



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 2019-0436, **Version:** 2

---

Clerk 12/12/2019

AN ORDINANCE relating to the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan; requiring the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan Update and all subsequent updates be developed using an environmental justice framework and the inclusion of a green jobs strategy and a sustainable and resilient community strategy; and amending Ordinance 17270, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 18.25.010 and Ordinance 17166, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 18.50.010.

### PREAMBLE:

King County has a long record of innovation, leadership and investment in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change. The King County Strategic Climate Action Plan is the blueprint that guides the county's actions in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change. The county's first Strategic Climate Action Plan was adopted in 2012 and updated in 2015, consistent with K.C.C. chapter 18.25. As required by King County Code, in June 2020 the executive will transmit an updated strategic climate action plan. The executive has convened a climate equity task force where leaders of frontline communities will develop goals and guide priority areas for climate action based on community values and concerns. Building on this existing work the 2020 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan and subsequent updates should address the climate crisis using a framework of environmental justice and in ways that create and maintain quality jobs with a focus on those most impacted by change in order to build sustainable and resilient communities and a more

equitable economy.

An environmental justice framework calls for environmental policies to explicitly address racial and economic disparities exacerbated by climate change. Across this country, including King County, historic discriminatory policies have placed a disproportionate environmental impact on the most marginalized communities. Furthermore, those most impacted by climate change are often those with the fewest resources to respond.

Using an environmental justice framework, the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan update is an opportunity to consider the impact and benefits to marginalized communities of policies to reduce emissions reductions, prepare the county for climate change and access the job opportunities that a new green economy will provide.

King County has convened the King County climate and equity community task force to recommend community-driven goals and priorities as part of the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan update.

Access to green jobs is a crucial element in developing sustainable and resilient communities. Jobs in energy efficiency, renewable energy development, electric vehicle maintenance, developing infrastructure for electric vehicles and investing in carbon sequestration are a growing field. According to the 2019 United States Energy and Employment Report, there are over 2.3 million energy efficiency-related jobs in the United States. Energy efficiency jobs pay more on average than the national median wage. However, women and people of color are vastly underrepresented in that sector. In 2018, the energy efficiency sector continued to produce the most new jobs of any energy sector. Demand for efficient technology and building upgrades has driven expansion across many traditional industries, including construction trades and professional services. As job growth in the energy efficiency sector increases, the report noted fifty-two percent of energy efficiency construction employers found it very difficult to hire

new employees. There is much work to do to make sure women and people of color have access to these well-paying jobs.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Ordinance 17270, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 18.25.010 are hereby amended to read as follows:

A.1. The ~~((executive shall develop))~~ county developed a strategic climate action plan in 2012 to establish long-term targets and guide actions within county services and operations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, consistent with the King County Strategic Plan. In accordance with this chapter, the executive updates the strategic climate action plan. Each update to the strategic climate action plan shall be developed with an environmental justice framework in partnership with those communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and in a manner consistent with Ordinance 16948, which establishes the county's fair and just principle. The strategic climate action plan shall include the following:

a. the identification of specific goals, strategies, measures, targets and priority actions for county services and operations to reduce emissions consistent with the countywide goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions twenty-five percent by 2020, fifty percent by 2030 and eighty percent by 2050, compared to a 2007 baseline. The strategic climate action plan should address five goal areas for reducing greenhouse gas emissions: transportation and land use; building and facilities energy; green building; consumption and materials management, including the environmental purchasing program; and forestry and agriculture. Each goal area shall address environmental justice and ensure that the strategies promote an equitable distribution of any environmental benefit. The strategic climate action plan should establish explicit and, whenever possible, quantifiable connections between the overarching climate goals and specific strategies and actions;

b.(1) a green jobs strategy. For purposes of this subsection A., a "green job" means one that generates an income large enough to support a household in King County and provides a benefit to the environment. The intent of the green jobs strategy is to encourage the development of greens jobs along the

career spectrum.

(2) The green jobs strategy shall be developed in consultation with members of the King County climate and equity community taskforce identified in subsection A.1.b.(2)(f) of this section, labor and workforce development organizations directed in subsection A. 7 of this section, and representatives of an environmental justice and climate equity organization, education, business, building managers, utilities, scientists with knowledge of the latest research on strategies to reduce emissions, tribes, local governments and regional groups such as the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration and the Puget Sound Regional Council, and shall include:

(a) specific actions King County and its partners can take to increase the number of green jobs and apprenticeships throughout the region, including jobs in energy efficiency, renewable energy, green vehicles and carbon sequestration, and King County administrative, executive, policy and technical jobs;

(b) a proposal for and budget to develop a green job pipeline that focuses especially on communities that have historically been underserved, and is informed by recommendations of the climate and equity community task force;

(c) identification of the industry sectors and job types with high-demand green jobs in King County;

