KING COUNTY EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ANNUAL REPORT

NOVEMBER 2014

King County

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LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE CONSTANTINE

During my State of the County address in early 2014, I highlighted the two great generational challenges of our time – building equity in our community and confronting climate change.

King County's ability to remain prosperous depends on each of our 2 million residents being able to reach his or her full potential. To attain true prosperity, everyone needs to be able to participate and achieve – based upon merit, drive and determination. Our core vision as a government is to make sure that every person has that fair shot at success, no matter where one comes from or how long one has been here.

Unfortunately, in King County we remain plagued by inequities. Where you live, how much you make and the color of your skin are major predictors of your life experience and your chances of living well and thriving.

The 2014 Equity and Social Justice Annual Report describes why we need to continue to address equity and what we and our partners are doing to create a stronger and more vibrant King County for all. I appreciate the important contributions to this report and the analysis of our local situation from Dr. Manuel Pastor of the University of Southern California and Alan Berube and Natalie Holmes from The Brookings Institution.

This report highlights the work we have done during the past year and lays out some of the key initiatives we are working on. I hope you will enjoy reading about the progress we are making in transforming the delivery of health and human services; creating equity in our workforce and workplace; implementing a low-income transportation fare option; and better engaging members of all communities, including immigrant and refugee communities.

We are at a historic point in our region and in our equity journey. Many in the public and private sectors—including community organizations, residents, businesses, local governments, and philanthropic groups—are committed to building an equity movement that helps create a better and more prosperous region where no one is left behind.

Sincerely,

Dow Constantine

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

EQUITY MATTERS: ANOTHER VIEW

Foreword by Manuel Pastor
Director, Program for Environmental and Regional Equity
University of Southern California

For years, many of us concerned about equity have advocated for inclusion based on principles of fairness, justice, and solidarity. That's all to the good but in the last two decades, an entirely different argument has taken root: that economic inequality is not just bad for society but may actually be bad for the economy as well.

Part of the evidence for this is staring us right in the face. Looking at the trends in the share of income going to the top one percent here in the United States, you notice two peaks: one in 1928 and the other in 2007, with each occurring right before a major financial crash. In his book, *The Price of Inequality,* Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz suggests why: excess wealth produces excess speculation while less middle-class income dampens market demand—the perfect recipe for macroeconomic downturn.

This comes on top of a larger body of evidence from the developing world suggesting that income inequality is a major drag on economic productivity, mostly because it diminishes investment in basic skills, leaves the poor stranded without finance, and produces high levels of social tension. Just two years ago, the International Monetary Fund conducted a study of what factors led to steady growth over time in a broad swath of national economies. Somewhat to the IMF's surprise, the single most significant factor that tended to derail sustained growth was inequality.

The international work has inspired another set of economists, myself included, to look at the relationship between equity and growth in America's metropolitan regions. The results have been remarkably consistent over various time periods, ideological perspectives, and statistical specifications (including controls for the impacts of growth itself on poverty and the distribution of income): Economic inequality, residential segregation, and concentrated poverty all tend to hurt not just the poor but overall prosperity.

And lest you think this is simply the light-headed dreaming of academic liberals, the latest entrants into the "inequality hurts growth" camp include economists from the Cleveland Federal Reserve (who were trying to compare Cleveland to other mid-size metros as part of a project for a business-philanthropic collaborative) and, most recently, researchers at the ratings agency Standard & Poor's who concluded that the slow recovery from the Great Recession is due in part to high levels of inequality.

So what does this mean for King County and, more broadly, the American future?

First, it means that raising issues of equity—how to measure it, how to make progress, and how to embed it in every policy decision—is key to putting King County on the right track for securing the region's economic future. This will require a complex and nuanced

approach: for example, the Seattle-King County region actually ranks better than most of America's metro regions in terms of the general record on growth and equity over the last thirty years but there are troubling signs of slippage—and Seattle-King County has long been able to "mask" certain disparities in opportunity by attracting immigrants and migrants who bring higher skills and higher earning potential, while many of the locally-born and raised are being left behind.

Second, raising questions of disparity is especially important now because of the ways in which our nation's changing demography is interacting with our longstanding problems of racial inequality. The country is slated to become "majority minority" by 2042—but the Seattle-King County region will be crossing that threshold about ten years before that. The bad news here is that the gap between white and Asian income on the one hand and Black and Latino income on the other is on the rise in the region. If we cannot insure that the emerging population is provided new opportunities and is sufficiently educated to take advantage of them, the long-term productivity of the region—and the country—will suffer.

Third, while business and civic leaders certainly need to hear this new message, that is not the only audience that needs to be moved. Those of us working primarily in the arenas of social justice and social service have long left economic thinking to others—and this is no longer viable. In particular, we need to look for those policies that promote not just short-term well-being but long-term economic independence. We call these "just growth sweet spots"—those interventions, like placing affordable housing close to employment and transit, that facilitate both justice and growth.

Finally, while I remain convinced that much of the new equity argument can and should be clearly linked to making the economy hum, we can't deny that the social distance that is created by high levels of inequality as well as segregation by race and class is also corrosive to democracy. Indeed, research suggests that our growing political polarization is linked to "spatial sorting"—and if we stay on the current trend line of social separation, grandstanding will continue to take the place of finding common ground.

In moving America forward, a key testing ground for new ideas and new alliances is America's metropolitan regions. It is here that we find new experiments in combining cluster-based economic strategies with workforce development, transit development with affordable housing, climate adaptation with environmental justice. It is here that people meet face to face, place to place, and race to race, understanding more immediately the consequences when inclusion is not pursued.

And it is in America's metros—particularly in King County—where new efforts to lift wages at the bottom are seen as not antagonistic to economic success but a key part of ensuring prosperity for all.

This report sets a benchmark, but it also sets a challenge. It is not enough to measure what's happened; we must also change what the future will bring. That will require new conversations, new strategies, and new policies. …The first step is data, to be sure—but the long-term goal is a vision in which every resident is afforded an opportunity to participate in decision-making, contribute to the regional economy, and benefit from the growth that results.

CONFRONTING SUBURBAN POVERTY IN KING COUNTY

Foreword by Alan Berube and Natalie Holmes
The Brookings Institution

Today, the suburban poor outnumber the urban poor in a majority of the nation's major metropolitan areas. King County is a microcosm of the national trend of rising suburban poverty, and the factors driving that trend. The following provides a brief overview of how poverty suburbanized in King County, what it means, and the role of King County's Equity and Social Justice work in addressing the new geography of poverty in the region.

TRANSFORMATION IN SEATTLE'S SUBURBS

Following World War II, south King County communities benefited from proximity to jobs, particularly big employers like Boeing and the Port of Seattle. Manufacturing provided access to middle-income jobs for high school graduates, but suffered major losses during the 1970s, when Boeing shed almost two-thirds of its jobs region-wide. Manufacturing subsequently bounced back, but by 1999 represented only 14 percent of private payrolls in King County, down from 30 percent in 1969.

