where incomes are lowest, and health needs the greatest, and where there is no easy access to parks and open space. This map is a guide to illustrate the scale and geography of the problem. Because of the inherent limitations of data at the census tract level, there are many neighborhoods in great need that do not appear on the map that simultaneously lack open space infrastructure. We have provided additional criteria in Section IV to help identify additional communities that should be prioritized for open space infrastructure investments.

Described below are just a few examples of low income and historically underserved communities that lack access to parks and open spaces:

- The Riverton and McMicken Heights neighborhoods in the Cities of SeaTac and Tukwila. These two communities have few parks, and what they do have provides very limited accessibility for residents. People living in these communities are in the lowest one-

⁵ In this report, reference to “low income and historically underserved communities” implies that communities of color – i.e. African American, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, immigrant and refugees – relative to communities that are predominantly white, have experienced and still do experience a lack public infrastructure investments in their neighborhoods such as transit, schools, parks, and health institutions. Due to the historic and persistent nature of structural racism, communities of color tend to be low income. However, not all low income communities are communities of color, and it is important not to conflate the two and perpetuate false narratives.

⁶ Starting in the 1920’s, covenants in force throughout the region allowed only white people to own property in most neighborhoods throughout Seattle. The covenants were outlawed in the 1960’s, but their history contributes to the geographic and demographic reality still experienced today by low income and historically underserved communities across the region. Below are research and articles on this issue.

University Washington -The Seattle Civil Rights & Labor Project:

<http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/segregated.htm>

Seattle Times January 2019: <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/the-deed-to-your-house-may-contain-racist-covenants-heres-how-to-fix-it/>

Seattle University Law Review:

<https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1917&context=sulr>

third of household income county-wide, and experience higher than normal levels of asthma and lower life expectancies. Being located under the airport flight path also contributes to elevated noise and air pollution. Despite a clear need for parks and open space, no CFT funds have been invested in these locations.

- The East Hill neighborhood in the City of Kent. East Hill is highly industrial, but due to displacement from Seattle and parts of Tukwila, it is receiving a large influx of people moving in because of lower housing costs. Residents of this neighborhood similarly are low income, many are immigrants, and all experience a lack of accessible open space. Sufficient park access will be increasingly important in anticipation of future development as density and number of people living in East Hill increases over time.
- The Lake City Core/Little Brook and South Park neighborhoods in the City of Seattle. These neighborhoods do not appear on the map because of census tract data limitations and the existence of a limited amount of open space. But within these communities live many low income and disenfranchised residents, most of whom are people of color and many of whom are immigrants. In the case of South Park, the community is surrounded by multiple highways, has some of the County's worst air, soil, and water pollution; and has a long history of discrimination and neglect. Both neighborhoods are seeing rapid development, and both have a small amount of open space, but not sufficient for their growing populations.

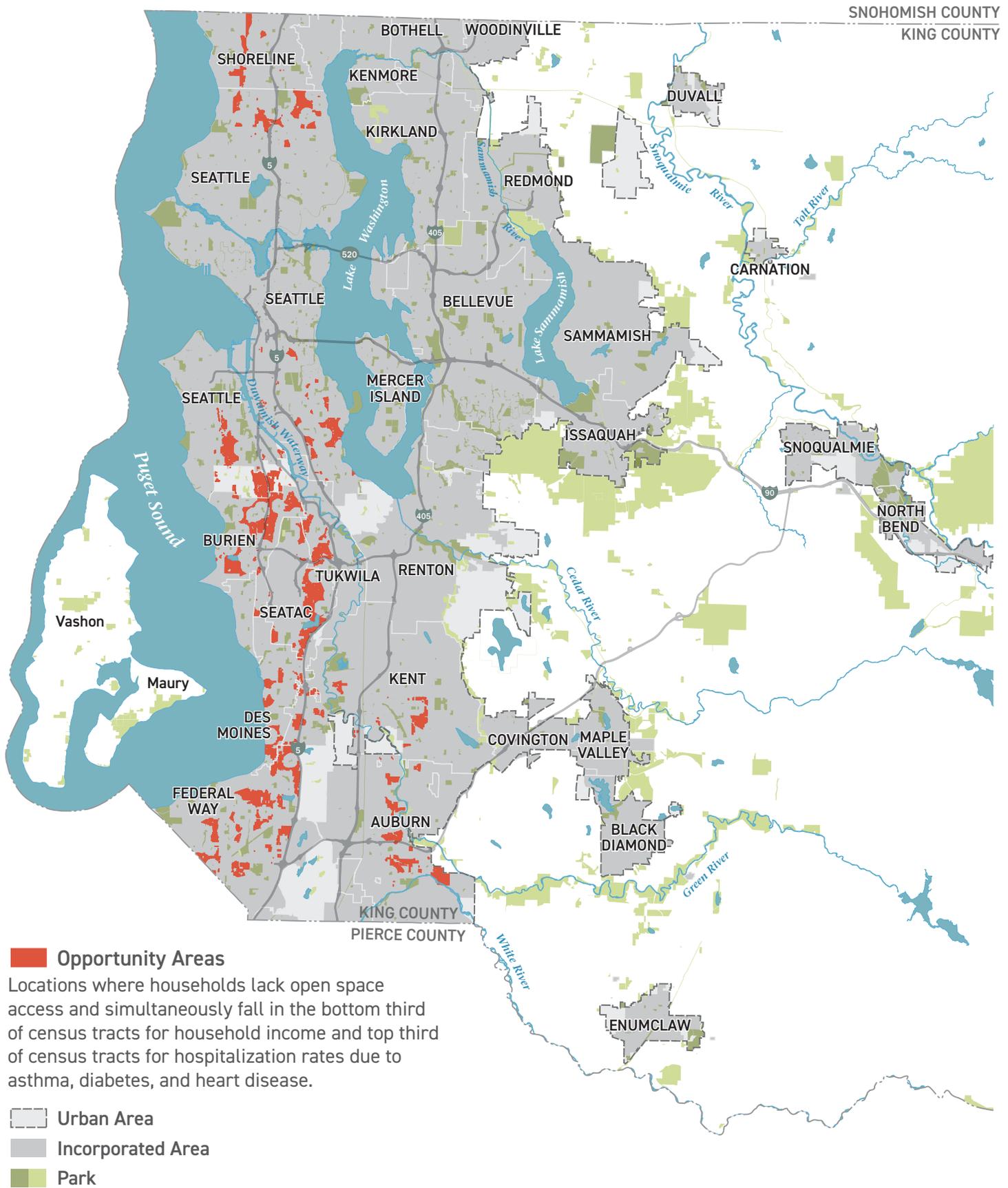
The LCI Advisory Group invested extensive time to understand the emerging and best practices surrounding the health and social benefits of open space in urban areas with green space deficits. As such, a central goal of the LCI is to eliminate these disparities in open space resources over the next 30 years.

Executive Constantine convened the Open Space Equity Cabinet, based on the LCI Advisory Group's recommendation, to begin the work to respond to this issue. In addition the Executive transmitted, and the King County Council passed legislation in summer of 2018 that took a first step to more fully integrate equity and social justice into how the region makes its future open space infrastructure investments.

This legislation – Ordinance 18774 – removed the 50% local funding match for cities, the County, and eligible non-profits to access the County's Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) levy funds for open space land acquisitions in areas that meet equity and social justice criteria. CFT is one of the region's main open space and park funding sources.⁷

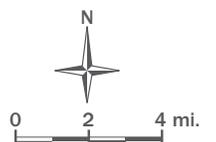
⁷ CFT is a property tax levied by the County and authorized by the State Legislature. The Levy rate cannot exceed 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. CFT funds can only be used for acquisition of land for the protection and creation of open space as defined by RCW 84.34.

OPEN SPACE INEQUITIES IN KING COUNTY



Note: "Lack of open space access" is defined as households that are greater than a quarter mile distance from a publicly-owned and accessible park, greenspace or trail.

The use of the information in this map is subject to the terms and conditions found at: www.kingcounty.gov/services/gis/Maps/terms-of-use.aspx. Your access and use is conditioned on your acceptance of these terms and conditions. KCIT, DCE 1901_9444w_lci_equity_rpt_map.ai



The match requirement was considered a barrier for certain jurisdictions without the local funding capacity to use CFT funds for open space investments. By removing the funding match for projects in these areas the goal is to incentivize cities, the County, and partners to use CFT funds to eliminate disparities in access to open spaces and parks in communities with the greatest needs.

Through the LCI the County is increasing the amount of CFT funds available to accelerate the pace of open space protection and creation.⁸ The County Council, in its adopted 2019 budget, authorized up to \$40 million in CFT funds for open space projects this year; this ranges between 3-4 times greater than historical annual amounts available to cities and the County. It is an important time to address the issues captured in this report, and to have a definitive action plan with new policy approaches so increased amounts of CFT funds can be deployed to eliminate disparities in access to open spaces.

As mentioned above, \$160 million was identified by the LCI Advisory Group as a base level of investment over 30 years to begin to eliminate the disparities in access to open space in communities shown in the map on page 4. This funding amount is a minimum amount of what will be needed to acquire property to create new parks in these locations; it includes estimates for land appreciation and inflation over a 30 year time period of acquiring properties to create new parks.

It is important to note that this \$160 million over 30 years does not include the funding needed to make the necessary capital improvements on these newly acquired lands to make them safe, usable, and culturally appropriate public parks. More funding will be needed over the next 30 years for these important capital investments, as well as park programming, and the capacity building needed to enable communities to apply for land acquisition funds. And, the funding will need to come from sources other than CFT, as CFT can only be used for the acquisition of land or property. Such additional sources could include the King County Parks levy as well as other cities' local parks and open space levies, state and local grants, and potential public/private partnerships.

Future CFT and Parks levy investments that improve access to green space and provide community gathering opportunities in dense urban environments is not only an important equity strategy, it is also an effective public health strategy. There is a growing body of research and evidence that correlates improved physical and mental health outcomes with ready access to nature and open spaces that foster stronger community connection and social cohesion.⁹ For example, when open space is frequented regularly it is shown to reduce blood pressure and the risk of cardiovascular disease. There is a growing movement in the medical community to

⁸ The 2018 LCI legislation – Ordinance 18774 - passed by the King County Council increased the bonding capacity of CFT from 50% to 80%. This allows the County to use bond financing to pull forward CFT funds for allocation to open space projects across King County and its cities. Historic annual CFT allocations were \$11-\$12 million; the new bond financing will provide for up to \$40 million in CFT funds that can be allocated in 2019.

⁹ Frumkin, Howard, et al; Nature Contact and Human Health: A Research Agenda. 2016

start “prescribing” regular and frequent visits to parks. Called “ParkScriptions” doctors are beginning to prescribe weekly visits to neighborhood parks to increase physical activity and reduce stress. But this will only have the intended health benefits if parks are close to where people live.

The Open Space Equity Cabinet met 13 times throughout 2018 and into 2019. Its work has been concentrated on developing a set of specific recommendations to redress historic disparities in access to, and the health benefits of, open space in communities with the greatest and most acute needs. The recommendations in this report focus mostly on CFT, and to a lesser extent the renewal of the King County Parks levy in 2019. They are considered a 2nd step the County can take to authentically integrate equity and social justice into the LCI and the region’s future open space investments; the 1st step occurred with passage of legislation in summer of 2018, as mentioned above. In developing our report and recommendations, the Open Space Equity Cabinet members coordinated and collaborated closely with County staff and the CFT Advisory Committee.

The intention is to affect change such that public open space funds are deployed in a targeted manner to ensure open space resources can be enjoyed by those lacking it and who need it the most.

This effort aligns with and seeks to manifests the outcomes envisioned in the 2010 King County Council Equity and Social Justice Ordinance 16948, and the 2016 King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan.

II. Objectives of the Open Space Equity Cabinet

The Open Space Equity Cabinet identified four objectives for its efforts in 2018 to begin this work in earnest. These four objectives are:

1. Define what successful open space equity outcomes look like in the near -, medium -, and long-term;
2. Increase representation of residents from low income and historically underserved communities on the CFT Advisory Committee to achieve equitable representation on the Committee, and help the Committee develop an equity and social justice framework;
3. Recommend revisions to Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) policies, code, and criteria to guide allocation of resources and funding decisions for open space equity;

4. Develop recommendations on community engagement processes and approaches the County, Equity Cabinet membership, and CFT Advisory Committee can deploy to catalyze actions by cities/communities/non-profits to develop and submit applications to the CFT Committee.

The Equity Cabinet’s outcomes for Objectives #1 and #2 are described below, Objective #3 is described in Part III and IV of this report, and Objective #4 is described in Part V.

Objective #1: defined near-, medium-, and long-term outcomes for open space equity

Near Term Outcomes (1-2 years; 2018 - 2019):

- ✓ 1-2 members of the Open Space Equity Cabinet or residents from low income and historically underserved communities nominated and appointed to the 16 member CFT Advisory Committee;¹⁰
- ✓ CFT Advisory Committee members receive ESJ training;¹¹
- ✓ Revisions to CFT code and policies developed;¹²
- ✓ Action plan developed for genuine community engagement to notify the public and community based organizations (CBOs) about open space funding resources and opportunities;¹³
- Revisions to CFT code and policies adopted by County leadership;
- CFT Committee develops an equity and social justice framework for its processes and decisions;
- Implementation of phase I of the community engagement action plan for CFT funds;¹⁴
- 2-3 projects funded by CFT in low income and historically underserved communities;
- Capacity building equity grant program for community-based organizations in low income and historically underserved communities to advance open space infrastructure included into the 2019 ballot renewal of the 2020-2025 King County Parks levy.