(d) actions King County can take to develop the green energy skills of King County's own workforce, such as collaboration on development of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs in sectors including energy efficiency, electrification, electric vehicle maintenance, the maintenance of electric vehicle infrastructure and carbon sequestration technologies; and

(e) an initial green jobs strategy in the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan update, with findings and recommendations along with recommended next steps for refining the green jobs strategy as part of plan implementation, biennial budgets and future plan updates; and

(f) a community-driven strategy to achieve sustainable and resilient communities. In order to

achieve a community driven strategy, the executive shall convene and partner with the King County climate and equity community task force to develop the sustainable and resilient community strategy. The King County climate and equity community task force shall be a racially and ethnically diverse group representing various communities in King County that are on the frontline of climate change. The task force shall develop goals and guide priority areas for climate action based on community values and concerns. The sustainable and resilient community strategy shall:

i. identify how climate change will impact communities of color, low-income communities and those disproportionately impacted by climate change;

ii. identify opportunities to take actions to address those impacts that could include increasing the number of affordable housing units, developing pathways to green jobs, preventing neighborhood displacement, increasing access to green spaces, providing access to zero emissions mobility options, improving food security, reducing pollution and addressing health disparities; and

iii. based on assessment of climate impacts and extreme weather events like heat waves on vulnerable communities, make recommendations for preparedness strategies and actions to include in county emergency response plans, the flood hazard management plan and the regional hazard mitigation plan;

c. the current assessment of climate change impacts in King County and identification of goals, strategies, measures, targets and priority actions within county services and county operations to address climate change impacts. Each goal and strategy shall address environmental justice and ensure that the strategies promote an equitable distribution of any environmental benefit;

((e-)) d. performance measures and related targets for both operational emissions and implementation of priority strategies, including the green job strategy, that advance the strategic climate action plan and provide for assessment of progress relative to overarching climate goals at the community scale; and

((d-)) e. an assessment of cost effectiveness for key county services and operations building on the pilot cost effectiveness assessment in the 2015 strategic climate action plan update.

2. Consistent with the county's strategic planning cycle, updates 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. The executive shall transmit updates to the strategic climate action plan to the council for adoption by motion.

3. In developing future updates to the strategic climate action plan, the executive shall continue to review climate change-related plans being developed by other municipalities, including the city of Seattle's climate action plan, and identify opportunities and strengthen recommendations for partnership with cities, businesses and nonprofit organizations to advance actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climate change impacts. ~~((Future updates shall also continue to strengthen engagement of communities most impacted by climate change, review and address the disproportionate impacts of climate change, and develop solutions in a manner consistent with Ordinance 16948 establishing the county's fair and just principle.))~~

4. The council recognizes that science related to climate change and successful climate solutions is evolving, and each update to the strategic climate action plan should build upon and refine the strategies, activities and performance targets in accordance with best available science, practices and progress toward emissions reductions targets.

5. Future updates shall include the requirements of subsection A.1. of this section.

6. Progress in achieving strategic climate action plan performance measure targets and accomplishment of priority actions identified in subsection A.1. of this section, as well as findings outlining recommendations for changes in policies, priorities and capital investments, shall be reported and transmitted to council biennially. The progress report shall be included as part of the report required in K.C.C. 18.50.010.

7. The executive shall convene a strategic climate action plan labor advisory council or seek input from county labor and workforce development organizations, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council of Washington, the Seattle Building and Construction Trades Council and the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, on recommendations for policies, programs and partnerships to

strengthen pathways to local green jobs and to provide guidance on each update.

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

The executive shall transmit by June 30 of every other year a report on the county's major environmental sustainability programs intended to reduce energy use, climate emissions, and resource use, and prepare for the impacts of climate change, as required in subsections A., B. and C. of this section. The report shall also describe the progress made throughout the region on developing of green jobs as defined in K.C.C. 18.25.010. 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 be structured in a way that links actual performance to established goals and indicators and can inform policy choices, program priorities and investments in capital projects. The report should address the following:

A. Greenhouse gas emissions reductions, including:

1. Progress towards achieving the overarching greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for both county government operations and the county as a whole;
2. Progress against targets and measures and updates on the implementation of strategies and priority actions in five goal areas for the strategic climate action plan: transportation and land use; building and

facilities energy; green building; consumption and materials management, including the environmental purchasing program; and forestry and agriculture; and

3. A summary of major expenses associated with the climate impacts research, community-scale emissions inventories, climate change community engagement, and climate change and energy efficiency partnerships with businesses and cities;

B. An update on implementation of climate preparedness strategies and priority actions recommended in the current strategic climate action plan;

C. An update on the strategies and priority actions identified in the green jobs strategy as required by K.C.C. 18.25.010;

D. An update on the actions taken to achieve sustainable and resilient communities as required by K.C.C. 18.25.010;

E. The green building program, as required in K.C.C. 18.17.020.M.1.; and

~~((D:))~~ F. The program to fund city projects to reduce energy demand, as required in Ordinance 18663, Section 3.