

## Legislation Text

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Clerk 02/23/2012

AN ORDINANCE requiring the King County executive to develop a strategic climate action plan by June 29, 2012; amending Ordinance 17166, Section 2, and K.C.C. 18.50.010 and adding a new chapter to K.C.C. Title 18.

### PREAMBLE:

There is consensus among the world's leading scientists, including the National Academies and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, that human sources of climate pollution such as carbon dioxide and methane are causing unprecedented and severe changes in global and local climate systems, and the related impacts are among the most significant environmental challenges facing the world. Climate scientists at the University of Washington report that significant changes to the Pacific Northwest climate are causing environmental changes including decreasing mountain snowpack and increasing flooding, and are negatively impacting infrastructure, forests, salmon, human health and Puget Sound. Climate change is causing increased stress and changes in distribution of plant and animal species due to vegetation range shifts, streamflow changes, invasive species invasions and increased freshwater and marine water temperatures.

Climate change can impact King County residents through increased flooding, heavier rains and dramatic shifts in weather patterns that damage infrastructure and roads, disrupt economic activity and agricultural production and threaten public safety. Given the interdependence of global economy, effects of climate change, such as impacts to the food supply, in other parts of

the country or world can also affect King County residents. Climate change is also projected to have public health impacts as well. A 2009 report by the Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington report that climate change can result in the following public health impacts: heat related illnesses, respiratory disease due to worsening air quality, injuries due to severe weather events, and infectious diseases.

The 2010 King County Strategic Plan established environmental sustainability as one of King County's eight goals, and includes high-level objectives and strategies to reduce climate pollution and prepare for the effects of climate change on the environment, human health and the economy and to minimize King County's operational environmental footprint.

RCW 70.235.020 requires that by 2020 Washington state reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels, and that by 2050 emissions are further reduced to fifty percent below 1990 levels. The King County Comprehensive Plan directs that the county collaborate with other local governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region to eighty percent below 2007 levels by 2050 and incorporate climate change considerations into county plans, programs and projects among other related policies and goals. In September 2011, the King County Growth Management Planning Council ("GMPC") approved policies calling for establishment of a countywide greenhouse gas reduction target that meets or exceeds the statewide reduction requirement and development of a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and measurement framework for use by all King County jurisdictions to efficiently and effectively measure progress toward countywide targets. GMPC further directed that interjurisdictional work to develop the target and measurement framework be a priority for 2012.

The 2010 King County Energy Plan, adopted by Motion 13368, is intended to reduce energy use and emissions and expand the use and production of renewable and greenhouse gas-neutral energy. The Energy Plan establishes near-term goals for energy efficiency in county buildings

and vehicles, promotes the use and production of renewable and greenhouse gas-neutral energy, and calls for integrated monitoring and reporting of climate, energy and green building outcomes.

Additionally, King County is carrying out a wide range of transportation, land use, open space and resource land protection, land management, energy efficiency, green building, waste reduction, recycling, emergency management, flood protection and outreach initiatives that can reduce climate pollution and address the inevitable impacts of climate change. The climate and energy motion, Motion 12362, adopted in 2006, outlined a series of near-term actions and opportunities related to climate change and should be updated.

The county is engaged in many activities to reduce climate pollution and address its impacts, related to both county operations and the community as a whole. Long-term and significant reductions in climate pollution and effective preparation for the effects of climate change will only be achieved through a strategic approach involving clearly prioritizing actions, identifying specific performance measures for implementation and effectiveness, and measuring our progress against these performance measures. The county should use performance measurement information to assess whether its actions having the intended effect in reducing climate pollution and preparing for the impacts of climate change and use the findings to inform future policy decisions, program priorities, and capital investments.

Through the adoption of the 2010-2014 King County Strategic Plan, King County has embraced strategic planning as a valuable framework for the identification and achievement of the county's goals. The 2010-2014 King County Strategic Plan established environmental sustainability as one of King County's eight goals, and includes an objective to reduce climate pollution and prepare for the effects of climate change on the environment, human health and the economy.

The King County Strategic Plan 2010-2014 establishes a strategic planning hierarchy working from high-level goals and objectives to implementing strategies tied to performance measures. King County's actions to reduce climate pollution and prepare for the impacts of climate change are carried out by multiple departments and agencies, and functionally related to efforts to improve energy efficiency. The development of a strategic climate action plan can help to provide greater direction and specificity to guide county actions to reduce climate pollution and prepare for the impacts of climate change, unify actions across agencies, inform business and other operational plans, and uniformly evaluate performance in achieving King County government's climate change objectives.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Section 2 of this ordinance should constitute a new chapter in the K.C.C. Title 18.

NEW SECTION. SECTION 2.