Medium Term Outcomes (3-5 years; 2020 - 2022):

1. Another 2-3 residents from low income and historically underserved communities nominated and appointed to the 16 member CFT Advisory Committee;

¹⁰ Action on this near term objective has been achieved; see narrative on the following page under Objective #2.

¹¹ The CFT Committee has been proactive and begun work on this; at its first meeting in 2019 members received a briefing and overview of Equity & Social Justice in King County.

¹² Action on this near term objective has been achieved; see Section III and Appendix A of this report.

¹³ Action on this near term objective has been achieved; see Section V and Appendix D of this report.

¹⁴ King County Department of Natural Resources & Parks has begun to implement early phase I actions recommended by the Open Space Equity Cabinet for the 2019 CFT grant round that began in January 2019, as described in Appendix D.

2. Implementation of phase II of the community engagement action plan for CFT funds where the County is working with and through community-based organizations;
3. Implementation of an open space equity capacity building grant program via the 2020-2025 Parks levy that works with and through community-based organizations;
4. 6 – 8 projects funded by CFT in low income and historically underserved communities;
5. Open space investments being paired with housing policies to avoid and minimize displacement;
6. Foster mutually accountable partnership structures between community-based organizations and existing non-profit nature conservancy organizations that are eligible to receive CFT funds under RCW 84.34;
7. Explore the creation of new nonprofit organization(s) that would be eligible under RCW 84.34 to receive CFT funds, such as a community land conservancy that is built by and for members of low income and historically underserved communities.

Long Term Outcomes (6-10 years; 2023 - 2027)

1. Broad representation of residents from low income and historically underserved communities on the 16 member CFT Advisory Committee;
2. On-going and institutionalized authentic engagement with CBOs and members of low income and historically underserved communities around the opportunities for open space funding;
3. One third to one half of King County’s low income and historically underserved communities that currently lack open space amenities have received open space funds to provide residents with new green spaces or improvements to existing green spaces, and there is an established pathway to eliminate all such disparities in King County no later than 2040, and ideally much sooner.
4. Evaluate the need, and build a coalition to consider, amending RCW 84.34 to broaden the organizations that can receive CFT funds beyond eligible nature conservancy corporation or association non-profit organizations and historic preservation corporation non-profit organizations. Organizations to consider making eligible include community-based organizations that are fit and capable of owning and maintaining land for public purpose overtime.

Objective #2: Increase representation of residents from low income and historically underserved communities on the CFT Advisory Committee to achieve equitable representation on the Committee, and help the Committee develop an equity and social justice framework

King County, cities, and community groups can apply every year for conservation futures grant dollars to acquire open space and green space. The CFT Advisory Committee reviews the grant

applications that are received for consistency with CFT requirements and makes funding recommendations to the County Executive and County Council each year for open space projects across the County seeking CFT funds and King County Parks levy funds. It is a 16 member committee, with each seat nominated by either the County Executive or members of the County Council.¹⁵ Members serve 4 year terms. As seats open up, it is the goal of the Open Space Equity Cabinet to recommend to the Council and Executive potential candidates to fill these seats.

A function of the Open Space Equity Cabinet is to serve as a 'bridge' to the CFT Advisory Committee – that is, to work with the Committee around the issues and decisions regarding equity and open space funding allocations. Currently there is a lack of representation from low income and historically underserved communities on the CFT Committee. As such, it is equally important for the Open Space Equity Cabinet to work to increase membership on the Committee to represent these communities. While doing so, it is important to not conflate communities of color with low income communities. Not all low income communities are comprised of people of color and it is important to not perpetuate false narratives.

In the future it is possible that the Open Space Equity Cabinet may no longer be needed because: (1) the CFT Committee has sufficient representation from low income and historically underserved communities, and (2) the County, CFT Committee, and cities have established norms and practices that institutionalize equity into how open space funding resources are allocated.

In 2018 the Open Space Equity Cabinet recommended its member Niesha Fort-Brooks for the CFT Advisory Committee Executive at-large position. Niesha was nominated and appointed and will be seated on the CFT Committee in 2019. In addition, in 2018 Tiffany Chan, while not on the Equity Cabinet, was nominated and appointed to the CFT Committee for the Council at-large position. Tiffany is a graduate of Puget Sound Sage's leadership program; Puget Sound Sage is represented on the Equity Cabinet.

With the nomination and seating of these two women to the CFT Advisory Committee, progress is being made on Objective #2. As described above in the definition of a successful medium term outcome, the Equity Cabinet will be working to recommend for nomination more people of color in the coming years to increase representation from low income and historically underserved communities on the CFT Advisory Committee.

Ensuring racial and socio-economic diversity on the CFT Advisory Committee is a priority. However, it is equally important to ensure that the CFT Committee as a whole, regardless of its demographic composition, works to develop an understanding of equity and social justice principles and framework. This ongoing work will guide actions to result in more equitable outcomes. Dismantling institutional and systemic inequities and barriers to access is everyone's

¹⁵ The 16 members of the CFT Advisory Committee are nominated as follows: 9 by council district, 4 at-large council appointments, 3 County Executive appointments.

responsibility. This responsibility should not be placed solely on those who are disparately impacted by the systemic and institutional inequities.

With this in mind, the Open Space Equity Cabinet recommends the CFT Advisory Committee members receive King County’s Equity and Social Justice training. We are encouraged by the CFT Advisory Committee’s early and proactive steps on this, as they have already taken action in their first meeting of 2019 to receive a briefing and overview of equity and social justice in King County. It is important the CFT Committee continue to educate itself on equity and social justice dynamics in King County, and doing so, develop a framework through which CFT Committee members implement the recommendations included in this report, and deliberate on their annual recommendations for CFT funding allocations to projects.

III. Recommendations and Revisions to Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) levy policy and code

The Open Space Equity Cabinet did extensive work reviewing, and then developing proposed revisions to CFT in Chapter 26.12 of the King County Code (KCC). These revisions are provided in strike-through and underline format in Appendix A of this report.

CFT was originally codified into KCC in 1982, following authorization by the State legislature. CFT funds are limited in scope of use and levy amount based on RCW 84.34.¹⁶ CFT code has been amended periodically since then and done so in a piece-meal fashion over many years. Until now it has not had a comprehensive review from an equity and social justice perspective.

Much has transpired and progressed in King County government in regards to equity since 1982, including – and most notably- King County Council’s passage of Ordinance 16948 in 2010, and the Council’s adoption of the King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan in 2016.

KCC 26.12 was most recently amended by the County Council through Ordinance 18774 passed in July of 2018 as a first step to launch the Land Conservation Initiative. This amendment was narrowly focused to implement two LCI Advisory Group recommendations: (1) remove the 50% local funding match requirement for acquisition projects in areas that meet equity criteria, and (2) increase the debt financing capacity of CFT. Specifically, Ordinance 18774 increased CFT

¹⁶ CFT funds can only be used for acquisition of land that meets criteria for “open space” as defined in RCW 84.34.020. The 2001 King County Motion 11144 further limits uses on lands acquired with CFT funds to “low impact, passive-use recreation.” The Motion prohibits use of CFT funds for lands that provide uses or facilities that support organized/structured athletic activities such as ballfields, courts, and gyms, and prohibits motorized uses. The Motion also limits the amount of impervious surface to no more than 15% of total property area acquired with CFT funds. Per RCW 84.34 the County’s levy rate for CFT cannot exceed 6.25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

debt capacity from 50% to 80% to bring forward in time more CFT funds to accelerate the pace of open space protection.

These two changes represent significant progress, and a key first step to begin to address the disparities communities experience in regards to accessible open space, parks, and trails. In its review of current CFT code the Open Space Equity Cabinet found that a second step is also needed to make meaningful forward progress on the LCI goal of eliminating disparities in access to open space resources over the next 30 years. The Open Space Equity Cabinet recommends King County bring the rules governing its open space funding up to date in a comprehensive and meaningful way, especially given the increased amount of CFT now available through the LCI.

Included in Appendix A is the Open Space Equity Cabinet’s recommendation on specific code changes. We developed these recommended code changes after careful consideration and thorough review, including coordination with members of the CFT Committee. The reader will see a broad set of changes to specifically and explicitly include equity and social justice in KCC 26.12. Suggested revisions include specific goal statements, language that more accurately reflects the equity and social justice narrative, and more defined parameters on how proposed projects may be eligible to receive match-free CFT funds that includes demonstrated community engagement.

In addition to these code revisions, the Equity Cabinet has proposed additions to King County Council Motion 11144 which more specifically describes the criteria upon which the CFT Advisory Committee makes its funding recommendations. The proposed additions to Motion 11144 are included in Appendix B. These additions reflect the changes proposed for KCC 26.12, and include an “opportunity area” category which would be for land acquisitions that create open space resources in communities with the greatest and most acute needs that simultaneously lack open space resources.

IV. Criteria and Metrics to Guide CFT Advisory Committee Recommendations for Match-Free Funding

Recently revised CFT code allows eligible open space acquisition projects located within defined “Equity Areas” to receive CFT funds match-free – that is, CFT can fund 100% of the land acquisition costs. As such, project applicants need not provide the standard 50% local funding match.

Equity Areas are defined in CFT code using three specific criteria. A project must be located in an area that meets all three of these following “specified criteria”: (1) census tract in which the median household income is in the lowest one-third for median household income for census tracts in King County; (2) census tract in which hospitalization rates for asthma, diabetes, and

heart disease are in the highest one-third for census tracts in King County; and (3) for urban areas, do not have publicly owned and accessible open space within one-quarter mile of residences.

In addition, current CFT code acknowledges that proposed projects in certain locations may not fit simultaneously into all the three specified criteria mentioned above, yet have needs such that they should be eligible for match-free CFT funding. This could be for a variety of reasons, including some limitations that stem from using census tract level data, which because of its gross scale can sometimes mask significant inequities within a sub area of a census tract. Specifically the code allows for the match waiver in areas “where project proponents can demonstrate, and the CFT Committee determines, that residents living in the area experience disproportionately limited access to public open spaces as well as demonstrated hardships such as, but not limited to, chronic low incomes, persistent poor health, or high rates of utilization of free and reduced prices school meals.”

As shown in our recommended revisions to CFT code in Appendix A, the Open Space Equity Cabinet recommends using the term “Opportunity Area” to define where match-free CFT funds should be deployed, instead of “Equity Area.” We feel our communities are ‘opportunities’ for investment. They are areas of King County that have historically been under-invested with open space resources. As such they are areas of ‘opportunity.’

We agree that the three specific criteria in current code, and mentioned above, are a good initial screen to define opportunity areas. We also agree with the direction the County took in adding flexibility in the code language allowing communities the opportunity to make a case for the match waiver if they don’t neatly fit all three specified criteria.

Our work focused on identifying additional important criteria to help communities, and future CFT applicants, make the case that their project lies within eligible “Opportunity Areas” if they do not strictly meet the three specific criteria mentioned above. We identified and ranked 15 important metrics based on our lived experiences. We propose that these new metrics are in addition to, not replacements for what is currently in code.

We believe these metrics will be important to both applicants and the County to help determine where the County allocates unmatched CFT funds to create new open spaces. The CFT Committee should consider these metrics as it makes its project funding recommendations for projects seeking match-free eligibility for open space equity.

Based on the availability and geographic scale of data, we organized these 15 additional metrics into category 1 and category 2 metrics. Category 1 includes eight metrics for which there is readily available, and regularly updated, data at meaningful geographic scales. The data results for these category 1 metrics can and should be provided by the County as an output report to CFT applicants and the CFT Committee.

Category 1 Metrics:

1. Percent of households at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
2. Utilization rate of free and reduced price school meals
3. Average life expectancy
4. Percent persons of color
5. Linguistic Isolation – i.e. Percent limited English speaking households
6. Percent population under the age of five
7. Park density per capita (i.e. acreage public open space / # of people in census tract)
8. Percent tree canopy

Category 2 includes metrics that are also important, but the data for these metrics is not regularly available nor is it regularly updated as category 1 data. The list of category 2 metrics, and links to their respective data sources, should be offered to prospective CFT applicants in the application notice and the data report. This will allow project applicants to readily use these category 2 criteria and their respective data sources to demonstrate that their project is in an eligible Opportunity Area, and thus should be eligible for match-free CFT funds.

Category 2 Metrics:

1. School health data
2. Exposure to pollutants
3. Renter density and housing type (i.e. density of rental apartments)
4. Social Vulnerability Index score based on Center for Disease Control (CDC) data
5. Community crime statistics
6. Community health data based on King County Public Health Best Start for Kids data
7. Communities Count – social & health indicator data

We understand DNRP staff intend to provide any requesting CFT applicant with available data related to the metrics above in order to help applicants determine if it makes sense to pursue match waiver. We support this action. Appendix C is an example of the data report we understand the County intends to make available to CFT applicants and the CFT committee; it includes the data results for the three specified criteria, as well as the additional category 1 and category 2 criteria, based on the location of a property that is proposed for acquisition as open space. This data report will paint the picture of eligibility for match-free CFT funding as an “Opportunity Area” project, and should convey to the CFT Committee whether a project will genuinely eliminate disparities in access to open space in communities that need it the most.

It is important to note that the data behind the Category 1 and 2 criteria is always being improved upon and being made more accessible. What is only available county wide or at the

school district level today may be available at the census tract or block level next year. Therefore, the County should evaluate these criteria, and new ones, on an on-going basis and adjust based on new data availability and applicability to open space investments and allocation of CFT funds.

In addition to these Category #1 and #2 metrics, it is equally important that applicants seeking Opportunity Area eligibility, and thus match-free CFT funds, demonstrate genuine community engagement and collaboration with community-based organizations and/or members of the community. Partnerships between CFT applicants and local community-based organizations should be strongly encouraged. At minimum applicants should provide at least two letters of support and a description of community outreach held to-date.