Meanwhile, the region experienced rapid demographic changes. Most of the county's population growth since 1990 has been among persons of color, as immigrants from Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa, as well as native-born African American and Latino populations, settled in south King County.

The city of Seattle's steady increases in population and housing costs have also contributed to demographic and economic change in south King County. While the typical monthly rent in Seattle approached $1,100 in 2012, more modest increases in south King County suburbs have made them home to an increasing share of the region's affordable housing. And the housing market crash and ensuing foreclosure crisis of the late 2000s hit harder in Seattle's suburbs than in the city itself.

As a consequence of these trends, there are today about four times as many poor residents in the region's suburbs as there were in 1970, and about 75 percent more than in 2000. More than three in five poor residents of King County live outside the city of Seattle. Seattle still faces significant poverty: about one in seven Seattle residents is poor, and the city's poor population has grown by 36 percent since 2000. But in SeaTac and Federal Way, the poor population roughly doubled in that time; it more than doubled in Auburn and Kent; and it nearly tripled in Renton.

POLICY CHALLENGES POSED BY SUBURBAN POVERTY

While some suburbs provide a stronger platform for the economic and social mobility of the poor than do inner-city neighborhoods, others face distinctive challenges: lack of transportation options; a threadbare local safety net and limited philanthropy; schools coping with new and unfamiliar pressures; and limited local capacity and fragmented local governance.

Federal spending patterns exemplify some of these challenges. Despite the fact that 63 percent of King county's poor residents live outside Seattle, a majority of federal dollars for key place-based services in 2012—Head Start and child care, community health centers, summer food programs, etc.—went to organizations in the city of Seattle. Affordable housing development programs, like the Community Development Block Grant, HOME, and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, delivered $37 million to Seattle in 2012, versus just $9 million to suburban King County. The imbalance is striking.

Nationwide, the federal government spent approximately $82 billion on place-based anti-poverty programs in 2012, spread across more than 80 programs and 10 agencies. By and large, these programs were built to address entrenched urban and rural poverty, and map awkwardly onto poverty's new suburban landscape. The infrastructure, access points, and local expertise and political will on which the success of these programs relies simply do not exist in many suburbs today.

THE ROAD AHEAD

King County and its suburbs are emerging as national leaders in developing ways to confront suburban poverty. One example is the Road Map Project. In 2010, seven neighboring school districts in south King County, including schools in south Seattle, joined forces under the Project to reduce educational achievement gaps and prepare all kids for college and careers in Greater Seattle's high-tech economy. Collaborative, high-capacity organizations like the Road Map Project blend fragmented federal dollars with state, local, and private investments. They cut across city and suburban lines, and across policy silos, effectively playing the role of a regional "quarterback."

King County is leading on this issue in other important ways, too. Its Health and Human Services Transformation Plan positions the county as a regional quarterback for new funding opportunities under the federal Affordable Care Act, using limited dollars in an integrated and outcome-focused way. And King County's Equity and Social Justice work is providing a critical framework and tools to help ensure that low-income families have access to communities in which they can succeed, with a blend of transportation options, healthy schools, access to jobs, and a mix of housing types.

King County, as well as the wider Puget Sound Region, is today where the country will be in 20 or 30 years—demographically, economically, and geographically—when it comes to the distribution of economic and social opportunity. How the region works together to promote metro-wide prosperity will lay important groundwork for the next generation of anti-poverty policy.

KING COUNTY IS WORKING WITH MANY PARTNERS – LOCALLY, REGIONALLY AND NATIONALLY – TO ADVANCE EQUITY.

One government alone can't eliminate inequities – the solution lies in community organizations, governments, business, philanthropy, academia and other sectors working together to advance a shared equity agenda.

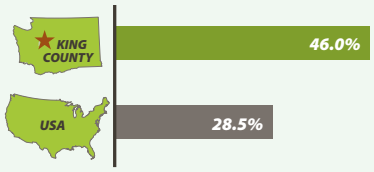
KING COUNTY PARTICIPATED IN THESE MAJOR PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS DURING THE LAST YEAR:

- ***Puget Sound Regional Equity Network and summit*** - *pugetsoundequity.org*
- ***Governing for Racial Equity Network and conference*** - *grenetwork.org*
- ***Place Matters*** - *jointcenter.org/content/place-matters*
- ***Race and Social Justice Community Roundtable*** - *www.seattle.gov/rsji/rsjroundtable*
- ***Working Democracy: Labor and Politics in an Era of Inequality with the UW Bridges Center*** - *depts.washington.edu/working*

AT A GLANCE, KING COUNTY IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, LEARN, WORK AND PLAY

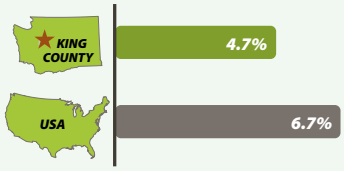
HIGHLY EDUCATED

People 25+ years old with Bachelor's Degree or higher education



LOWER UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment rate (Dec. 2013)

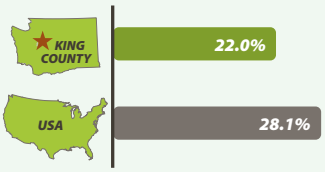


STRONG HOUSEHOLD INCOME

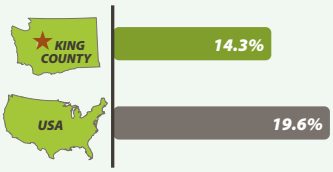
Median household income

GOOD HEALTH

Obese adults

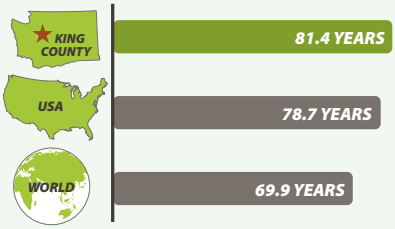


Adults currently smoking



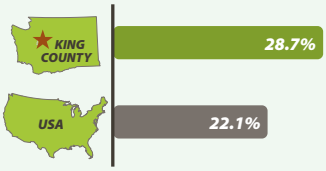
HIGH LIFE EXPECTANCY

Life expectancy at birth

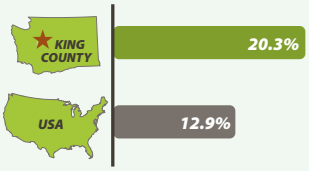


DIVERSE AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY

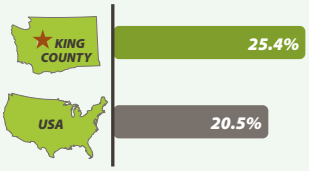
People of color



Foreign born



People (5+ years old) who speak a language other than English at home



A robust and innovative economy, stunning natural beauty, a thriving cultural and arts scene, and openness to diversity make King County a unique home to more than 2 million residents.

