



Signature Report

Motion 15606

Proposed No. 2020-0068.1

Sponsors Dembowski

1 A MOTION providing direction to the conservation futures
2 advisory committee on priorities for allocating conservation
3 futures tax levy funds.

4 WHEREAS, in RCW 84.34.010, the state Legislature "declares that it is in the
5 best interest of the state to maintain, preserve, conserve and otherwise continue in
6 existence adequate open space lands for the production of food, fiber and forest crops and
7 to ensure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic
8 and social well-being of the state and its citizens," and

9 WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.210 authorizes the county to acquire property rights "to
10 protect, preserve, maintain, improve, restore, limit the future use of, or other otherwise
11 conserve, selected open space land, farm and agricultural land, and timber land," and

12 WHEREAS, property rights acquired under this authorization are defined as
13 conservation futures, and

14 WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.230 authorizes the use of a property tax levy to fund the
15 acquisition of conservation futures and the maintenance and operation of acquired
16 properties, and

17 WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.240 authorizes counties to establish a special
18 conservation futures fund to which the levy proceeds are credited, and

19 WHEREAS, King County has established a conservation futures tax levy and

20 fund, and

21 WHEREAS, King County is required to establish a process to help ensure, over
22 time, that the distribution of the tax levy is throughout the county, and

23 WHEREAS, K.C.C. chapter 26.12 establishes an annual process for distribution
24 of the tax levy to acquire open space lands, including green spaces, greenbelts, wildlife
25 habitat and trail rights-of-way, and

26 WHEREAS, the process includes an advisory committee that makes project and
27 funding allocation recommendations for each project to the executive, and

28 WHEREAS, the executive makes project and funding recommendations as part of
29 the budget process, and

30 WHEREAS, K.C.C. 26.12.010 allows the council to adopt a motion providing
31 direction to the conservation futures advisory committee on priorities for evaluating
32 project applications, and

33 WHEREAS, K.C.C. 26.12.025 establishes criteria for conservation futures project
34 selection, which are: "wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve; salmon habitat and aquatic
35 resources; scenic resources; community separator; historic or cultural resources; urban
36 passive-use natural area or greenbelt; park, open space or natural corridor addition; and
37 passive recreation opportunity in an area with unmet needs; and projects that seek to
38 redress historic disparities in access to or health benefits of open space in opportunity
39 areas. Additional criteria may include: educational or interpretive opportunity; impact to
40 open space resources; feasibility, including ownership complexity, a willing seller or
41 sellers or community support; partnerships; if the property identified in an adopted
42 comprehensive plan, park open space, habitat, cultural resource or community plan;

43 transfer of development rights participation; stewardship and maintenance; regional
44 significance; adopted financial policies; and any other criteria consistent with chapter
45 84.34 RCW," and Motion 15513 gives additional detail on project eligibility criteria, and

46 WHEREAS, farm and agricultural lands are allowed to be purchased with
47 conservation futures tax funding, and

48 WHEREAS, King County first established Agricultural Production Districts
49 ("APDs") in 1985 to protect over 41,000 acres of agricultural lands of long-term
50 commercial significance, which are an irreplaceable natural resource, and

51 WHEREAS, the King County Comprehensive Plan states that uses in APDs must
52 be conserved for productive use and that all land uses in these districts must be sited and
53 designed to ensure compatibility with resource management, and

54 WHEREAS, surveys indicate that only 25,000 out of the 41,000 acres in the
55 APDs are being actively farmed, and

56 WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan states that King County should encourage
57 infrastructure and services that support resource management and resource-based
58 businesses in the APDs and should employ a variety of innovative programs and
59 incentives to help maintain and enhance resource-based industries, and

60 WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan states that King County should work with
61 other jurisdictions, agencies, and agriculture interest groups to maintain and enhance
62 commercial farming activities, and

63 WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan calls on King County to seek funding for,
64 and purchase additional development rights to, land in the APDs and calls on the county
65 to develop a long-term strategy for financing protection of farmland and to ensure that

66 easements for such are well-managed in the long-term;

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

68 A. The council establishes as a priority for the conservation futures advisory
69 committee's consideration during the annual project selection and funding
70 recommendation process, one or more projects that include the purchase of property
71 rights in Agricultural Production Districts for agricultural activities or conservation.

72 B. The department of natural resources and parks, water and land resources
73 division, is requested to work with landowners and jurisdictions in which properties
74 reflecting these priorities are located, in submitting project proposals that meet this

75 priority, as part of the 2020 conservation futures tax levy funding selection process

76 provided for in K.C.C. 26.12.010.

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Motion 15606 was introduced on 2/4/2020 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 2/25/2020, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles, Ms. Balducci and Mr. Zahilay



KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claudia Balducci", is written over a horizontal line. Below the line, the name "Claudia Balducci, Chair" is printed.

Claudia Balducci, Chair

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Melani Pedroza", is written over a horizontal line.

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None