The County and the CFT Advisory Committee should also consider requiring non-profit organizations that apply for match-free CFT funds, which are also currently eligible to receive CFT funds under RCW 84.34, to have included in their missions and strategic plans a commitment to equity and community engagement.

It is critical that communities help drive where and how open space funds are used. The County's CFT application process and the CFT Advisory Committee's funding allocation decisions need to ensure genuine community engagement has and will take place.

V. Community Engagement Protocol & Practices for CFT Funding

King County, all its 39 cities, as well as community groups, community members, and any non-profit organization can apply for CFT funds. However, RCW 84.34.210 requires that County CFT funds may only be awarded to and received by cities, the County, and eligible non-profits that are "nature conservancy corporation or association non-profits", or "historic preservation corporation non-profits." The intent is that the entity receiving CFT acquisition funds is fit to own and manage land for the public interest over the long term.

The Open Space Equity Cabinet understands this dynamic well and agrees that long term ownership and management issues are important. The County has done a good job notifying and engaging allowed awardees of CFT funds – i.e. itself, cities, and eligible non-profits - about the annual CFT funding opportunity and CFT application process. A well-established process is in place that all cities and eligible non-profits know about in order to seek and secure annual CFT funds. This is critically important. Some examples of how individuals and community-based

organizations applied for CFT funds and partnered with entities eligible to receive CFT funds are described in the footnote at the bottom of this page.¹⁷

But, despite hundreds of applications and awards for CFT funds from local governments over the last three decades, many communities in many cities, as well as parts of the County, still face inequities in access to open space, as is shown in the map on page 4. Furthermore, the examples of organizations described in the footnote may not be indicative of the human and social capital from CBOs in low income and historically underserved communities. With the current levels of understanding about the mechanics of open space funding sources, residents and CBOs from these communities are likely to have limited capacity, levels of expertise, and the time required to establish these types of partnership with entities eligible to receive CFT funds.

The Open Space Equity Cabinet strongly recommends new engagement strategies and efforts to begin to reverse the persistent problem illustrated on page 4. In addition to notifying local governments about CFT, it is equally important that a broader constituency of eligible *applicants* know about CFT funding opportunities and understand the process to develop and submit applications.

We feel it is also important for the County to support local community efforts to create new non-profit organizations that would be eligible to *receive* CFT funds, such as community land conservancies. A community land conservancy would be built by and for members of low income and historically underserved communities. Importantly these organizations would need to have the personnel expertise and institutional capacity to own and maintain urban land over

¹⁷ Examples include:

(1) Seattle-based community group called “Save Waldo Woods” formed to apply for CFT funds to protect Waldo Woods in the Maple Leaf neighborhood of the City; the City got on board after “Save Waldo Woods” successfully applied for CFT funds and the City received the CFT funds to protect the property through a conservation easement.

(2) “One Bothell” a community group in the City of Bothell formed to protect and turn Wayne Golf course into a City park; at the time One Bothell did not have the support of the Mayor and majority of City Council to convert the golf course into a city park. Following election of a new Mayor and City Council, One Bothell was able to develop a partnership between the City of Bothell, King County, and Forterra, to acquire the property as a park, with the property ownership going to the City.

(3) In the City of Federal Way, the “Save Weyerhaeuser Campus” community group has formed to encourage and support the City and Forterra to work towards conserving forest and lake front on the former Weyerhaeuser Campus.

(4) The City of Pacific did not have resources to apply for CFT funds to protect open space lands along Milwaukee Creek; a local woman wrote and submitted CFT applications on behalf of the City. The City was awarded CFT funds for these applications and the City provided matching funds and purchased the properties.

(5) In the City of Seattle a community-based organization called “Urban Homestead Foundation” was formed by local parents as a 501.C3 land conservancy which qualifies to receive funds under CFT. This group was awarded CFT funds to preserve a parcel of land in their neighborhood; the City of Seattle has not supported this acquisition and has not provided the requisite matching funds to complete the acquisition. As such, the Urban Homestead Foundation is still fundraising to bring the matching funds to close on the acquisition.

time.¹⁸ Such a land trust would also be able to integrate open space planning into affordable housing developments to ensure that open space improvements do not induce displacement.

In parallel with this, existing eligible non-profit nature conservancy organizations should work with the Open Space Equity Cabinet, and together foster mutually accountable partnership structures between community-based organizations (CBOs) and the non-profit organizations currently eligible to receive CFT funds. The County can and should help facilitate this work.

The County's CFT process needs to expand and deepen its notification and engagement to increase participation among low income and historically underserved communities, and the non-governmental community-based organizations supporting them. It is these organizations and groups of people living in "Opportunity Areas," who do not know about nor have they applied for CFT funds; the County needs to inform and educate them about CFT funding opportunities.

The County needs to engage these communities directly. We believe working with and through community based organizations (CBOs) from these areas is the most direct and effective way to inform communities about open space funding opportunities and the grant application process. This will build community capacity and will ultimately result in CFT applications for projects in Opportunity Areas. It will also help build successful partnerships between CBOs and their respective jurisdictions or eligible land conservancy non-profits to be awarded funding and carry out projects.

The Open Space Equity Cabinet developed a pragmatic and implementable Community Engagement Action Plan for the County. Its goal is to catalyze actions by communities, non-profits, and cities to develop and submit CFT applications for open space investments in "Opportunity Areas." We envision CBOs, cities, and the County working together to promote and advance open space investments. Our Action Plan is included in Appendix D; a high-level summary is described below.

The Community Engagement Action Plan should be implemented in two initial phases, recognizing that the annual CFT funding process has an application deadline relatively early in the year (early March 2019). In addition we recommend this new outreach and engagement begin initially as a pilot effort in one or two cities/unincorporated urban areas, and then be scaled more broadly after learning from the successes of the pilots.

Phase I is focused on actions the County can take in time for the 2019 CFT grant round, as well as planning to set the stage for more in-depth community engagement for the 2020 CFT grant round. We understand that County staff have already begun efforts to implement some of the actions we are recommending even prior to our final report. These actions include scheduling

¹⁸ A component of this would likely involve the community land trust being accredited by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA); LTA is a national non-profit that maintains standards for land trusts across the United States. Alternatively, given capacity limitations, one model might include partnerships with well-established land conservancies.

additional outreach meetings designed to include underserved populations and translation of materials. We appreciate the County's "early implementation" efforts in order to help make a positive difference for the 2019 CFT grant application process. Phase II actions are focused on implementation of in-depth community engagement and capacity building in the one or two pilot communities during the second half of 2019 in advance of the 2020 CFT grant deadline in March 2020.

Phase 1 (December 2018-August 2019):

- CFT Program conducts expanded announcement and technical assistance and guidance workshops to Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) recommended by the Open Space Equity Cabinet. This is the initial expanded notification effort to inform communities about the current 2019 CFT grant process.
- In coordination with the Open Space Equity Cabinet, develop the framework and approach for CBO engagement in 1-2 pilot cities to be implemented in Phase 2, ahead of the 2020 CFT grant round. This will set the stage for the County and CBOs to conduct community engagement in 1-2 pilot cities to make it possible for successful CFT applications in 2020.

Phase 2 (September 2019-August 2020):

- Implement the CBO engagement approach in 1-2 pilot cities.
- Additional workshops and technical assistance in advance of the March 2020 CFT application deadline.
- Ongoing work focused on engagement and capacity support, as well as developing partnerships between CBOs and jurisdictions.

It is important to differentiate between: (1) actions to notify and educate communities about technical and factual aspects of the CFT grant funding process, and (2) community capacity building actions/efforts to develop successful CFT applications and the partnerships needed between CBOs and their local governments or non-profits that are eligible under RCW to receive CFT funds.

Technical assistance and community capacity building are equally important, and our Action Plan envisions both being ramped-up so Opportunity Area communities are able to seek and secure CFT funds.

The Open Space Equity Cabinet recommends that King County elected leadership include an equity grant program in the 2020-2025 renewal of the King County Parks Levy with the goal of increasing access to, and the use of, parks, open space and public recreation facilities in low income and historically underserved communities. This grant program could be used to:

1. Help communities build capacity, coalesce and/or build partnerships to develop successful parks and open space projects;
2. Enable community groups to develop applications for acquisition of new urban open space (where the real estate purchase was made using match-free CFT funds); and/or
3. Help fund improvements to existing public open space and recreation facilities in our neighborhoods to make these spaces more safe, accessible, and usable by our communities.

Based on the success of other Parks Levy funded grants programs such as the Community Partnerships & Grants Program, a relatively small amount of Parks Levy funding can help create successful open space, park and recreation projects in our communities. Included in Appendix E is a letter the Open Space Equity Cabinet sent to King County Executive Constantine in support of including this enhancement in a renewal of the King County Parks levy in 2019.

VI. Work Ahead

In addition to the outreach and engagement work described in Section V, there is work to be done in 2019 and beyond in three specific areas:

1. More directly link open space investments in Opportunity Areas with public health. The open space narrative should lead with health and equity – i.e. accessible open space improves mental and physical health outcomes in low income communities of color. People respond to open space and parks more if this resource is described in the context of how it impacts the health of their families and themselves. As described in Section VII below, this is what Los Angeles County did with its successful “Measure A” open space funding effort in 2016. King County should do the same.

Building and strengthening partnership between open space agencies at the County and city levels with that of Seattle / King County Public health is important. Together these agencies can collaborate and coordinate with community groups to make smart, health-promoting open space investments. The goal should be to make investments that address disparities in access to open space infrastructure *and simultaneously* improve health outcomes.

2. Care must be taken to not inadvertently induce the displacement of low-income residents living in Opportunity Areas where open space funds are deployed. Open space is an important neighborhood amenity that increases and enhances the livability of where people live. Often times this can result in increased rents and housing costs which can displace low income residents living in these areas.

The County, and its cities, need to pair open space investments with affordable housing policies and strategies. This should require linking land use policies, and other tools such as shallow rent subsidies, with open space investments – both in cities and the County’s unincorporated urban areas.¹⁹ Action on this must come in parallel with action on targeting open space investments in Opportunity Areas. The County’s and cities’ comprehensive plans are the logical starting place for such policies.

King County is soon to begin its process for a “mid-point” update to its Comprehensive Plan which will be adopted by the County Council in 2020. This “mid-point” update is limited to items identified as Topical Areas in the scope of work adopted by the County Council for the 2020 Comprehensive Plan update, as identified in Council Motion 2019-0015. Given that the next opportunity to update the Comprehensive Plan is not until 2023 the County should work in 2019 to develop policies for its 2020 Comprehensive Plan update that address open space investments while maintaining and increasing housing affordability. This work is an outcome of the Regional Affordable Housing Plan, which is a Topical Area currently included in Council Motion 2019-0015. Cities should similarly take action in updates to their comprehensive plans.

3. The County should identify ways affordable housing projects can maximize their greatest potential for open space, green spaces and tree plantings and retention of heritage trees. Through the Green Building Ordinance (GBO) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policies, King County should take measures to integrate open space, implement cultural retention in communities, avoid gentrification, and include actions to avoid displacement of low income residents. These approaches should strive for place-based solutions built from the sum of equal parts current and future residents, where land use, economic development, and cultural identity preservation and community development strategies are front and center. This will help in GBO projects and TOD areas to consider these important drivers of neighborhood livability.
4. The purchase of land to create new green space in dense urban environments is an important strategy and investment to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change. Our communities are the most vulnerable and will bear the brunt of climate uncertainty in our region. Urban green spaces provide land in our neighborhoods upon which trees and natural landscapes can mitigate the urban heat island effect; they provide a

¹⁹ Shallow rent subsidies can provide families small amounts of money over a defined period. These subsidies could distribute scarce housing resources among more families that are on the cusp of housing stability potentially induced by rent increases from creation of new parks and open space amenities nearby where they live. A small housing subsidy to these families could yield a large increase in stability and avoid the displacement caused by future open space investments.

collective natural backyard for those of us not fortunate enough to have one. This will become increasingly important as the effects of climate change increase and become acute.

King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) includes language about the importance of green space as a strategy to build resilience into the physical environment of our communities. Efforts are underway in 2019 to amend and update the SCAP in 2020. The County should work to ensure the themes captured in this report are included in the SCAP update, and the County should engage the Open Space Equity Cabinet members to incorporate their ideas into the 2020 SCAP.

5. Foster mutually accountable partnership structures between community-based organizations and existing non-profit nature conservancy organizations that are eligible to receive CFT funds under RCW 84.34.
6. Explore the creation of new nonprofit organization(s) that would be eligible under RCW 84.34 to receive CFT funds, such as a community land conservancy that is built by and for members of low income and historically underserved communities.
7. Evaluate the need, and build a coalition to consider, amending RCW 84.34 to broaden the organizations that can receive CFT funds beyond eligible nature conservancy corporation or association non-profit organizations and historic preservation corporation non-profit organizations. Organizations to consider making eligible include community-based organizations that are fit and capable of owning and maintaining land for public purpose overtime.

VII. Los Angeles County – a Model to Learn From

The Open Space Equity Cabinet was visited by a cohort of leaders from Los Angeles County who were instrumental in the successful passage of Measure "A" in LA County in 2016.²⁰ This cohort shared their wisdom and lessons-learned with members of the Cabinet and King County staff.

²⁰ A panel of leaders in the park equity movement, made up of representatives from Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement, First 5 Los Angeles, Prevention Institute, and Promesa Boyle Heights, visited Seattle from Los Angeles to speak to the Open Space Equity Cabinet and King County staff. This was made possible by The Wilderness Society, an important partner to King County on the Land Conservation Initiative.