BUT WHEN YOU LOOK CLOSER, SIGNIFICANT PORTIONS OF OUR COMMUNITY ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND

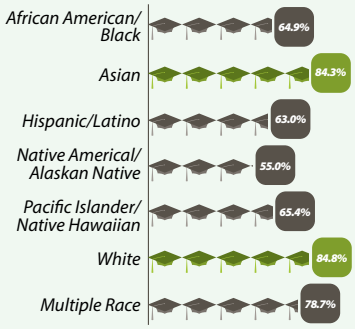
There are places such as south King County and racial/ethnic groups such as African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders that do not enjoy the same level of access to our region's benefits and opportunities.

EDUCATION

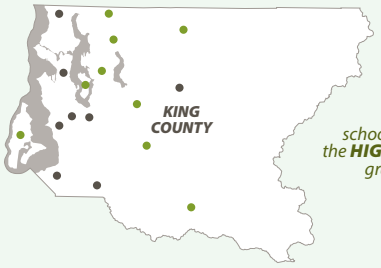
On-time high school graduation rates

- *Above King County (KC) average*
- *KC average: 79.4%*
- *Below KC average*

BY RACE



BY PLACE



*Average of 9 school districts with the **HIGHEST** on-time graduation rates*

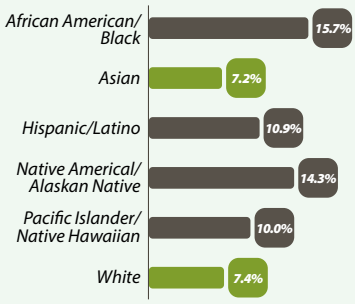
*Average of 9 school districts with the **LOWEST** on-time graduation rates*

UNEMPLOYMENT

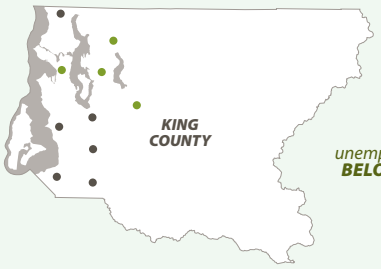
2010-2012

- *Lower unemployment rates*
- *KC average: 8.2%*
- *Higher unemployment rates*

BY RACE



BY PLACE



*Average of areas with unemployment rates **BELOW** KC average*

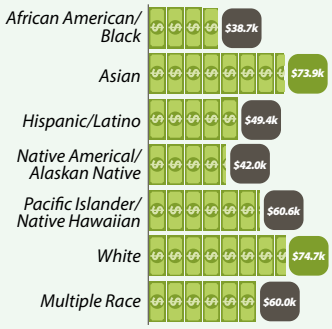
*Average of areas with unemployment rates **ABOVE** KC average*

INCOME

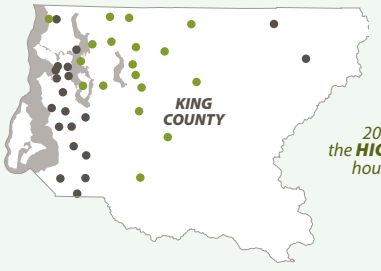
Annual household income

- *Above KC average*
- *KC average: $71,175*
- *Below KC average*

BY RACE



BY PLACE



*Average of 20 zip codes with the **HIGHEST** annual household income*

*Average of 20 zip codes with the **LOWEST** annual household income*

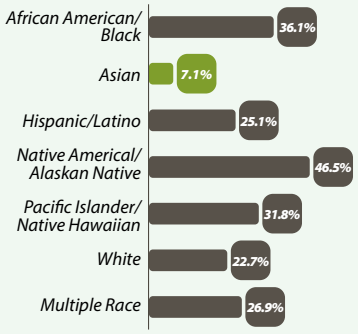
THESE DIFFERENCES ARE PREVENTING MANY OF OUR RESIDENTS FROM REACHING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

HEALTH

Adults obesity (2008-2012)

- Lower obesity rates
- KC average: 22.2%
- Higher obesity rates

BY RACE



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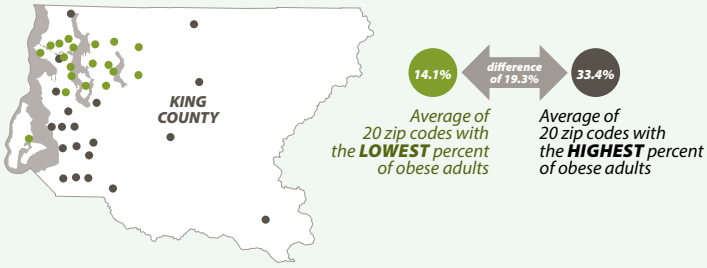
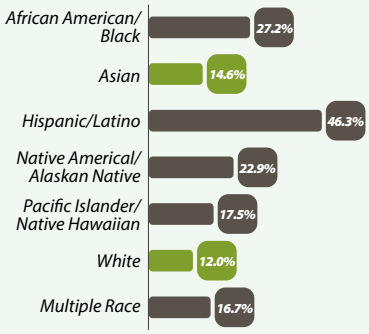


HEALTH

Adults without health insurance before Affordable Care Act enrollment (2011)

- Lower rates of uninsured adults
- KC average: 16.4%
- Higher rates of uninsured adults

BY RACE



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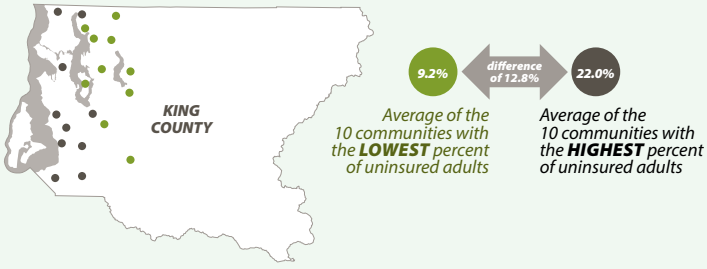
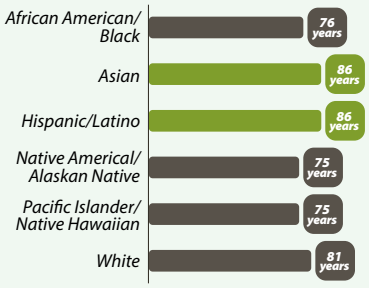


