



Legislation Text

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Clerk 02/28/2019

A MOTION adopting the Implementation Plan for a Carbon Neutral King County Government.

WHEREAS, King County is already experiencing the impacts of a changing climate: warming temperatures; acidifying marine waters; rising sea levels; increasing flooding risk; more-frequent heat events that impact health; decreasing mountain snowpack; and less water in the summer, and

WHEREAS, impacts of a changing climate will not affect all King County residents in the same way. Experiences will vary based on income, health, age and place of residence. Climate change impacts can magnify existing health issues and limited access to resources that are already experienced disproportionately by communities of color, and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the King County executive recommended and the council unanimously adopted a Strategic Climate Action Plan that establishes pathways, priority actions and commitments that the county will carry out in its operations and at the community scale to achieve ambitious emission reduction goals, and

WHEREAS, the 2015 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan presents a bold course of action that will make progress toward achieving the countywide goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by eighty percent by 2050, and

WHEREAS, the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan directs the county to reduce operational greenhouse gas emissions by fifty percent by 2030, and also directs the solid waste and wastewater treatment divisions of the department of natural resources and parks, to each achieve net carbon neutrality, and

WHEREAS, the 2015 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan also strengthens the county's strategy

to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate on local communities, infrastructure, economy, public health and safety and the natural environment, and

WHEREAS, the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan advances King County's guiding principle of promoting fairness and opportunity and eliminating inequities by considering the equity and social justice impacts in its decision-making on climate change strategies, and

WHEREAS, in April 2016, the council passed Motion 14633, which requested that the King County executive transmit a report addressing the feasibility of achieving a carbon-neutral or zero-emission transit fleet, and

WHEREAS, in April 2017, the King County council adopted the Feasibility of Achieving a Carbon-Neutral or Zero-Emission Fleet report, which recommends that no later than 2040 Metro transition to a zero-emission bus fleet powered by renewable energy, and focus early deployment of zero-emission buses in the communities that are most vulnerable to air pollution, and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan directs the county to "strive to provide services and build and operate public buildings and infrastructure that are carbon neutral," and

WHEREAS, to support implementation of this policy, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Work Plan directs the executive to develop an implementation plan to achieve King County government carbon neutral operations, and

WHEREAS, the King County council directed that the implementation plan shall address existing and new county buildings, as well as all county operations and services, and shall identify the actions, costs and schedule for achieving carbon neutral status, and

WHEREAS, the implementation plan identifies existing strategies the county is implementing to reach existing operational greenhouse gas reduction targets, including: transitioning to a zero-emission bus fleet served by renewable energy; committing to purchase wind generated, carbon-free electricity from Puget Sound Energy beginning in 2019; and implementing and achieving aggressive energy efficiency projects and targets;

and

WHEREAS the implementation plan develops and identifies additional strategies to achieve even deeper reductions in operational greenhouse gas emissions such as fleet electrification, renewable energy, and fugitive methane reduction strategies, and

WHEREAS, the council directed the executive to transmit an update to the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan by June 2020, which will identify new carbon reduction strategies at both the county operations and community scale, and

WHEREAS, the implementation plan will inform the 2020 update of the Strategic Climate Action Plan, through which existing county targets for carbon neutrality and greenhouse gas emissions reduction will be updated consistent with the findings of the implementation plan, and

WHEREAS the strategies identified in the implementation plan are likely to evolve as they are further developed through the update of the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan and more information is known about the feasibility, tradeoffs and costs of implementation, and

WHEREAS, a progress report on development of the implementation plan was transmitted to the council in December 2017, and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan work plan directed that an implementation plan and a motion adopting the plan be transmitted to the King County council for consideration by February 28, 2019;

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

The Implementation Plan for a Carbon Neutral King County Government, which is Attachment A to this motion and prepared in accordance with 2016 King County Comprehensive Plan Workplan Action 9, is hereby adopted.