Through Measure “A” Los Angeles County government is working to address systemic inequities and close historic gaps in park and open space infrastructure investments. King County and city governments can learn from this work as they work to address the problem of inequitable investments in park and opens spaces through the Land Conservation Initiative. ²¹

Los Angeles County shares many similarities to King County, but on an even larger scale. It is a large geography home to over 10 million residents, comprised of 88 cities and many unincorporated urban and rural areas, and is one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the U.S.

In Los Angeles County, as in King County, low-income communities of color bear a disproportionate burden of: (1) park access inequities, (2) health disparities associated with lack of safe access to green space and opportunities for physical activity, and (3) lower qualities of life and lower life expectancies.

Some of the important lessons learned from our Los Angeles visitors are described below:

- A Parks Needs Assessment is critical. Successful passage of Measure “A” was possible because of LA County’s Park Needs Assessment which comprehensively assessed the park and recreation needs and opportunities county-wide – i.e. in both cities and unincorporated urban areas. This provided important data and evidence about existing park and open space infrastructure, and the extent of neighborhood-level park and recreation deficits. Prior to this LA County government had no such data available and thus had limited understanding of the extent of the problem. This Needs Assessment report indicated that approximately 53% of LA County residents live in a high or very high need area for parks and open space.
- It is important to link park and green space deficits with health inequities. There is a strong connection between ready access to parks and green space and improved health outcomes. Making this link will also help to leverage funding for long-term community health. Furthermore, residents better understand the benefits of park and open space investments when it is framed in the context of the health of their children and themselves. The Los Angeles County Public Health Department commissioned a study to provide important information about the relationships between parks and public health. The report provides data on selected health outcomes, demographic characteristics, and socio economic conditions in relation to park space per capita. This report was intended as a complement to the Park Needs Assessment described above.

²¹ LA County’s Measure “A” is a voter approved Initiative that generates \$96 million annually for parks and open space; it replaced Proposition A which was passed 20 years ago and was set to expire in 2019. It passed with 75% voter approval. Funds go to the county, cities, and local communities to create, protect, enhance, and maintain neighborhood parks, open space, trails, beaches, natural habitat and rivers, creeks and streams.

- Take a collaborative approach to training and technical assistance – work with and through local community based organizations (CBOs), and support grass roots leadership development. Contemporary participation incorporates the perspectives of vulnerable communities and supports community-based participation to result in shared decision making among residents and local governments.
- Tie public grant funds to authentic community engagement. Measure A’s grant funds for park and open space require project applicants to demonstrate a minimum level of community engagement; the level of community engagement increases with the amount of open space grant funds requested.
- Ensure language access to grant funding notices, workshops, and technical assistance to address linguistic isolation. In the implementation of Measure A, LA County has identified three tiers of linguistic isolation based on geography (census tract) and percentage of residents that speak English “less than very well.” The “tier” a project location falls into dictates the level of interpretation and translation services needed for the written materials, meetings, and workshops.
- Attach equity guidelines to public funds for parks and open space.
- Incorporate metrics and evaluation to monitor progress.

VIII. Conclusion

The physical environment where you live affects your quality of life *and* your life expectancy.²² Parks and open spaces where people can easily walk, play, and gather is an integral component of a neighborhood’s physical environment, which is but one of the many determinants of equity needed to ensure a fair and just society. We hope this report will bring change to the way King County and its cities invest in parks and open spaces to redress historic disparities in access to these critical pieces of neighborhood infrastructure.

Members of the Open Space Equity Cabinet have worked diligently over the last nine months, and have begun to build trust with the County. We and our County partner have come to appreciate that change occurs at the speed of trust, and are encouraged by the building momentum this effort has created. As such, we also hope that this report will catalyze change

²² There is an 18 year difference in life expectancy between a male born and living on South Mercer Island and a male born and living in the East SeaTac / Northwest Tukwila neighborhoods. For a female born into and living in these same neighborhoods the life expectancy difference is 12 years.

in other policy arenas that affect *all* 14 determinants of equity as outlined in the King County Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Strategic Plan.

Many communities across King County experience a lack of open space infrastructure; these same communities have low household incomes and are home to residents with some of the County's poorest health. Over the next 10 – 20 years we must collectively eliminate the stark disparities in access to parks and green space in communities with the greatest and most acute needs. In so doing, it is important that we lead the park and open space narrative with the public health benefits it provides. While we do this we need to simultaneously find ways to acquire and conserve King County's wilderness, farm, and forest lands.

Dismantling the institutional and systemic inequities in access to open spaces is everyone's responsibility. It is not solely the responsibility of those who are disparately impacted by these inequities.

As a first step we propose revisions to King County's CFT code chapter 26.12 based on our comprehensive review and evaluation from an equity and social justice perspective. These proposed revisions are attached in Appendix A.

Ensuring racial and socio-economic diversity on the CFT Advisory Committee is a next step. We all need to be diligent and persistent in nominating and appointing residents from low income and historically underserved communities onto the CFT Advisory Committee, the body charged with providing funding recommendations to the Council and Executive.

Equally important is building an Equity and Social Justice framework for the CFT Advisory Committee to apply as it recommends funding allocations to the County Executive and Council. This involves the Committee applying the criteria and metrics we propose in chapter IV to determine if projects authentically address open space equity, and thus are eligible for match-free CFT funds.

Despite hundreds of applications and awards for CFT funds from local governments over the last three decades, many communities still face inequities in access to open space. It is important that a broader constituency of eligible *applicants* know about CFT funding opportunities and understand the process to develop and submit applications. The County's CFT process should expand and deepen its notification and engagement to increase participation among low income and historically underserved communities, and the non-governmental community-based organizations supporting them.

The County needs to engage these communities directly by working with and through community based organizations (CBOs). This is the most direct and effective way to inform communities about open space funding opportunities and the grant application process. Contracting with CBOs will build community capacity and ultimately result in CFT applications for projects in areas in need of open spaces. Attached in Appendix D is our recommended

Community Engagement Action Plan. Its goal is to catalyze actions by communities, non-profits, and cities to develop and submit CFT applications for open space investments.

In closing, as we collectively undertake this work we must take proactive steps to not induce displacement of low income residents through public investments that create new neighborhood parks and open spaces. This is important work, let's be proactive so we advance this work in the most effective way to benefit the physical environment *and* the livability of communities historically left behind.

Appendix A: Revisions to King County CFT Code Chapter 26.12

Open Space Equity Cabinet recommended revisions: red bold underline are new additions; bold black underline are deletions

King County Code 26.12 CONSERVATION FUTURES

Sections:

- 26.12.003 Definitions - K.C.C. 26.12.003 through 26.12.035.
- 26.12.005 Goal of conservation futures tax allocation.
- 26.12.010 Conservation futures tax levy funds - allocation.
- 26.12.025 Open space criteria.
- 26.12.030 Open Space Plan.
- 26.12.035 Project reporting and reallocations.
- 26.12.040 Allocation of funds - 1989.
- 26.12.050 Allocation of funds - Ordinance 9071 projects.
- 26.12.100 Financial policies.

26.12.003 Definitions - K.C.C. 26.12.003 through 26.12.035. The definitions in this section apply throughout K.C.C. 26.12.003 through 26.12.035 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

A. "Annual allocation" means the allocation of conservation futures tax levy funds collected in the ensuing budget year and other moneys deposited in the conservation futures fund.

B. "~~Citizen oversight~~ **Advisory** committee" means the ~~Citizen oversight~~ **conservation futures advisory** committee, established under K.C.C. 2.36.070.

C. "Conservation futures tax levy funds" means moneys collected through the tax levy upon all taxable property in King County authorized by RCW 84.34.230.

D. "Conservation futures fund" means the King County conservation futures fund established under K.C.C. 4A.200.210.

E. "Equity" as defined in King County Council Ordinance 16948, means all people have full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential.

F. "Social Justice" as defined in King County Council Ordinance 16948, means all aspects of justice, including legal, political and economic, and requires the fair distribution of public goods, institutional resources and life opportunities for all people.

~~E. G.~~ **"Equity Areas "Opportunity areas"** means areas within King County that meet all three of the specified criteria listed below, or areas where the project proponent or proponents can demonstrate, and the ~~Citizen~~ **Advisory oversight** committee determines, that residents living in the area **disproportionately** experience ~~disproportionately~~ limited access to public open spaces, as well as demonstrated hardships **including such as**, but not limited to, ~~chronic low incomes, persistent poor health, or high rates of utilization of free and reduced price school meals.~~ **income, health, social, and environmental factors. Demonstrated hardships should reflect the lack of conditions for a fair and just society as defined in the determinants of equity in King County Ordinance 16948.** The three specific criteria are: areas located in a census tract in which the median household income is in the lowest one-third for median household income for census tracts in King County; areas located in a census tract in which hospitalization rates for asthma, diabetes, and heart disease are in the highest one-third for census tracts in King County; and for areas within the Urban Growth Boundary, do not have a publicly owned and accessible park within one-quarter mile of a residence, or for areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary that do not have a publicly owned and accessible park within two miles of a residence. The department of natural resources and parks shall identify and update ~~equity areas at least every five years~~ **opportunity areas every 3 years.**

~~F. H.~~ "Governmental agency" and "agency" mean King County or any city within King County.

~~G. I.~~ "Open space land" means the fee simple interest in open space land, farm and agricultural land, and timber land, as those terms are defined in chapter 84.34 RCW, **including greenspaces in dense urban environments**, for public use or enjoyment, or any lesser interest in those lands, including development rights, conservation futures, easement, covenant or other contractual right necessary to protect, preserve, maintain, improve, restore, limit the future use of or otherwise conserve the land.

H. "Project" means open space land to which King County conservation futures tax levy funds are allocated for acquisition under the processes under K.C.C. 26.12.010. (Ord. 18774 § 3, 2018: Ord. 14714 § 4, 2003: Ord. 13717 § 1, 2000).

26.12.005 Goal of conservation futures tax allocation. The following shall be goals of the county conservation futures tax allocations over time. In accordance with chapter 84.34 RCW, ~~it shall be the goal of~~ the county **shall** ~~to~~ maintain, preserve, conserve, **expand**, and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands, and **the county shall also** ~~to~~ achieve **a broad an equitable** geographical distribution of **conservation futures** funds. ~~from conservation futures over the long term,~~ **Conservation futures funds shall be allocated in a manner that addresses equity and social justice by providing open spaces in communities in greatest need.** The

~~Citizen Advisory oversight~~ committee shall also include in its recommendation to the executive a description of how projects contain a demonstrable regional visibility, use, cultural, ecological, historical or other natural resource significance. (Ord. 13717 § 3 and 5, 2000: Ord. 9430 § 2, 1990: Ord. 8867 § 2, 1989).

26.12.010 Conservation futures fund - allocation of conservation futures tax levy funds. A process is hereby established for the annual allocation of the conservation futures tax levy funds, to acquire open space lands, including green spaces, greenbelts, wildlife habitat, and trail rights-of-way proposed for preservation for public use by either the county or the cities within the county. King County, cities within the county, non-governmental organizations or individuals ~~Citizen groups and Citizens~~ may make application for funds in this allocation process.

A. The county executive shall determine a date, no later than April 1, as a deadline for submission of applications for use of conservation futures tax levy funds. At least one month before the application submission deadline date, the executive shall provide ~~all cities, within the county~~ notice on the King County website of the opportunity to apply to the county for a share of the annual allocation of the conservation futures tax levy funds available for that year. ~~Notice also shall be provided on the King County website~~ The executive shall also provide notice by email to all agencies and non-governmental organizations or individuals who may have potential interest in conservation futures funding. King County DNRP shall maintain and update a list of parties who may have potential interest in conservation futures funding.

B. No later than March 1, the county council may adopt a motion that provides direction to the ~~Citizen advisory oversight~~ committee on priorities for evaluating the applications within the open space criteria identified in K.C.C. 27.02.025.

C.1. By July 15, the ~~Citizen advisory oversight~~ committee shall make project recommendations and recommend funding allocations for each project to the executive, including:

- a. a description of each project including project location and acreage;
- b. a report on how each project meets the county open space selection criteria, contained in K.C.C. 26.12.025; and
- c. the amount of funding requested in each project application; and
- d. any additional relevant criteria of the jurisdiction in which the potential acquisition is located.

2. The committee's recommendations are solely advisory and the executive and/or the council may adopt, alter, add to or decline to adopt all or part of the committee's recommendations in the budget process.

D. The executive's project and funding recommendation shall be included in the annual proposed appropriation ordinance for the ensuing budget year.

E.1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection E. 2. and 3. of this section, **any** application~~s~~ funded by this process shall be sponsored and forwarded by the jurisdiction in which the project is located. Except for acquisitions of property interests in **equity opportunity** areas, the jurisdiction shall commit to providing a matching contribution no less than the amount of conservation futures tax levy funds appropriated for the project before conservation futures tax levy funds are reimbursed to that jurisdiction. This contribution may consist of cash, land trades with a valuation verified by an appraisal by a Member of the Appraisal Institute (MAI) certified appraiser or the cash value, excluding King County conservation futures contributions, of other open spaces acquired within the previous two years that is either directly adjacent to the project or the county concludes to be directly linked to the property under application.

2. A jurisdiction may make an application in partnership with one or more jurisdictions if the proposed project lies wholly within the boundaries of those jurisdictions, or if another reason for such a partnership is articulated within the application, such as a trail connection, a community separator or coordinated salmon habitat preservation. In such a partnership application, the relationship, roles and responsibilities for acquisition, ownership, any matching contribution obligations and future maintenance must be described. If a partnership application is funded by this process, the jurisdictions shall be required to enter into an interlocal agreement with the county formalizing the relationship, roles and responsibilities for acquisition, ownership, any matching contribution obligations and future maintenance.