LIFE EXPECTANCY

- Above KC average
- KC average: 81.4 years
- Below KC average

BY RACE



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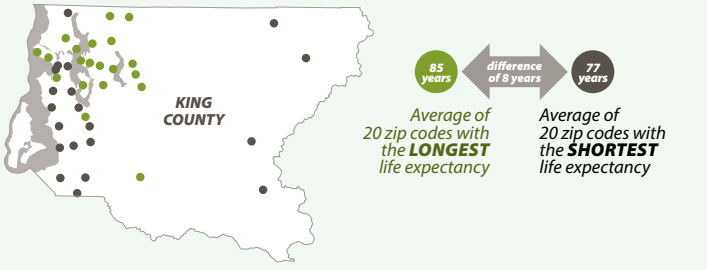
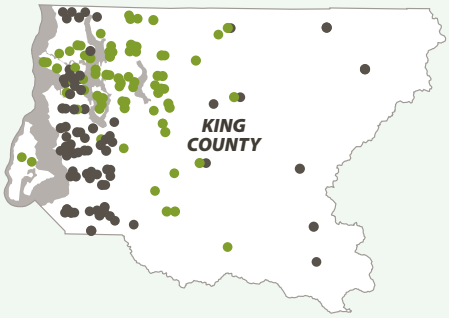


RACE AND PLACE MATTER IN KING COUNTY

QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

Together, race and place predict whether people have the opportunity to thrive.

People of color generally do not experience the same quality of life as white residents.



QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

- ABOVE AVERAGE
- BELOW AVERAGE

COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

PERCENT OF POPULATION WHO ARE PEOPLE OF COLOR

- less than 20%
- 20-40%
- greater than 40%

14 DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY

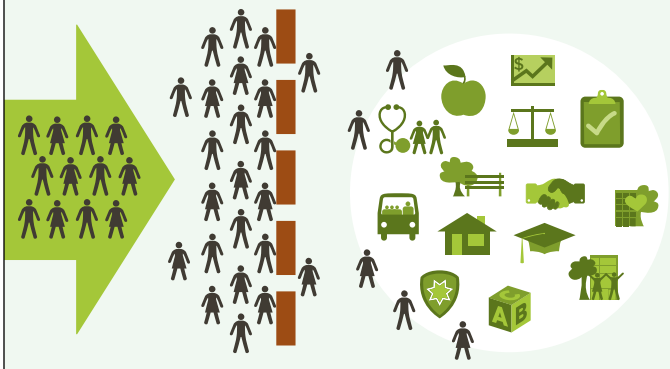
These are the conditions that King County has identified that each person needs to flourish.

- THE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, HEALTHY, LOCAL FOOD
- ACCESS TO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
- ACCESS TO PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES
- ACCESS TO SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION
- AFFORDABLE, SAFE, QUALITY HOUSING
- COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY
- EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- EQUITABLE LAW AND JUSTICE SYSTEM
- EQUITY IN COUNTY PRACTICES
- FAMILY WAGE JOBS AND JOB TRAINING
- HEALTHY BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS
- QUALITY EDUCATION
- STRONG, VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS

INEQUITIES HURT EVERYONE

WHEN PEOPLE LACK ACCESS TO THESE DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY, THEY LACK OPPORTUNITY. THE RESULTING INEQUITIES IMPACT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.

BARRIERS ***DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY***



COMMUNITY IMPACTS

HIGHER:

- *Health care costs*
- *Health problems*
- *Crime*
- *Unfilled high-skilled jobs*
- *Incarceration*

LOWER:

- *On-time graduation*
- *Wages*
- *Educated and skilled workforce*
- *Quality affordable housing*

WE ARE ALL BETTER OFF WHEN ALL OF US ARE BETTER OFF

KING COUNTY IS FOCUSING ON INCREASING ACCESS TO THE DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY SO THAT ALL PEOPLE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO FLOURISH.

REMOVING BARRIERS ***GREATER ACCESS TO DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY***

THRIVING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

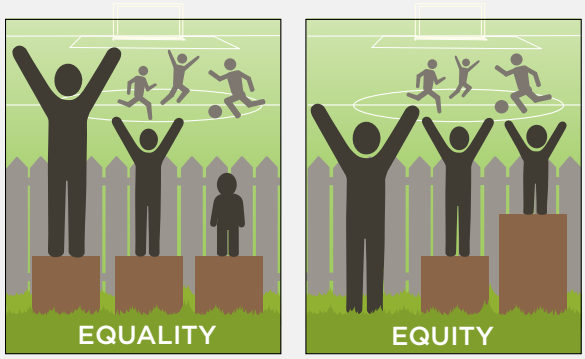
HIGHER:

- *On-time graduation*
- *Wages*
- *Educated and skilled workforce*
- *Quality affordable housing*

LOWER:

- *Health care costs*
- *Health problems*
- *Crime*
- *Unfilled high-skilled jobs*
- *Incarceration*

KING COUNTY'S APPROACH TO EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE



King County's Equity and Social Justice work is grounded in our 2010 "fair and just" ordinance, which requires us to intentionally consider equity and integrate it into our decisions and policies, our county practices and our engagement with communities. The ordinance also lays out definitions, structure and systems of accountability.

Though local inequities demand urgency on our part to act, we need to be patient and committed to long-term solutions. Since there is not one "blueprint" for equity, we are basing our work both on research and new, innovative practices. We don't always have the right answers, but we are asking the questions that deepen our understanding of the root causes. We are learning from these experiences so that we can continuously improve.

Our ordinance requires King County to report back yearly on progress, through this annual report. This report highlights some of the tangible ways that our county government, working closely with community partners, is doing business differently to promote equity. Our approach includes moving upstream, focusing on populations with the greatest needs, and improving organizational practices and how we work with communities.

EQUITY VS. EQUALITY

King County's 2010 "fair and just" ordinance defines "equity" as all people having full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. For King County this means we aspire for our residents to have access to our determinants of equity—the social, economic, geographic, political and environmental conditions in which the people in our county are born, grow, live, work and age.

We must also pay attention to "inequities," which are differences that are systematic, patterned, unfair—yet changeable. These inequities may be caused by our past and current decisions, systems and institutional structures, policies and practices in our society.