A.1. The executive shall develop a strategic climate action plan that uses the King County Strategic Plan 2010-2014, adopted by Ordinance 16897, as the organizing framework. The first strategic climate action plan shall be transmitted by June 29, 2012, with a motion adopting the plan. Given the relatively short timeframe for completion of the initial climate strategic plan, the scope will focus primarily on county operations and activities that the county can influence through its direct operations, and will integrate and refine current policies, plans, interlocal collaborations, and performance measures. The strategic climate action plan shall include the following:

a. the identification of specific objectives, strategies and priority actions for reducing emissions and mitigating climate impacts. The list of strategies shall be sufficiently detailed to provide clear guidance on how King County can directly affect the outcomes of reducing emissions and addressing the impact of climate change in King County;

b. related strategies, program activities and targets from the 2010 Energy Plan adopted by Motion

13368, given the highly dependent relationship of reductions in climate pollution of both energy efficiency improvements and the strategic climate action plan; and

c. performance measures and related targets for both operational emissions and implementation of priority strategies that advance the strategic climate action plan.

2. In developing the King County strategic climate action plan, the executive shall review climate change related plans being developed by other municipalities, including the city of Seattle's climate action plan, and identify any opportunities for partnerships with cities or strategies or activities that could be incorporated as part of the King County climate strategic plan.

3. The council recognizes that the climate change related strategies identified in the King County Strategic Plan 2010-2014 may benefit from revision and thus the strategies identified for the climate action plan transmitted by June 29, 2012, should build upon and refine the strategies, activities, and performance targets identified as part of the King County Strategic Plan 2010-2014.

4. Subsequently, the executive shall transmit an update to the strategic climate action plan by June 29, 2015, for adoption by motion. Updates shall include the requirements of subsection A. of this section and should also identify community-level actions the county can implement to reduce climate pollution and prepare for the impacts of climate change. Given the strong interdependence between climate emissions and energy use, the King County Energy Plan will be combined and integrated with the 2012 update of the strategic climate action plan.

5. Consistent with the county's strategic planning cycle, updates after 2015 will occur at least every five years, unless more frequent updates are needed to respond to changing information about emissions sources, performance relative to targets, new technologies, or a changing regulatory context.

6. Progress in achieving strategic climate action plan performance measure targets and accomplishment of priority actions identified in subsection A.1.c., as well as findings outlining recommendations for changes in policies, priorities and capital investments, shall be reported and transmitted to

council annually. The progress report shall be included as part of the report required in K.C.C. 18.50.010.

B. Future updates to climate-related objectives and strategies in the King County Strategic Plan should be informed by the strategic climate action plan.

C. The executive must transmit the legislation and reports required to be submitted by this section in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff and the lead staff for the transportation, economy and environment committee or its successor.

SECTION 3. Ordinance 17166, Section 2, and K.C.C. 18.50.010 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

The executive shall transmit by June 30 of each year a report on the county's major environmental sustainability programs intended to reduce energy use, climate emissions and resource use. The executive shall transmit the report to council, filed in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff and the lead staff for the transportation economy and environment committee or its successor. The report shall cover the climate change, energy, green building and environmental purchasing programs. For each of these programs, the executive shall describe the major accomplishments and include a summary of performance relative to key environmental goals and indicators, challenges and opportunities and recommendations. The report shall be structured in a way that links actual performance to established goals and indicators and can guide policy choices, program priorities((;)) and investments in capital projects. The report required in section 2.A.6. of this ordinance shall be included as part of the report. The report should address the following:

A. The climate change program, including:

1. The greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for both county government operations and the county as a whole and actions to reduce operational and community scale greenhouse gas emissions;(( and))
2. Specific climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, performance measures and targets;

3. All expenses associated with the climate change program; and

4. A cost-benefit analysis of the program;

B. The energy program, including energy targets established in the 2010 Energy Plan;

C. The green building program, including:

1. The total number of capital projects for which a division is responsible, and the number of LEED projects and other sustainable development projects, such as historic restoration and adaptive reuse, and their status;

2. The additional costs associated with achieving LEED certification;

3. The total number of non-LEED projects that have completed a sustainable development scorecard;

4. The green strategies employed;

5. The operations and maintenance costs for all completed projects incorporating green building principles and practices and projects incorporating renewable energy or energy efficiency components, as well as the operations and maintenance costs that were projected before construction;

6. The reductions in greenhouse gas emissions;

7. The construction waste recycled; renewable resources used;

8. The green materials used; and

9. The fiscal performance of all projects incorporating green building principles and practices including an accounting of all project costs and benefits that can be quantified, documented and verified; and

D. The environmental purchasing program, including:

1. Quantities, costs and types of recycled and other environmentally preferable products purchased, and quantities of computers and electronics recycled;

2. A summary of savings achieved through the purchase of recycled and other environmentally preferable products;

3. A summary of program promotional efforts; and

4. Recommendations for changes in procurement policies.