3. **For an application by a non-governmental organization or individual, the award shall be made either to a non-profit eligible under Chapter 84.34 RCW or to the agency of the jurisdiction in which the property is located. If the agency is to own the property, then K.C.C chapter 26.12.010.E1 will apply. If an eligible non-profit is to own the property, that non-profit shall be required to enter into an agreement with the county.** For an application by a **non-governmental organization or individual, ~~citizen or citizen group~~**, except for acquisitions of property interests in **equity opportunity** areas, **the jurisdiction or eligible nonprofit receiving the award, or the non-governmental organization or individual who submitted the application, ~~citizen or citizen group~~** shall commit to providing a matching contribution no less than the amount of conservation futures tax levy funds appropriated for the project. This contribution may consist of cash, land trades with a valuation verified by an appraisal by a Member of the Appraisal Institute (MAI) certified appraiser or the cash value, excluding King County conservation futures contributions, of other open spaces acquired within the previous two years that is either directly adjacent to the project or the county concludes to be directly linked to the property under application. **Before a funding award is paid to a nonprofit, the nonprofit shall obtain a letter of intent from an agency or a secondary nonprofit that indicates that if in the future the acquiring nonprofit ceases to exist, the agency or the secondary nonprofit is willing to be identified on title to the acquired property as an owner. If the property is in the unincorporated area and the nonprofit seeks an agency letter, the nonprofit shall request the letter**

from King County. If the property is in an incorporated area and the nonprofit seeks an agency letter, the nonprofit shall request the letter from the agency of the jurisdiction in which the project is located. In the event that the legislative body of the agency of the incorporated area indicates in writing that it is not willing to provide this letter, the nonprofit shall request a letter from King County. For any acquisition by a nonprofit, King County will record in the chain of title a restriction on the property to ensure that the conservation values of the property are preserved in perpetuity.

~~For a project based on an application by a citizen or citizen group, the funds shall be reimbursed to the jurisdiction in which the project is located. If a citizen or citizen group application is funded by this process, the jurisdiction in which the project is located shall be required to enter into an interlocal agreement with the county formalizing the relationship, roles and responsibilities for acquisition, ownership, any matching contribution obligations and future maintenance~~

F. If the King County transfer of development program bank, as established by K.C.C. chapter 21A.37, is awarded conservation futures levy funds in order to purchase development rights and thereby preserve open space in accordance with purposes and provisions of this chapter, the bank is authorized to sell those development rights and to use the proceeds from that sale to acquire additional development rights, thereby preserving additional open space lands in accordance with the terms and provisions of this chapter. When transferrable development rights are purchased by the bank in accordance with K.C.C. chapter 21A.37 using conservation futures tax levy funds allocated to a project under K.C.C. 26.12.003.G., matching conservation futures tax fund credit is allowed for funds generated from the subsequent sales of the transferrable development rights, if the funds from those sales are used to purchase additional open space that is identified as being within the scope of the original conservation futures tax project.

G. Conservation futures tax levy funds shall be deposited in the conservation futures fund for the purpose of administering, disbursing and accounting for conservation futures tax levy funds authorized by King County. Conservation futures tax levy funds shall be disbursed to projects previously approved by King County upon receipt and verification by King County of properly completed requests for payment of the funds. The office of performance, strategy and budget shall prescribe the form for the requests. The disbursement requests shall be made only for capital project expenditures that include all costs of acquiring real property, including interests in real property, and the following costs, though it shall not include the cost of preparing applications for conservation futures moneys: cost of related relocation of eligible occupants; cost of appraisal; cost of appraisal review; cost of title insurance; closing costs; pro rata real estate taxes; recording fees; compensating tax; hazardous waste substances reports; directly related staff costs; and related legal and administrative costs. The city shall transmit payment to its payees

for current capital project costs within five days of the receipt by the city of its requested conservation futures tax levy funds. The city shall provide a list of authorized individuals to certify requests to King County. The city is responsible for the accuracy of the payment requests and the propriety and timeliness of its disbursements following receipt of conservation futures tax levy funds. Conservation futures tax levy funds may not be used to acquire any property or interest therein through the exercise of the power of eminent domain.

H. Projects carried out by a governmental agency in whole or part with conservation futures tax levy funds shall not be transferred or conveyed except by interlocal agreement providing that the land or interest in land shall be continued to be used for the purposes of K.C.C. 26.12.005 through 26.12.025 and in strict conformance with the uses authorized under RCW 84.34.230. Also, the land or interest in land shall not be converted to a different use unless other equivalent lands within the geographic jurisdiction of the governmental agency are received in exchange for the lands or interest in lands. This section does not prevent the grant of easements or franchises or the making of joint use agreements or other operations compatible with the use of a project as provided for in this section and authorized under RCW 84.34.230. (Ord. 18774 § 2, 2018: Ord. 17539 § 64, 2013: Ord. 16960 § 25, 2010: Ord. 14714 § 5, 2003: Ord. 13717 § 2, 2000: Ord. 10750 § 2, 1993: Ord. 9430 § 1, 1990: Ord. 8867 § 1, 1989).

26.12.025 Open space criteria. In making an annual allocation of conservation futures tax levy funds, the county shall consider the following criteria, in no particular order: wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve; salmon habitat and aquatic resources; scenic resources; community separator; historic or cultural resources; urban passive-use natural area or greenbelt; park or open space system addition; projects that seek to redress historic disparities in access to or health benefits of open space in opportunity areas; and transfer of development rights program implementation. Additional criteria may include: passive recreation; education/interpretive opportunity; threat of loss of open space resources; ownership complexity; partnerships; stewardship and maintenance; adopted financial policies; and any other criteria consistent with RCW 84.34.020. (Ord. 18774 § 4, 2018: Ord. 13717 § 4, 2000).

~~———— **26.12.030 Open Space Plan.** For the purpose of this chapter, an open space plan should define the term "open space" and its critical attributes as applied to the specific natural environment of a city. The plan should also establish the goals of the city regarding the conservation and management of open space, policies designed to achieve these goals and all necessary implementing measures. Specific open space conservation opportunities should also be identified. (Ord. 8867 § 3, 1989).~~

26.12.035 Project reporting and reallocations.

A. Each governmental agency receiving conservation futures tax levy funds and the department of natural resources and parks shall furnish a report to the executive by January 31 of each year. The report shall include for each project:

1. The amount of conservation futures tax levy funds expended;
2. The amount of conservation futures tax levy funds remaining;
3. The status of matching funds;
4. The amount of acreage purchased;
5. A brief description of all acquisition activity, such as contact with landowners, title and appraisal research conducted and offers extended;
6. The expected timeline for project completion;
7. Any requested scope change description as defined in K.C.C. 4A.10.525;
8. Any change in project description;
9. Any request for project abandonment; and
10. Any significant obstacles or barriers to project completion.

B. The **Citizen advisory oversight** committee may recommend to the council the reallocation of conservation futures tax levy funds for any project for which the appropriated funds have not been encumbered and expended within a reasonable time period. (Ord. 17929 § 74, 2014; Ord. 14714 § 6, 2003).

~~———— **26.12.040 Allocation of funds - 1989.** Conservation Futures funds may be allocated by the county council in 1989 for parcels which otherwise comply with 26.12.010 C-E, and for which there exists a demonstrable threat of conversion to non-open space uses prior to June 1, 1990. (Ord. 8867 § 4, 1989).~~

~~———— **26.12.050 Allocation of funds - Ordinance 9071 projects.** For the purposes as provided in state law, all conservation future funds collected by the county after the enactment of this section and prior to the commencement of the allocation process provided in this chapter shall be available for the completion of projects as set forth in Ordinance 9071, according to the following procedure:~~

~~———— A. A jurisdiction, requiring open space funds to complete a project as described in Ordinance 9071 shall present a request to the **Citizen Advisory** oversight committee established by Ordinance 9071;~~

~~———— B. Within thirty days of a receipt of a request for conservation futures funding, the **Citizen Advisory** oversight committee shall consider and make recommendations on such requests to the King County executive. The executive shall transmit to the King~~

~~County council the committee's recommendation in conjunction with the executive's recommendation on the request, and the appropriate legislation;~~

~~——— C. The committee shall develop its recommendations based on the open space criteria set forth in Ordinance 9071 and Motion 7886;~~

~~——— D. It shall be a goal of the council and the **Citizen Advisory** oversight committee identified in K.C.C. 26.12.010.C. to **allocate funds from conservation futures achieve an equitable geographical allocation of funds from conservation futures through this process;** and~~

~~——— E. The executive shall notify Seattle and suburban jurisdictions of the requirement to submit bond project financing plans before additional conservation futures revenues will be allocated. These financing plans should include: the basis for updated project cost estimates; the level of bond proceeds and other revenues available for these projects; and the conservation futures revenue necessary to complete a project. (Ord. 18670 § 78, 2018; Ord. 9430 § 3, 1990).~~

26.12.100 Financial policies.

A. In addition to and consistent with the provisions of this chapter and chapter 84.34 RCW, the following financial policies should guide the allocation of conservation futures tax levy funds for acquiring property interests for land conservation. Key funding goals include: accelerating the pace of acquisitions and thereby reducing their ultimate cost, spreading costs to future taxpayers who will benefit from lands protected in perpetuity, maximizing the use of available funds, prioritizing acquisitions in **equity opportunity** areas and parcels that are at high risk of development, **broad** geographic **distribution of funding equity** over time, and ensuring that sufficient reserves remain available to pursue emerging conservation **and equity** opportunities.

B. Matching funds should not be required for proposals to acquire property interests if the proposal meets the following two criteria: (1) the property is located in equity opportunity areas, and (2) the applicant(s) demonstrates engagement and collaboration with community based organizations and/or members of the community in which the property is located.

In addition to the changes in 26.12.100(B) the following guidance language will be provided in the following CFT documents received by CFT applicants:

- *Announcement & Application Instructions: “Opportunity Area proposals should have engagement and collaboration with community based organizations and/or members of the community. Collaboration can be demonstrated through **at least two** letters of support and a description of community outreach held to date, or planned in the future. Proposals that demonstrate community support will be prioritized higher than those without demonstrated support.”*
- *Application: “Please describe the community engagement and collaboration with community-based organizations and/or members of the community. Please provide **at least two** letters of support. If you have not engaged in such outreach, please describe your planned community outreach.”*
- *Motion/Criteria will have a clear statement of prioritization in the low/high guidance: “Projects in opportunity areas should have community engagement and collaboration, which can be demonstrated through **at least two letters** of support and a description of community outreach held to date or planned in the future.*

Low: *Proposals that meet equity area criteria but do not have demonstrated community engagement and collaboration as evidenced through letters of support and a description of outreach carried out to date.*

High: *Proposals that meet equity area criteria and can demonstrate community engagement and collaboration as evidenced through letters of support and a description of outreach carried out to date.*

C. Issuing bonds can help accelerate the pace of acquisitions, lower the ultimate cost of acquisitions, and spread the acquisition costs to include future taxpayers who will also benefit from lands protected in perpetuity.

D. The pace of acquisitions should be accelerated by issuing bonds and allocating as much as eighty percent of anticipated annual conservation futures tax levy funds for debt service, consistent with sound financial principles. Factors for determining the extent of bonding should include, land values, existing levels of bonding, progress in accomplishing an accelerated rate of acquisitions, economic forecasts, bond covenants, current and projected interest rates and other relevant factors.

E. The county should pursue additional means to accelerate the pace of acquisitions, including partnering with nonprofit organizations and the private sector and identifying additional public and private funding sources.

F. Conservation futures tax revenues should be used to protect parcels identified by King County and cities as part of the 2018 Land Conservation Initiative and additional parcels that have similar conservation attributes. If sufficient funds are not available to complete the acquisition of all available property interests in a particular year, priority should be given to protecting parcels in **equity opportunity** areas and parcels most at risk for development.

G. Funds should remain available on an annual basis to pursue ongoing and emerging opportunities to acquire conservation lands. (Ord. 18774 § 1, 2018)

Appendix B: Revisions to Council Motion 11144

New additions are in red underline on pages 37, 40, 41

APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA KING COUNTY CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT)

Not listed in priority order

1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

A. WILDLIFE HABITAT OR RARE PLANT RESERVE: The property contributes to a functioning wildlife habitat system or corridor in an urban or rural area that provides habitat for feeding, resting, wintering, reproduction, nesting, cover, or a migration link. Identify the habitat functions of the site, as related to the larger landscape. Note key species observed or likely found given the habitat. Discuss the sufficiency of the size of the property and adjacent protected properties or buffers to support the species. Identify major plant communities, including succession stages (e.g., mature second growth forest). Note if habitat improvement is planned for the site that will increase the habitat value (e.g., native plantings, removal of shoreline or bank armoring, forest thinning for ecological health, installation of rain garden or pollinator garden).

- **Low:** Limited potential habitat value on site, supporting highly common or non-native plant and animal species (e.g., Himalayan blackberry, starlings, ornamental plants). Consideration is given for a project that plans meaningful habitat restoration on a site that currently offers less habitat opportunity.
- **Medium:** Moderate habitat value on site, including a dominance of native species over non-native species, and some structural complexity (e.g., water source, snags or downed logs, native shrub thickets, some tree canopy cover). Property supports semi-common species such as raptors, black-tailed deer, and coyote. Property contains native vegetation, tree canopy or patches of native shrubs that support migratory birds and pollinators; has proximity to other natural areas or a key part of a natural corridor through urban areas. Consideration is given for a project that plans meaningful habitat restoration on a site that currently offers less habitat opportunity.
- **High:** Unique habitat such as old-growth forest, bog habitat, salt marsh, or a community of uncommon native species. Property is large in size and/or provides good connectivity to other large blocks of habitat and is predominantly composed of native plant species. Site may support species listed by state or federal government as candidate, sensitive, threatened or endangered, such as salmonid species, great blue heron nest colonies or rare shellfish, or may support uncommon animal species such as black bear, pileated woodpecker, osprey, or forage fish.. Urban areas may be smaller in size but include a key piece completing a green corridor through the built environment that functions as a movement corridor for migratory birds and pollinators and/or for larger species, or a significantly large patch of rare habitat (e.g., old-growth remnant patch). Consideration is given for a project that plans meaningful habitat restoration on a site that currently offers less habitat opportunity.