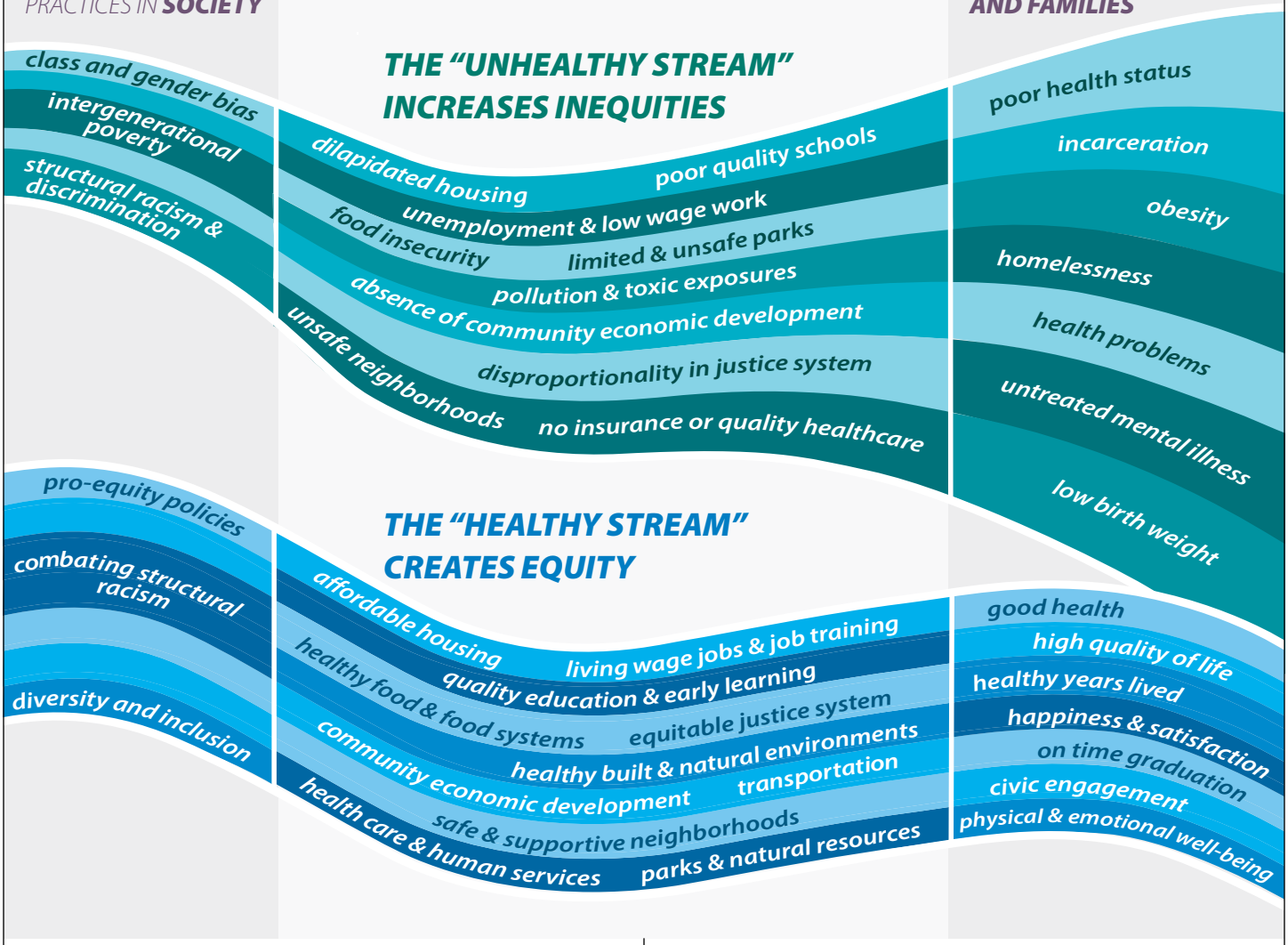
The ordinance directs us to focus on the populations with the greatest needs, particularly low-income populations, communities of color and limited-English speaking populations. These populations are also concentrated in geographic areas, such as parts of South King County, where the greatest inequities exist.

MOVING UPSTREAM TO CREATE EQUITY

"Moving upstream" means focusing on creating the conditions—or determinants of equity—that allow people to achieve their fullest potential. Moving upstream is about creating lasting changes, which can take various forms, such as enhancing focus on:

- Community conditions, for example access to affordable, quality housing and healthy environments, instead of individual outcomes, such as poor health
- Early childhood investments, that can prevent mental, behavioral and physical issues later in life
- Policy and systems changes such as increasing access to healthy foods and decreasing availability of unhealthy foods, instead of services for individuals such as nutrition education
- Preventing crises and problems from occurring, instead of treating these after they arise.

BUILDING EQUITY



EQUITY IN ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES

Equity in organizational practices is one of our key determinants of equity. One area of increasing attention for King County has been diversifying our workforce to keep pace with our changing local demographics.

A diverse workforce at all levels of county government allows us to offer more creative, effective ideas and strategies within our programs and agencies and to work more effectively with communities. King County aims to promote diversity in hiring, retaining and promoting at all levels—including managers, supervisors, leads, program and front line staff. Diversity in this case is broadly defined and includes race and ethnicity, gender, age, disability and education (formal as well as experience).

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

Effective community engagement means removing barriers for communities that may have previously prevented residents from successfully working with county government. It involves engaging all communities in a way that fosters trust, creates more effective services, programs and policies, and supports community-led solutions.

MAKING A HEALTHY DIFFERENCE THROUGH ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

DETERMINANT OF EQUITY:
Access to health and human services.

WHO: Public Health, Executive's Office, county agencies and a broad range of community organizations and leaders.

WHAT: Enrolling King County residents in affordable health care coverage made available by the Affordable Care Act.

For two years, while attending the University of Washington, Veronica Quintero, Miss Seafair 2011, went without health care coverage. It was a risky choice, given that at the age of nine, she was diagnosed with lymphoma. As a child, Quintero went through several months of chemotherapy. Thankfully, her doctor declared her free of cancer and she has had no complications since then.

"As a cancer survivor, I realize that preventive care is extremely important and I plan to make it a part of my life going forward," she said.

Quintero has now become an advocate for Washington State's new health care exchange within the Latino community.

"I was able to educate my own parents, who speak no English," she said. "My dad was able to enroll and is already seeking treatment for several health issues he had been ignoring because he couldn't afford medical care. As a seasonal migrant farm worker, health insurance through his job is nonexistent."

The Affordable Care Act has given many King County residents access to affordable health care for the first time ever, allowing them to take advantage of preventive services such as vaccinations, cancer screenings, mental health screenings and treatment for chronic conditions before they become more serious.

Thanks to a comprehensive, county-wide effort spearheaded by King County Executive Dow Constantine, the County has been a national leader and trailblazer in health insurance enrollment, with nearly 200,000 of our residents signing up as of mid-2014 through Washington Healthplanfinder. When efforts started, the populations that had the greatest need and were least likely to have insurance were Latinos and African Americans in south King County, most of whom were male.

THE COUNTY PURSUED A THREE PRONG STRATEGY:

1. The Executive convened a Leadership Circle to champion enrollment of people who are newly eligible for health insurance. The group consists of prominent community leaders from local businesses, health and nonprofit organizations, education, cities, labor, media and other sectors, all of whom have made a commitment to reach out to their respective constituencies.

2. The Executive charged all King County agencies and departments to think innovatively about how they could connect residents with health enrollment information.

3. Public Health formed a network of community partners and in-person assisters to get the word out and help people enroll.

EXAMPLES OF THE WORK COUNTY AGENCIES UNDERTOOK:

- The Department of Executive Services put up health enrollment posters in all County buildings and made presentations on health care reform to its custodial and other entry level facilities staff.
- The Department of Transportation and its partners helped spread the word on health enrollment by supporting an advertising campaign on Metro buses.
- The Department of Community and Human Services used its strong ties with community and social service

Family at an enrollment event in early 2014

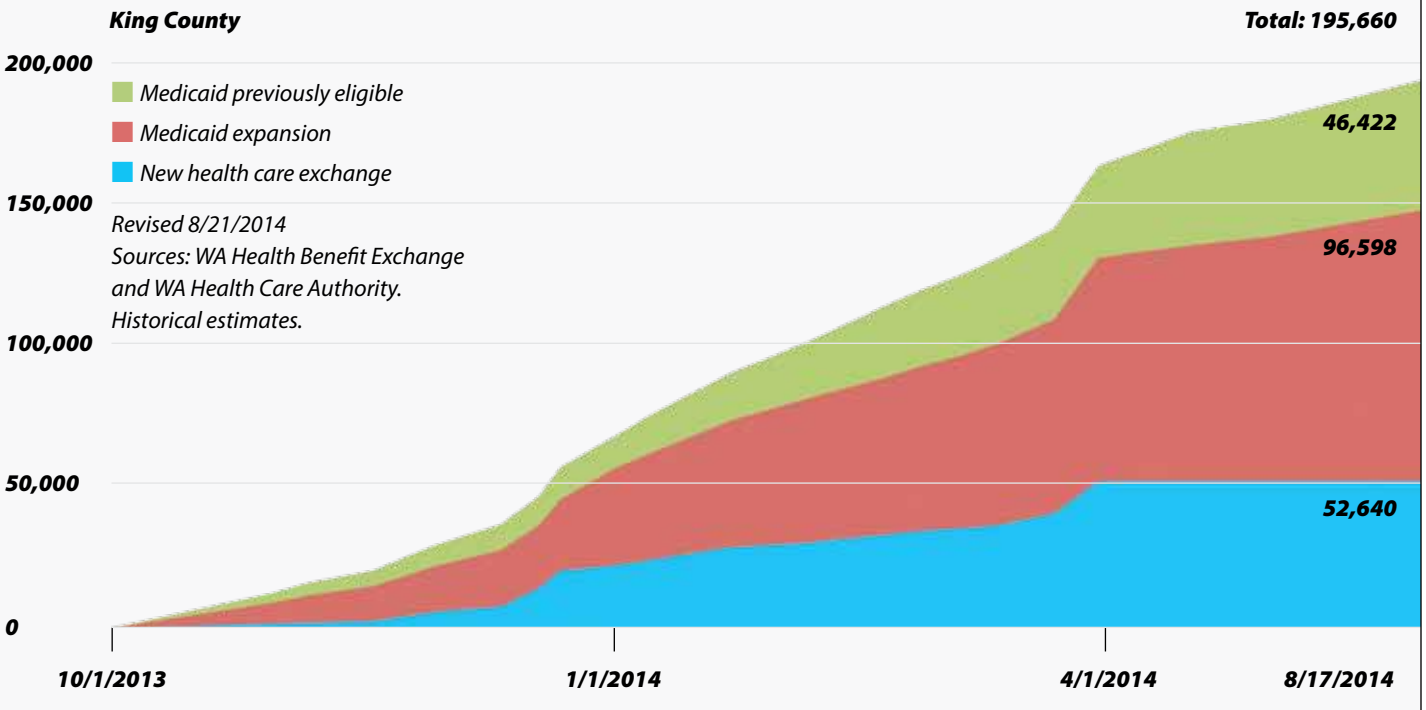
organizations to provide them with health enrollment strategies and materials for reaching out to uninsured King County residents.

- The King County Assessor's Office included health enrollment information on inserts mailed to all King County property owners.
- The Department of Natural Resources and Parks reached out to unincorporated areas in King County, conducting briefings to inform community organizations about enrollment opportunities.
- King County Information Technology included links to the Washington State Healthplanfinder on King County web pages and pushed information on enrollment out to the public via social media.

Despite the overwhelming success in getting people enrolled, some people in our county remain uninsured. King County Public Health Centers and community health centers are doing their part to continue to enroll people or provide services to those who aren't eligible– with reduced fees adjusted by family size and income.

King County residents will continue to experience significant gains in health and well-being because our community is working collectively to make the shift from a costly, crisis-oriented response to health and social problems to one that focuses on prevention and eliminates inequities. Thanks to our shared leadership, responsibility and broad engagement of community partners, King County has become a model that other regions around the country are already looking to for successful implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: NEW ENROLLMENT CUMULATIVE TOTALS



COMMUNITIES OF OPPORTUNITY: PLACES THAT MATTER

DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY:
Impacts all determinants.

WHO: King County, The Seattle Foundation and a broad range of community partners.

WHAT: Working to improve health, social, racial and economic equity.

In early 2014, King County government and The Seattle Foundation launched the Communities of Opportunity Initiative in partnership with community organizations, city governments, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Its purpose is to support community-identified goals that increase health, social, racial and economic equity—and positively influence policies, systems and practices within and across communities.

WHY THE NEED FOR THIS INITIATIVE?

Lasting change happens when we act on the improvements communities envision for their own neighborhoods. And in our region, these needs are significant.

As King County has grown, so have many health, social, and racial inequities. Today our region risks becoming a society divided between the best of times for some people and the worst of times for others. While average measures of our quality of life factors are among the highest in the country among large urban counties, these averages mask stark differences in terms of place, race and income.

Aiming to create neighborhoods where everybody thrives

As shown in the map, "place" plays a central role in many measures of health and well-being. This is most pronounced in the areas shown in dark red, many of which lie in south King County along the I-5 corridor. These same places are also home to the greatest percentages of low-income residents, people of color and people who do not speak English very well (limited speaking).

THE POWER OF THREE

Communities of Opportunity helps neighborhoods throughout King County work to improve influences that affect health and well-being. Investments will target specific communities with the greatest inequities and the most to gain from additional funding.

The Initiative is a result of three elements coming together:

1. King County's Health and Human Services Transformation Plan calls for supporting targeted communities by developing solutions that will improve factors that impact the health and well-being of residents and the vibrancy of their neighborhoods. These issues include housing, physical environment, adequate employment, early childhood support and access to services.

2. The Seattle Foundation, through its Center for Community Partnerships, has made a multi-year commitment to support place-based efforts that addresses racial and financial inequities through Communities of Opportunity.

3. King County (in addition to Albuquerque, New Orleans, San Antonio, and San Francisco) was selected to receive a one-year planning grant by Living Cities, a philanthropic alliance that includes 22 of the world's largest foundations and financial institutions. As part of its Integration Initiative, Living Cities draws Communities of Opportunity together into a national collective that helps reshape communities and policies to meet the needs of low-income residents.