B. SALMON HABITAT AND AQUATIC RESOURCES: The property will conserve salmonid habitat or aquatic resources, including forested watershed areas that provide surface or ground water supply, spawning gravel replenishment sources, nearshore sediment sources, freshwater or marine buffers, offshore eelgrass beds, kelp forests or mudflats, cool spring water sources, flood refuge areas, river oxbows, estuaries, marshes or back-channels that support the life cycles of salmonid and other aquatic biota. Discuss any adopted or proposed plans for property or broader system restoration, the estimated cost and timeframe. Briefly note how water quality in the larger stream basin beyond the property proposed for acquisition will be maintained or improved. For urban salmonid habitat, please discuss existing or proposed public access and aquatic resource educational uses on the site proposed for acquisition or within the basin.

- **Low:** Property is within a basin containing highly degraded habitat/aquatic resources, requiring significant restoration on the property or within the system, that will likely yield low to moderate improvements.
- **Medium:** Property is within a basin containing degraded habitat/aquatic resources where restoration would likely yield a significant improvement in the system.
- **High:** The property is: 1) within a high quality basin identified in Waterways 2000 or WRIA Plans, or 2) in an urban basin with salmonid habitat for which an adopted basin restoration plan exists; and/or 3) located on saltwater shoreline and provides a sediment source for natural littoral drift processes.

C. SCENIC RESOURCES: The property can offer scenic resources in multiple ways. The property itself may provide the opportunity to view or experience a natural or cultural scenic resource that is located on-site. The property may serve as a viewpoint, from which a visitor view of an off-site resource (e.g., provide a view of Mt. Rainier). The property may contain or be part of a larger greenspace corridor that is viewed from a nearby location (e.g., a green corridor located along a major right-of-way, or a corridor providing visual relief in a dense urban area, or greenspace that is viewed from another public viewpoint).

- **Low:** Property provides little or no natural or cultural scenic resources or views as described above.
- **Medium:** Property provides or protects a view of a scenic resource, such as a creek, a greenspace corridor, or other uncommon natural feature or cultural resource that is visible from a local, county or state park/open space/right-of-way.
- **High:** Property provides or protects a view of a unique scenic resource, such as mountains (e.g., Olympic Mountains), downtown Seattle skyline, a geological feature unique to King County, a major greenspace corridor, or a large body of water or major river (e.g., Lake Washington, Puget Sound, Snoqualmie River).

D. COMMUNITY SEPARATOR: Undeveloped, natural land areas that serve to define edges of separate, distinct communities, neighborhoods, or incompatible land uses, including visual relief. Rivers that flow through cities and do not separate them may be significant community separators, while rivers that actually separate cities are considered regional separators that define King County's regional form.

- **Low:** Property provides some separation but is not a significant greenbelt.
- **Medium:** Property is part of a larger greenbelt that separates major neighborhoods or communities.
- **High:** Property is part of a greenbelt that helps define King County's regional form, separates cities, counties, or is along a major regional waterway.

E. HISTORIC OR CULTURAL RESOURCES: Property must itself be an eligible historical or cultural resource, have situated upon it a structure that is such a resource, or be a buffer for property that is a historic or cultural resource. Structures are not eligible for funding with CFT. Historic or archaeological resources must be eligible for designation on a local, King County, state or federal register.

- **Low:** Property may be eligible for designation; requires a letter from a local, county, state or federal preservation officer stating that the property is eligible for listing on a register.
- **Medium:** Provides a buffer to a historic or cultural resource listed on a local, county state, or federal register.
- **High:** Contains a historic or cultural resource listed on a local, county, state, or federal register.

F. URBAN PASSIVE-USE NATURAL AREA OR GREENBELT: Property is itself, or contributes significantly to a larger system of, undeveloped natural area that will be used as a passive-use community or regional urban open space, wildlife corridor or trail corridor. The system must be located in an incorporated city or urban area designated in accordance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA).

- **Low:** Property provides or contributes to a passive-use natural area/greenbelt of under 1 acre in size.
- **Medium:** Property provides or contributes to a passive-use natural area/greenbelt between 1 and 3 acres, or enhances water access to a pond, lake, or creek.
- **High:** Property provides or contributes to a passive-use natural area/greenbelt greater than 3 acres in size, or enhances water access to Puget Sound, Lake Washington/Union, Lake Sammamish, or the Green/Duwamish, Cedar, Snoqualmie or Sammamish Rivers.

G. PARK, OPEN SPACE, OR NATURAL CORRIDOR ADDITION: The property is adjacent to or is demonstrated to be integrally linked to a park, open space, or natural corridor system. Describe the attributes of the property that will provide a meaningful contribution to the existing open space, such as size, allowing an important function to occur, or removing a development threat that would adversely affect an existing open space. For urban areas: properties that provide stepping stones of habitat (e.g., pollinator gardens) or movement corridors (e.g., for pollinators, songbirds, or meso-predators like coyotes, fox, raptors) and act in conjunction with other pocket parks to facilitate movement of wildlife through urban landscapes.

- **Low:** Property provides a moderate contribution, but is not critical for the integrity of the park or system.
- **Medium:** Property provides a significant natural buffer or a significant contribution to the function of an existing park, open space, or natural corridor, or navigation through an urban landscape.
- **High:** The proposed acquisition is a critical link or inholding in an existing park, open space, or natural corridor and will provide a highly significant addition by virtue of its size or by providing a habitat/movement corridor through a densely urban landscape.

H. PASSIVE RECREATION OPPORTUNITY IN AN AREA WITH UNMET NEEDS: The property will create, enhance, or preserve a passive recreation use in an area having a deficit in passive park or open space resources. Need may be documented in a park, open space, community or comprehensive plan, adopted in conformance with the State Growth Management Act. Passive recreation includes uses such as hiking, walking, biking, gardening, children's play, or nature viewing (refer to Conservation Futures General Conditions for more information on passive-use recreation). How many

people will the proposal directly or indirectly serve and how does this relate to needs assessments that have been conducted by the local jurisdiction?

- **Low:** Low need
- **Medium:** Significant need
- **High:** Critical need

I. PROJECTS THAT SEEK TO REDRESS HISTORIC DISPARITIES IN ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE IN OPPORTUNITY AREAS: This criterion focuses on the need to fund projects that would provide open space in the most underserved parts of the county, where there is evidence of a history of inequities, discrimination, injustices, and limited regional investment, including investment in open space. Acquisition projects that meet this criterion would help reduce or eliminate disparities in access to public open spaces and trails in communities with the greatest and most acute needs. These parts of the county are referred to as “opportunity areas.” Projects in opportunity areas may be eligible to receive CFT funds for the entire project cost without providing match dollars. KCC 26.12.003.I establishes two ways by which a property may qualify as being in an opportunity area.

1. The project meets all three of the following specified criteria:
 - (a) “areas located in a census tract in which the median household income is in the lowest one-third for median household income for census tracts in King County;
 - (b) “areas located in a zip code in which hospitalization rates for asthma, diabetes, and heart disease are in the highest one-third for zip codes in King County; and
 - (c) “for areas within the Urban Growth Boundary that do not have a publicly owned and accessible park or open space within one-quarter mile of a residence, or for areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary that do not have a publicly owned and accessible park or open space within two miles of a residence.”
2. Alternatively, a project may qualify if “the project proponent or proponents can demonstrate, and the advisory committee determines, that residents living in the area disproportionately experience limited access to public open spaces, are lacking the conditions for a fair and just society as defined in the determinants of equity codified in King County Ordinance 16948, and experience demonstrated hardships including, but not limited to, income, health, social and environmental factors.”

Projects in opportunity areas should have community engagement and collaboration, which can be demonstrated through at least two letters of support, and a description of community outreach held to date or planned in the future.

- **Low:** Proposals that meet opportunity area criteria but do not have demonstrated community engagement and collaboration as evidenced through two letters of support and/or a description of outreach carried out to date.
- **High:** Proposals that meet opportunity area criteria and can demonstrate community engagement and collaboration as evidenced through two letters of support and/or a description of outreach carried out to date.

2. ADDITIONAL FACTORS

A. EDUCATIONAL OR INTERPRETIVE OPPORTUNITY: The property will provide, now or potentially, the setting for meaningful education or interpretation of natural systems or other historic/cultural resources described in the section above.

- **Low:** Fair to poor access; low anticipated use; resources common.
- **Medium:** Moderate access; irregular use by small groups; less common resources.
- **High:** Good to excellent access; anticipated regular use by groups or individuals from outside the local jurisdiction or community; a resource that is unique to King County.

B. IMPACT TO OPEN SPACE RESOURCES: Note whether the open space resources described in Section 1 above will be negatively impacted if this application is not funded. Consider also open space resources on this property could be lost as a result of activities off-site in a larger connected system (e.g., could a nearby clearcut negatively impact a salmon run or wildlife on the property?). In the case of properties which currently have few on-site resources, indicate whether preserving this property provides opportunity to create or restore open space resources (e.g., a built-out site can be restored to provide a community gathering place and greenspace).

- **Low:** For properties which already have significant open space resources, there is little or no demonstrated threat. For properties that lack significant resources on site, there is little opportunity to create/restore open space resources.
- **Medium:** For properties which already have significant open space resources, development is proposed, but permits have not been issued, and such action would have a serious impact on open space resources. For properties that lack significant resources on site, there is a moderate opportunity to create/restore open space resources.
- **High:** Development is imminent or a potentially damaging water rights application has been granted; a building or subdivision permit application has been approved; SEPA review completed; a logging, grading, or clearing permit is approved, and such action would have a serious impact on open space resources. For properties that lack significant resources on site, there is significant opportunity to create/restore open space resources.

C. FEASIBILITY: OWNERSHIP COMPLEXITY, WILLING SELLER(S), COMMUNITY SUPPORT: How many properties are proposed for purchase and what property interests (i.e., fee simple, conservation easement) are proposed for each parcel? Which parcels have willing sellers? If a multi-parcel proposal, discuss how the remaining parcels could be acquired. Is there community support or opposition that could affect the feasibility or success of the proposal?

- **Low:** There are many properties for which little is known about the intent of the owner(s) to sell, but the applicant or agency has notified the owners. No demonstrated community support, or community opposes proposal.
- **Medium:** The applicant or agency has obtained a signed letter of interest from key landowner(s) to sell the identified property interest(s). Local community is aware of the proposal and does not oppose it.
- **High:** The applicant or agency can provide a copy of an irrevocable purchase option or purchase and sale agreement for purchase of the identified key property interest(s). Demonstrated strong community support for proposal.

D. PARTNERSHIPS: Describe any public or private partnerships that will enhance this project: Will the project provide partnerships with other governments or private groups, such as provision of funding or volunteer efforts towards property acquisition, provision of allowable facilities, stewardship, restoration of a significantly degraded resource, outreach to local businesses, community education, etc. In addition,

please list any actual funds expended, committed, or donated through in-kind services for restoration, stewardship, education, interpretation or other enhancement directly associated with the project.

- **Low:** A group conducts one to three of the above activities annually or provides modest funding support.
- **Medium:** A group conducts three to four of the above activities annually or provides moderate funding support.
- **High:** A group conducts five or more of the above activities annually or provides significant funding support.

E. IS THE PROPERTY IDENTIFIED IN AN ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, PARK OPEN SPACE, HABITAT, CULTURAL RESOURCE, OR COMMUNITY PLAN? Please identify the name of the plan and the date adopted, and reference appropriate pages, but do not provide copies of the plan.

F. TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) PARTICIPATION: Is the property a proposed sending site in an adopted transfer of development rights (TDR) program? Is the property located in or near a formally designated receiving area in an authorized TDR program, as evidenced by an ordinance or interlocal agreement between cities and/or King County? Describe how this project will further the goals of the program.

- **Low:** No adopted TDR program or interlocal between the applicant city and King County exists.
- **Medium:** An adopted program or TDR interlocal exists between the applicant city and King County.
- **High:** An adopted TDR interlocal exists between the city and county and the sending site is approved.

3. STEWARDSHIP AND MAINTENANCE

How will the property be stewarded and maintained? Does the property lend itself to volunteer stewardship opportunities? Briefly discuss short-term “hold and protect” measures and longer-term stewardship plans for the proposal site. How will proposed stewardship and maintenance efforts be funded?

- **Low:** Applicant lacks stewardship experience and makes no funding commitment.
- **Medium:** Applicant has stewardship experience but does not identify funding source.
- **High:** Applicant can demonstrate a stewardship track record, make a funding estimate and commits to ongoing funding.

REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

King County Code (KCC) 26.12.010.C1.e requires that “the advisory committee shall also include in its recommendation to the executive a description of how projects contain a demonstrable regional visibility, use, ecological, cultural, historical, or other natural resource significance.” Regional significance describes a property or system that contains a unique or highly important open space resource to King

County (e.g., saltwater shoreline), or may be highly visible from a major public right-of-way, or may be a major destination for residents from throughout King County. If the advisory committee concludes that a project has regional significance, the committee will include that information its recommendation report.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

KING COUNTY CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT)

GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. Properties eligible for funding from CFT collections must meet the definitions of open space lands under RCW 84.34.020 and meet CFT Application Evaluation Criteria.
2. Project applications may include one or more parcels of land. Proposed acquisitions may include fee simple or less than fee acquisitions such as conservation easements.
3. Future use of the property is restricted to low impact, passive-use recreation, which means that development of facilities to support organized/structured athletic activities such as ballfields, courts, and gyms is not allowed. Small children's playgrounds are allowed, within the 15% non-vegetative impervious surface limit described below, not to exceed 5,000 square feet, and compatible with the other open space values of the property. Future use is further limited to non-motorized use, except as is necessary for the following types of uses (and provided in a way that protects open space resources): maintenance, staging areas, entrance roads, and parking to provide public access.
4. A maximum of 15% of the total surface area of a proposed acquisition project may be developed or maintained with non-vegetative impervious surfaces. Trail surfaces (soft-surface or paved) are not included in the calculation of this restriction. This percentage may be adjusted in instances where the Advisory Committee recommends, and the King County Council determines, that parking or other developed features necessary for the use of the site are required, are compatible with open space resources, and would exceed the 15% limit (e.g., scenic viewpoints).
5. CFT project funds must be expended within two years of approval by King County Council. Unspent funds may be reallocated to a previously approved project or to a new project, unless applicant demonstrates to the Advisory Committee a compelling reason for continuance of CFT funding for the project beyond the two-year limit.

MATCHING FUNDS

Except for projects in opportunity areas as defined in KCC 26.12.003 and discussed below, a recipient of CFT funding must commit to providing a matching contribution of no less than the amount of CFT funds awarded to the project before conservation futures tax funds are reimbursed. Eligible matching fund sources include:

- Cash
- Land match with a valuation verified by an independent state-certified real estate appraiser with a current general real estate appraiser license
- The cash value, excluding King County Conservation Futures contributions, of other open spaces acquired within the previous two years from the date of submittal of the application and not already used as match for CFT projects
- Properties used as land match and cash value of other open spaces acquired within previous two years should be directly linked to the property under application, and meet conservation futures general conditions.

Projects in opportunity areas may be eligible to receive CFT funds for the entire project cost without providing match dollars. KCC 26.12.003 establishes two ways by which a property may qualify as being in an opportunity area.

1. The project meets all three of the following specified criteria:
 - (a) “areas located in a census tract in which the median household income is in the lowest one-third for median household income for census tracts in King County;
 - (b) “areas located in a census tract [zip code] in which hospitalization rates for asthma, diabetes, and heart disease are in the highest one-third for census tracts [zip codes] in King County; and
 - (c) “for areas within the Urban Growth Boundary that do not have a publicly owned and accessible park within one-quarter mile of a residence, or for areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary that do not have a publicly owned and accessible park within two miles of a residence.”
2. Alternatively, a project may qualify if “the project proponent or proponents can demonstrate, and the advisory committee determines, that residents living in the area disproportionately experience limited access to public open spaces, are lacking the conditions for a fair and just society as defined in the determinants of equity codified in King County Ordinance 16948, and experience demonstrated hardships including, but not limited to, income, health, social and environmental factors.”

The CFT Committee will make a determination as to whether the project meets opportunity area criteria and qualifies for match-free funding. The Committee will then determine whether to recommend to King County Council that the project receive a CFT funding award.

Appendix C: Opportunity Area Criteria / Data Report

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS REPORT:

This report identifies how a property meets select criteria that were identified by King County and stakeholders as relevant to equity/opportunity area determination.

There are two methods by which a property may qualify as being in an equity/opportunity area:

Method 1. Property meets all three of the following “specified criteria” in King County code 26.12.003. Data results related Method 1 are provided in this report in “#1: DOES PROPERTY MEET ALL 3 SPECIFIED CRITERIA?”

- (a) “areas located in a census tract in which the median household income is in the lowest one-third for median household income for census tracts in King County;
- (b) “areas located in a census tract in which hospitalization rates for asthma, diabetes, and heart disease are in the highest one-third for census tracts in King County; and
- (c) “for areas within the Urban Growth Boundary, [that] do not have a publicly owned and accessible park within one-quarter mile of a residence, or for areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary[,] that do not have a publicly owned and accessible park within two miles of a residence.” (King County Code 26.12.003)

Method 2. If a property does not qualify under Method #1, a project may qualify if “**the project proponent or proponents can demonstrate, and the citizen oversight committee determines, that residents living in the area experience disproportionately limited access to public open spaces as well as demonstrated hardships such as, but not limited to, chronic low incomes, persistent poor health, or high rates of utilization of free and reduced price school meals.**” (King County Code 26.12.003)

Relevant criteria and/or data sources for Method 2 are provided in two sections:

“#2: ADDITIONAL RELEVANT CRITERIA WITH READILY AVAILABLE DATA” provides data about how an applicant’s proposed property meets certain relevant criteria which have data sources that are readily accessible and regularly updated.

“#3: ADDITIONAL RELEVANT SOURCES OF INFORMATION” provides links to other relevant sources of information and data. CFT values the use of multiple sources of data and information to demonstrate that a property is in an equity/opportunity area. Applicants are welcome to provide additional criteria and data sources not identified in this report to demonstrate that a property is in an equity/opportunity area.

Parcel [Number(s)]:

Jurisdiction: [Jurisdiction Name]

Data Report Requested By: [Name, affiliation if known]

CFT Project Name: [Project Name]

Date of Report:

#1. DOES PROPERTY MEET ALL 3 SPECIFIED CRITERIA?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

"%tile" means "percentile" in the data below

Criterion	Is criterion met?	How is criterion met?	Description
Income			<p>Criterion is met if household Income in census tract is within the lowest 1/3 of all census tracts in King County. <i>(source: American Community Survey)</i></p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of income • 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of income • 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of income
Hospitalization Rates			<p>Criterion is met if hospitalization rates for asthma, diabetes, and heart disease are within the highest 1/3 of all census tracts in King County <i>(source: King County Public Health)</i></p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of hospitalization rates • 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of hospitalization rates • 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of hospitalization rates
Access to Open Space			<p>Criterion is met if there is no publicly accessible open space within ¼ mile in an urban area <i>(source: composite layer of park & open space data)</i></p>

#2. ADDITIONAL RELEVANT CRITERIA WITH READILY AVAILABLE DATA

Applicant can use data results from the following criteria alongside results in #1 to provide other relevant information in the application.

Criterion	Data Point	Percentile	Description
% Households At or Below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level			<p>Percentile indicates how the percentage of households at or below 200% of the federal poverty level in this census tract compares with all other census tracts in King County (<i>source: American Community Survey</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of occurrence of poor households • 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of occurrence of poor households • 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of occurrence of poor households
Utilization Rate of Free & Reduced Price School Meals			<p>Percentile indicates how the utilization of free & reduced price school meals for an elementary school compares to that of all other elementary schools in King County. (Note: data set is available for elementary schools; attendance areas for those schools are not readily available at this time; instead we mapped geographic adjacency of parcels to elementary schools to produce results.) (<i>source: Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of use of subsidized meals • 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of use of subsidized meals • 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of use of subsidized meals
Average Life Expectancy			<p>Percentile indicates how the average life expectancy for this health reporting area (HRA) compares to that of all other HRAs in King County (HRAs are larger than census tracts) (<i>source: King County Public Health</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of life expectancy • 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of life expectancy • 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of life expectancy
% Limited English Speaking Households			<p>Percentile indicates how the percent of people who speak English less than very well for this census tract compares with all other census tracts in King County (<i>source: American Community Survey</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of limited-English-speaking households • 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of limited-English-speaking households

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of limited-English-speaking households
% Population Under Age 5			<p>Percentile indicates how the percent of the population under age 5 for this census tract compares with all other census tracts in King County (<i>source: Washington Office of Financial Management</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of children under age 5 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of children under age 5 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of children under age 5
% People of Color			<p>Percentile indicates how the percentage of people who identify as being of a race and/or ethnicity other than white alone for this census tract compares with all other census tracts in King County (<i>source: Washington Office of Financial Management</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of people of color 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of people of color 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of people of color
Open Space & Park Density Per Capita			<p>Percentile indicates how the acres of publicly accessible open space & parks per person for this census tract compares with all other census tracts in King County (<i>source: composite layer of park & open space data</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of open space & parks per capita 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of open space & parks per capita 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of open space & parks per capita
% Tree Canopy (Neighborhood “Greenness”)			<p>Percentile indicates how the tree cover in this neighborhood (census block group) compares with all other block groups in King County (“tree” is measured as vegetation approximately 10 feet tall) (<i>source: lidar and aerial imagery data from 2002-2017</i>)</p> <p>The percentile data can be interpreted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-33rd percentiles indicate lower level of tree cover 34-66th percentiles indicate middle level of tree cover 67-100th percentiles indicate higher level of tree cover

#3. ADDITIONAL RELEVANT SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Applicant can use data from sources such as, but not limited to, those identified below alongside results provided in this report for #1 and #2 to provide other relevant information in the application. Applicants can also draw on data sources other than these.

Criterion	Source	Description
School Health Data	https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/DataSystems/HealthyYouthSurvey/DataRequest https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/data/school-district-health-profiles.aspx	Washington State Department of Health “Healthy Use Survey.” Individuals may be able to request their neighborhood school data.
School Demographics & School Languages	http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/DataDownload.aspx http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?groupLevel=District&schoolId=1&reportLevel=State&years=2017-18&year=2017-18 http://www.k12.wa.us/DataAdmin/default.aspx	WA Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Individuals may be able to request or find their neighborhood school data.
Exposure to Pollutants	https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen/what-ejscreen	Environmental Protection Agency “EJ Screen” (EJ = Environmental Justice). Compiles data for pollutant exposure.
Renter Density	https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_1YR_S1702&prodType=table https://www.ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/population-demographics/population-estimates/adjusted-2000-population-and-housing-structure-type-and-group-quarters-state-counties-cities-and-towns	American Community Survey data on owner/renter occupied. Percent multi-family housing type in Washington OFM data.
RCO Match Reduction	https://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/MatchReduction.shtml	Match reduction eligibility for a state-wide grant program. See Interactive Map to view data for your area. RCO Match Reduction information does not correlate with qualifying for a CFT match waiver.
4 Themes of Social Vulnerability	https://svi.cdc.gov/factsheet.html	CDC’s Social Vulnerability Index: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Socioeconomic status 2. Household Composition 3. Race/Ethnicity/Language 4. Housing/Transportation

Community Crime Statistics	https://www.crimereports.com/	King County Sheriff's Office
Community Health Indicator Data	https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/initiatives/best-starts-for-kids/dashboards.aspx	King County Public Health – Best Starts for Kids (BSK) data
“Communities Count” Social & Health Indicator Data of King County	http://www.communitiescount.org/index.php?page=data-resources	Various Public Agencies across King County
Washington Tracking Network: A Source for Environmental Public Health Data	https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/WTNIBL	Managed by Washington State Department of Health

Appendix D: Proposed Community Engagement Action Plan for CFT grant funding for King County's Department of Natural Resources & Parks

Goal: To expand, engage and diversify cities and non-profits awarded Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) funds and to encourage and increase applications submitted in partnership with groups from low income and underserved communities.

We encourage DNRP to expand and deepen outreach, engagement and capacity support to increase participation among low income and underserved communities, and non-governmental organizations supporting those communities. This could lead to more applications by non-governmental organizations or individuals from low income and underserved communities, resulting in partnerships wherein jurisdictions or eligible nonprofits receive CFT funds and carry out the project in partnership with community.

The Engagement Action Plan should be implemented in two initial phases, recognizing that the annual CFT funding process has an application deadline relatively early in 2019 (early March). In addition, we recommend this new Engagement Plan begin initially as a pilot effort in one or two cities/unincorporated urban areas, and then be scaled more broadly after learning from the successes of the pilots.

Phase I is focused on actions the County can take in time for the 2019 CFT grant round, as well as planning to set the stage for more in-depth community engagement for the 2020 CFT grant round. Phase II actions are focused on actual implementation of in-depth community engagement in the one or two pilot communities during the second half of 2019 in advance of the 2020 CFT grant deadline.

Phase 1 (December 2018-August 2019):

- CFT Program conducts expanded announcement, engagement, and technical assistance and guidance workshops to Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) recommended by the Open Space Equity Cabinet. This is the initial expanded notification effort to inform communities about the current 2019 CFT grant process.
- In coordination with the Open Space Equity Cabinet, develop the framework and approach for CBO engagement in 1-2 pilot cities to be implemented in Phase 2, ahead of the 2020 CFT grant round. This will set the stage for the County and CBOs to conduct genuine and culturally appropriate community engagement in 1-2 pilot cities to make it possible for successful CFT applications in 2020.

Phase 2 (August 2019-August 2020):

- Implement the CBO engagement approach in 1-2 pilot cities.

- Additional workshops and technical assistance in advance of the March 2020 CFT application deadline.
- Ongoing work focused on outreach, engagement, and capacity support, as well as developing partnerships between CBOs and jurisdictions.

Phase 1 Actions (December 2018–August 2019)

1. With guidance from the Open Space Equity Cabinet, KCDNRP staff will compile a list and map of community-based organizations (CBOs) in areas that may have interest in park and greenspace creation, but have not (or rarely) benefited from CFT grants.

Timing: Early December 2018

2. CFT Coordinator and Open Space Equity Cabinet subcommittee draft letter to underrepresented CBOs to be sent in December to prepare them for CFT grant announcement.

Timing: Early-Mid December 2018

3. Open Space Equity cabinet subcommittee will give input on:
 - Where January 2019 Technical Workshops should be held (described in #7 below).
 - Language(s) into which to translate annual CFT notification and the CFT application.