The initial investment among partners over five years is approximately $3.7 million.

EQUITY BY DESIGN AND WITH COMMUNITY

A dedicated Design Committee, co-sponsored by The Seattle Foundation and King County, was formed in spring of 2014 to help develop and refine the initiative's larger framework. The formation of this committee represents a change in how King County has previously engaged communities in local initiatives. From the start, community-based organizations and champions of equity have been part of this Design Committee and driving the strategies and investments.

"We need to change the way institutions and communities work together. People are more engaged in developing strategies for change when they feel they own more of the change in their community,"

said Sili Savusa, Executive Director of White Center Community Development Association and member of the Communities of Opportunity Design Committee.

KING COUNTY HEALTH, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY MEASURES

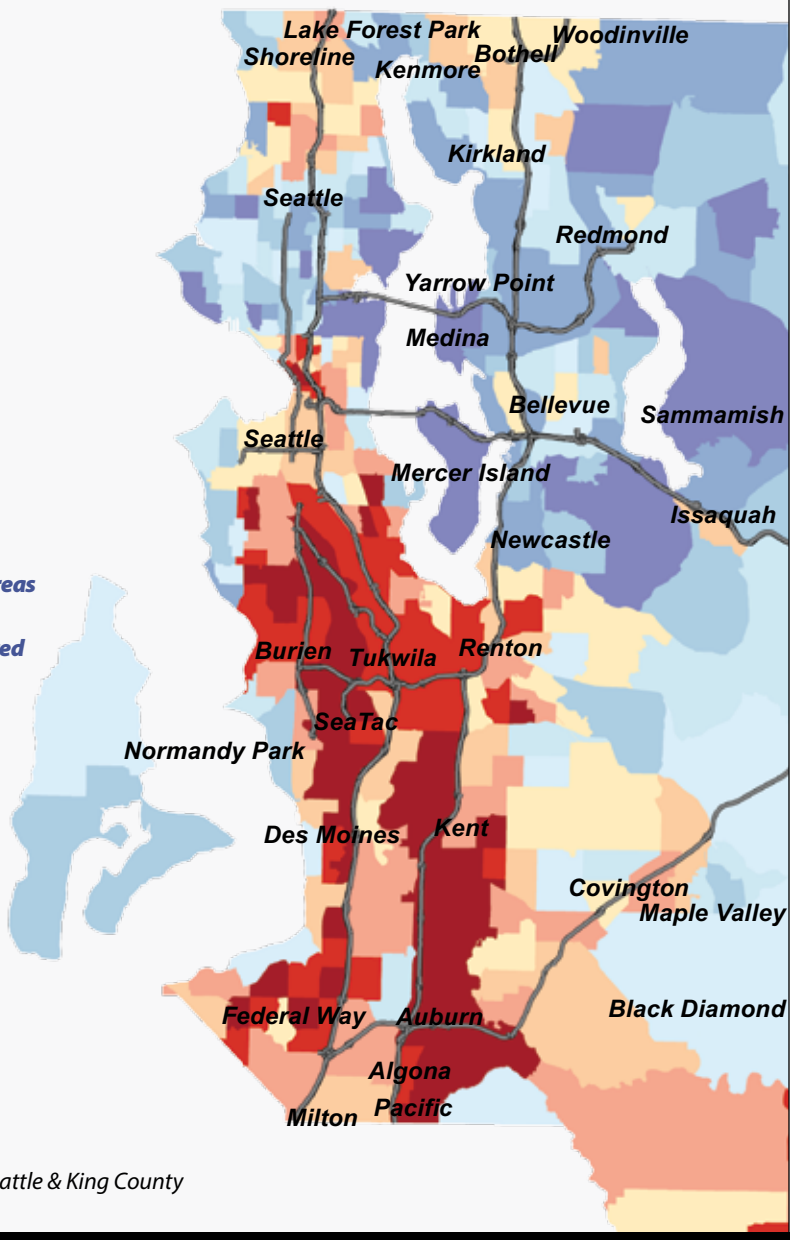
LEGEND — ***Freeways***

RANKING

Census Tracts ranked by an index of health, housing and economic opportunity measures.

Lowest Ranked → ***Highest Ranked***

POPULATION MEASURES	***Dark red areas populations most impacted***	***Dark blue areas populations least impacted***
Life expectancy	*74 years*	*87 years*
Health, broadly defined:		
Adverse childhood experiences	*20%*	*9%*
Frequent mental distress	*14%*	*4%*
Smoking	*20%*	*5%*
Obesity	*33%*	*14%*
Diabetes	*13%*	*5%*
Preventable hospitalizations	*1.0%*	*0.4%*
Housing:		
Poor housing condition	*8%*	*0%*
Economic opportunity:		
Low-income, below 200% poverty	*54%*	*6%*
Unemployment	*13%*	*3%*



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau / Produced by: Public Health - Seattle & King County

EMBRACING WORKFORCE CHANGE AS AN EQUITY OPPORTUNITY

DETERMINANT OF EQUITY:
Equity in County practices.

WHO: King County Human Resources Division working with all County agencies.

WHAT: Becoming a more diverse, equitable and dynamic employer of the future.

Like many organizations across the country, King County is facing a seismic shift in the makeup of its workforce over the next five years—giving us an opportunity to grow into a more diverse, equitable and dynamic employer of the future.

Between increasing retirements and regular turnover, the County is expecting a 46 percent turnover in our workforce by the year 2018. At the same time, the community we serve has changed significantly, becoming considerably more diverse over the last 40 years.

Through King County's new Employer of the Future initiative and the 2014-16 Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) plan, we are developing a framework for ensuring greater equity, diversity and opportunity in our changing workplace.

The County has identified three key areas where we can make a substantial impact on who we are as an employer and how we serve the people of King County. These key areas are: hiring, training and pay equity.