Timing: Early December 2018

4. With the annual CFT notification, CFT coordinator includes a paragraph describing the grant opportunity and Technical Assistance and Guidance Workshops in language(s) recommended by the Open Space Equity Cabinet. Notification directs applicants to the CFT website where the application will be available in recommended language(s).

Notification sent to the list of CBOs provided by the Cabinet.

Timing: January ~7th

5. CFT coordinator encourages each city with mapped open space opportunity areas to forward multilingual CFT notice, outreach materials & application to community groups they know work on open space or land conservation in their city – including the list identified by the Open Space Equity Cabinet.

Timing: January ~7th

6. KCDNRP staff, with guidance from the Open Space Equity Cabinet subcommittee, will develop outreach materials that the Open Space Equity Cabinet will use in Opportunity Areas.

Timing: Early January

7. *Technical Assistance and Guidance Workshops*: CFT coordinator facilitates workshops, with interpretation in languages recommended by the Open Space Equity Cabinet and CBOs, to orient potential Opportunity Area applicants to CFT timeline, policies, requirements, criteria, and guidance on how to complete applications. All workshops will be announced with the announcement – which should be sent to the CBOs recommended by the Open Space Equity Cabinet. Open Space Equity Cabinet members are welcome to participate (at current compensation rate).

Suggested locations are as follows:

- a. South Park to serve South Seattle, Burien, SeaTac, Tukwila and Renton
- b. Kent to serve Auburn, Des Moines, Federal Way and Kent

CFT coordinator also holds the regular annual workshop on Mercer Island and conducts outreach at previously scheduled grant events in Kent and New Holly development in Seattle.

Timing: Mid-Late January

8. Develop Framework for Phase 2 Work which should be implemented August 2019-August 2020, along the following lines:

Timing for Actions 8a–8d: January-August 2019

8a. The Open Space Equity Cabinet will work with DNRP staff to develop a program to partner with CBOs to implement an engagement strategy in Opportunity Areas. This should be started as a pilot project in 1-2 cities in Phase 2, followed by evaluation, and program expansion to additional cities in 2020.

The community engagement strategy should include three distinct roles, collectively referred to as Engagement Specialists (individuals may be qualified for all three):

1. *Community Engagement Specialists*: Basic notification and awareness-building
2. *Technical Assistance Specialists*: Fielding basic guidance and FAQs regarding CFT process, application, and eligibility requirements
3. *Community Capacity Builders*: Convening partner groups (including among CBOs and established land conservancies) and helping to develop individual proposals

NOTE: DNRP Staff should seek alternative public and private funding sources to support Capacity Builders (see Phase I Action 10 below)

8b. Determine 1-2 pilot cities and a list of CBOs who may be appropriate partner organizations for community-led engagement in these cities. Partner CBOs should reflect the ethnic demography of the community and will therefore determine the prioritization of translation/interpretation needs.

The Open Space Equity Cabinet will work with DNRP staff to evaluate and determine the most appropriate model for community-led and culturally

appropriate engagement and education about the CFT funding opportunity, eligibility requirements, and funding opportunities.

Potential models should include the following features:

- DNRP training for CBO staff on CFT process
- CBO trainees have expertise in community engagement
- CBO trainees have established links to communities in an opportunity area
- CBO trainees co-develop engagement strategies with DNRP staff and are permitted to tailor them to their communities
- CBO trainees are compensated for all work, including training

Specific community engagement strategies are yet to be determined. One strategy that satisfies these requirements is a 'train-the-trainer' model wherein DNRP staff would work with a CBO to train community members in CFT process and trainees would then train other community members in outreach and engagement. Another strategy might involve DNRP part-time staff working with CBO staff to engage communities in opportunity areas. Which (or what combination of) strategies are used may vary from community to community, and will therefore be determined through discussion with the Open Space Equity Cabinet and following the 2019 CFT grant cycle.

The intent of the community engagement strategy is to educate community members in a culturally appropriate manner about the CFT grant fund opportunity and process, and ultimately attract potential applicants, connecting them to DNRP staff, established land conservancies / jurisdictions, and other resources for project development and application submittal.

DNRP will determine budget estimates for the engagement process and the preferred approach for community engagement that considers contract costs for community Engagement Specialists, number of community meetings/trainings, translation and interpretation services, food, as well as whether to offer other services such as childcare.

Set up parameters by which to evaluate the effectiveness of the CBO network.

- 8c. Plan workshops to be held during Phase 2.
- 8d. DNRP staff work on logistics such as contracting procedures, how to fund the work for Phase 2. Review Best Starts for Kids and Communities of Opportunity outreach and engagement models.
9. The Open Space Equity Cabinet will review and suggest revisions to the CFT application and other materials to ensure that they are reasonably accessible to CBOs and provide an opportunity to highlight the equity benefits of a specific acquisition.
Timing: January-August 2019
10. DNRP Staff should seek financial and in kind contributions from established land conservancies to support the community-led outreach and engagement strategy
Timing: January-August 2019

11. Open Space Equity Cabinet, CFT Committee and KC DNRP staff evaluate Phase 1 work to be ready to implement Phase 2.

Consider compensating CBO staff to participate in evaluation.

Timing: July-August 2019

Phase 2 Actions (August 2019–July 2020)

1. Set up preferred engagement approach in 1-2 pilot cities, as outlined in Phase 1, Action 8b.

Timing: August-September 2019

2. Train Engagement Specialists based on preferred approach described in Phase I Action 8b. All specialists should be trained in early fall 2019 to help in advance of, and during, grant round in winter 2020

Timing: September-October 2019

3. Determine whether to produce a brief webinar/video in multiple languages to provide technical assistance and to be posted on the KC DNRP website. Produce, if interested.

Timing: September-December 2019

4. CFT Coordinator, Open Space Equity Cabinet and CFT Committee revise CFT materials.

Timing: September-December 2019

5. *Opportunity Area Meetings:* CFT coordinator and Engagement Specialists facilitate meetings to orient potential Opportunity Area applicants to CFT timeline and requirements. Determine appropriate geographic groupings – one possibility is:
 - a. Opportunity Area Meeting 1: Burien, SeaTac, Tukwila and Renton
 - b. Opportunity Area Meeting 2: Auburn, Des Moines, Federal Way and Kent
 - c. Opportunity Area Meeting 3: Seattle and Shoreline

Budgeted to include translation and interpretation, food, childcare and to compensate local CBO staff to attend these meetings. Consider inviting awardees from the 2019 cycle to celebrate and offer examples of their success.

Timing: October-November 2019

6. *Partnership Workshops:* CFT Coordinator facilitates meetings to inform relevant public officials and established land conservancies of the equity goals and intent of providing CFT notice to community groups; and to encourage them to partner with community groups on CFT applications. Determine appropriate geographic groupings – one possibility is:
 - a. Public meeting 1: Des Moines, Burien and SeaTac, Tukwila, Renton
 - b. Public meeting 2: Auburn, Federal Way and Kent

c. Public meeting 3: Seattle and Shoreline

Consider inviting CBO network and/or Open Space Equity Cabinet members; if so, budget for time.

Timing: October-November 2019

7. Distribute application announcement using the expanded mailing list and multilingual notifications. See Phase 1, Actions 1, 2, and 3.

In 2020, announcement will include contact information for CBOs or individuals available to provide guidance for CFT submissions.

Timing: January 2020

8. *Technical Assistance and Guidance Workshops*: See Phase 1, Action 7.

Incorporate CBO network into workshops focused on opportunity areas.

Timing: January–February 2020

9. 1–2 trained Technical Assistance Specialists (and/or Community Capacity Builders) will help provide support to applicants during application process.

Timing: January–February 2020

10. Open Space Equity Cabinet, CFT Committee and KC DNRP staff evaluate Phase 2 work to identify gaps in engagement and capacity support to address in 2021.

Specifically, in review, consider items 10a through 10e listed below:

Timing for Action 10a–10e: July-August 2020

10a. Is there a need to expand language services – beyond additional languages, this might include multilingual service and supporting applications in other languages

10b. Is refinement needed to outreach/engagement materials to address FAQs

10c. Is any adjustment needed to meeting locations and times to reflect local needs

10d. Is the policy/application framework that incentivizes partnerships with CBOs and cities effective, or do adjustments need to be made?

10e. How effective are mechanisms put in place to address capacity gaps? What adjustments need to be made?

- Community engagement personnel model?

- Workshops?

- If community engagement model was piloted in Phase 2, how to roll out an expansion in fall 2020 for 2021 grant round?

Appendix E: Letter to King County Executive Regarding 2019 Renewal of the King County Parks Levy

King County Executive Dow Constantine

King County Chinook Building
401 5th Ave. Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104

November 8, 2018

Dear Executive Constantine,

The launch of the Land Conservation Initiative (LCI) this past summer, with its bold vision to “protect the remaining and most vital greenspaces for everyone,” marks a milestone. And with the County’s commitment to race and social justice through the 2010 Equity and Social Justice Initiative, implementation of this vision is well underway. Through strong guidance of regional leaders a framework was developed for creating a more equitable distribution of open space throughout King County. The framework provides the lens through which we can begin the work of reversing inequitable access to health-promoting open space and begin the process of addressing historical inequities. This framework is built on the three principles:

- Equity is to be an overarching theme across the entire Land Conservation Initiative;
- Open Space is a region-wide benefit; the Initiative must ensure these benefits accrue to all residents;
- The equity pillar of the LCI is to "go where needs are the greatest".

The King County Open Space Equity Cabinet, a group of 21 community members charged with integrating equity into the LCI, is advancing its work. The Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) Oversight Committee is preparing to help accelerate the pace of open space acquisitions starting next year given changes you and the Council made this past summer to increase CFT bonding capacity and the local funding match waiver for projects in equity areas in great need of parks and open space. These actions represent the first step in a multi-year, multi-step strategy to manifest the LCI’s vision.

The renewal of the King County Parks Levy in 2019 is another important next step. Recently, the Open Space Equity Cabinet was briefed on the levy renewal, then asked to provide feedback. One of the elements being considered is the addition of “Equity Grants” as an enhancement to the levy. The idea, as we understand it, is to make these funds available to support communities advance public investments in park and open space infrastructure where they are

needed most via programming and/or capacity building. The investments in programming and infrastructure have the potential to greatly contribute to critical impacts on the health of our families and the health of the spaces where our children play.

First, we want to convey our strong support for the King County Parks Levy, and specifically for including this idea of equity grants into the 2019 levy renewal. However, we do have ideas on how to strengthen equity outcomes that align well with the tenants of the County's Equity and Social Justice commitment.

1) Examine the entire levy through a systemic equity lens as opposed to introducing equity as a separate component

In 2010 you and the County Council unanimously adopted the Equity and Social Justice Ordinance, a ground-breaking piece of legislation that set the stage for the ESJ strategic plan and subsequent ESJ efforts across King County agencies and funding sources. To build on this work, we believe an equity-based approach should be applied holistically. In order to make systems change to rectify past inequities and create a vision for the future that supports the well-being of all of King County's residents, we ask that an equity based approach be applied to not only funding components but to policy creation, data collection, outreach and engagement, decision making processes, evaluation and planning. We believe adding a robust equity component to the Parks levy renewal is an asset that will strengthen its passage at the ballot in 2019. The Equity Cabinet, and its broader network, are eager to be a 'voice' in support of communities of color for the renewal of Parks Levy and the enhancement for equity grants.

2) Parks Levy funded projects should be community-driven

The Equity Cabinet believes the Communities of Opportunity (COO) approach for convening, governance and grant structure funded under the Best Starts for Kids (BSK) levy is a model for infrastructure and engagement by which the Parks Levy funds could be deployed to build community capacity and advance open space investments in high need areas. Additionally, it is a model for supporting community leadership to collaborate and develop the solutions that are driven by and for community. The Parks Levy's well-established and long-standing Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) program, is another model that holds potential to grow a broad base of Parks Levy supporters to champion future levy renewals.

3) Equity requires adequate funding to redress historical imbalance in investments

We believe that in order to make substantial progress in addressing historic inequities to ensure all of King County's communities can benefit from its parks and natural resources programs, it is prudent that the County make investments larger than \$6 million dollars over the next 6 years.

The Equity Cabinet has discussed a capacity grant concept as a much-needed strategy as a companion to CFT grants since we began convening in spring 2018. One way these grants will help empower our communities is by enabling them to work with their cities and the County to apply for CFT funds to create health-promoting park and open spaces in currently underserved

areas. Over the 36-year history of CFT, there has been a lack of community-driven CFT applications. This grant program, if included in the Parks levy, could start to turn that around because CFT funds cannot, by law, be used for programmatic purposes.

Another way these grants can empower communities is through investments focused on programming and capital investment to better activate new or existing parks that align with community needs and wants. Often times, and in many locations, our communities experience a disconnect between community needs/wants and the priorities of local parks departments. These grants can be used to catalyze engagement between community and jurisdictional leadership to identify, design, and develop capital improvements that will increase the utilization rates of new or existing park spaces by a much broader swath of the community. As mentioned above, we believe this will have immediate impacts on the health and wellbeing of our families and children.

We applaud the County for recognizing that robust equity grants are smart investments in community, and members of the Open Space Equity Cabinet stand ready to assist the County to further develop the structure of a park and open space equity grant program. Thank you and we look forward to discussing these important enhancements to the Parks Levy with you.

Sincerely,



Lylianna Allala



De'Sean Quinn

Co-Chairs of the King County Open Space Equity Cabinet

Members of the King County Open Space Equity Cabinet

Niesha Fort-Brooks (Global To Local)

Sili Savusa (White Center Community Development Association)

Tony To (HomeSight)

Paulina Lopez (Duwamish River Clean-Up Coalition)

Kim Powe (Puget Sound Sage)

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