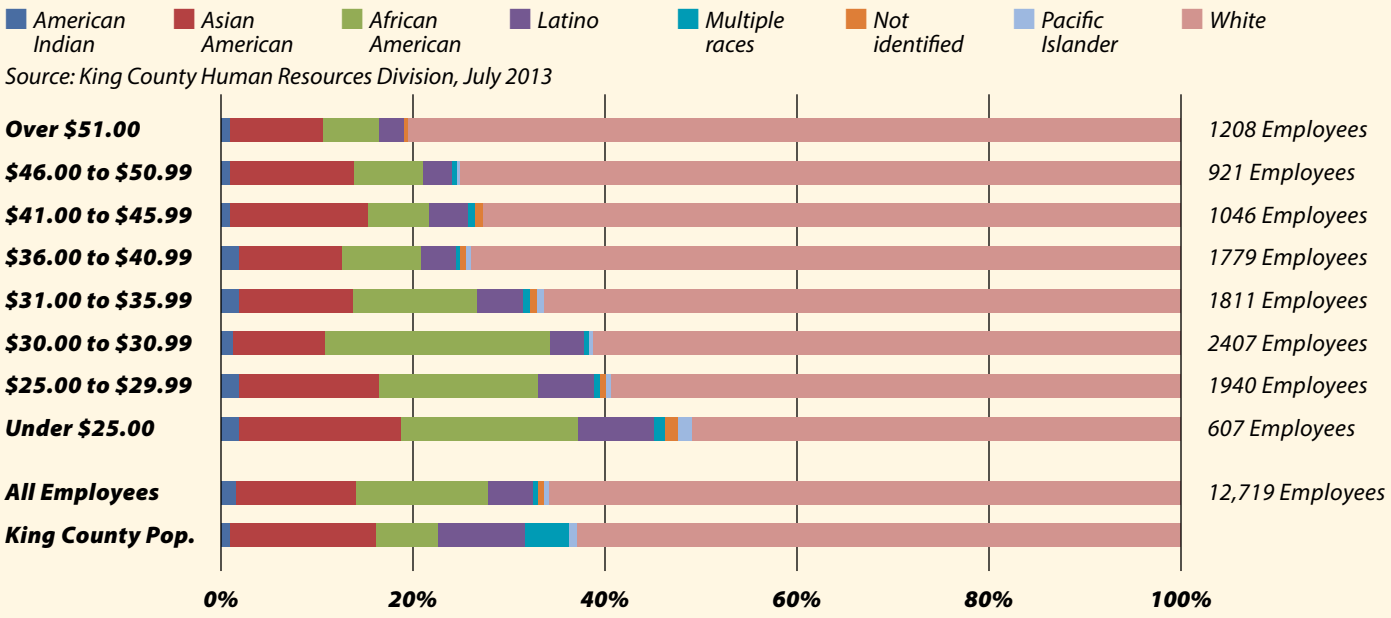
HIRING

King County's workforce roughly reflects the ethnic diversity of our community. However, that diversity is not always reflected through every level of the workforce. The Human Resources Division (HRD) is making changes to the recruitment process in an effort to reach more candidates who might be interested in working at all levels of King County and represent a broad spectrum in terms of race and ethnicity, age, disability, education, income and other areas. Recommended changes include:

- Shifting the hiring process to focus on the core attributes of the ideal candidate, rather than requiring certain levels of education and experience
- Removing unnecessary educational requirements from job postings and, where possible, allowing candidates to substitute equivalent experience for education
- Creating trainee job classifications to provide opportunities for a less experienced workforce to enter county service
- Advertising in a range of places where a wide variety of candidates are more likely to look for job postings, and launching more robust outreach efforts
- Ensuring diversity of race, gender and age on interview panels and training panel members to be aware of and alert to their implicit biases in the process

King County employees

KING COUNTY EMPLOYEES – RACE BY HOURLY PAY RATES



"All of these changes are designed to make it easier to bring in candidates who can perform the job, develop within King County, and use their experience and ideas to help us serve our residents better," said Nancy Buonanno Grennan, Human Resources Director.

PAY

Pay equity across ethnic and racial lines is an area that needs greater focus, as well. Because diversity decreases as we go up the pay scale, Human Resources is developing a number of strategies to ensure that recruitment at all levels of county government includes a pool of qualified, diverse candidates. In addition, the department is creating cross-County internal development and career paths so that we can develop and promote talent from within.

King County has also done a lot of work to ensure pay equity between male and female employees. Currently, women in our workforce earn 99.1 percent of what men earn on average—compared to 81 percent nationwide, and 76 percent in Washington State. However, pay for women at King County has a much wider distribution than men, with greater representation at the high and low ends of the pay scale.

"We want to make sure that we have a passionate, skilled and diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve," said Buonanno Grennan.

As a result, when the high end is removed, the pay for men noticeably outpaces the pay for women (while women and men performing the same jobs are receiving equal pay, as required by the County's compensation policies and guidelines). This reflects the large number of men employed in what are still mostly male-dominated professions, such as law enforcement, skilled trades and transit operators. The County is aggressively seeking ways to increase the participation of women in these fields. Furthermore, the County's new Compensation and Classification Guidelines ask hiring managers to be mindful of the fact that women and persons of color may not be as proactive in bargaining on behalf of themselves when agreeing upon a starting wage for a new job.

continued

TRAINING

Enhancing our employees' equity and social justice awareness enables us to better serve our customers and be more sensitive to their needs, while making sure that we treat one another with respect at work. Over the last two years, the County has built a robust Employee Training and Development curriculum that offers county-wide learning activities and training specifically targeting equity and social justice. This effort includes quarterly classes, cultural competency and awareness workshops, and monthly "lunch and learn" presentations on ESJ-related topics of interest. In addition, 24 employees from various agencies were trained to teach the Basic Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) class in their own departments, providing additional learning opportunities.

Human Resource's new Continuous Organizational Development unit also took steps to embed ESJ principles and practices into a number of training programs, including Leadership Academy, Train the Trainer, Organizational Development and Difficult Conversations. HRD also offered three cultural competency classes, two classes on Inclusive Teaching, and one class on Facilitating Dialogues around Race, Gender, Culture and Social Differences.

Over the course of 2013, 346 employees attended 24 Basic ESJ classes, and close to 250 employees attended 11 Micro-Aggression in the Workplace classes, with the feedback from employees showing strong support for these learning opportunities. This adds to the thousands who have already attended ESJ trainings.

"As an employee, I can be an agent of change by ensuring that I provide equal access/opportunity to all and treat everyone equitably. How I treat others affects society as a whole."
–a King County employee

As one employee noted in a class evaluation, "I was at the Micro-Aggressions training you gave yesterday and just had to say how wonderful I thought it was. [It] made me realize that I have been on both the receiving side and giving side of some micro-aggressions and micro-inequities that I had never identified as such before. I will work on addressing these behaviors in myself and others."

We've made significant progress in advancing diversity and equity at King County, but there's still a lot to do. The coming change in our workforce over the next five years gives us an ideal opportunity to make lasting organizational changes that will benefit our employees—and our communities.

King County employees

THE FUTURE OF KING COUNTY IS ACADEMIC

DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY: Quality education, family wage jobs and job training, equity in county practices.

WHO: Public Health Environmental Health Services division, University of Washington School of Public Health, local high schools, school districts, and other partners.

WHAT: Collaborating on a program to help King County youth realize their full potential by increasing graduation rates and preparing them for the workforce of tomorrow.

In 2013, Public Health's Environmental Health Services launched the Education Engagement Strategy to help close the gap for students of color in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Its goal is to increase graduation rates, improve college and career readiness, and inspire a source of qualified and diverse individuals who will make up the county's future workforce.

According to Greg Wilson of Environmental Health, the purpose of the program is fourfold:

- Capturing the 'hearts and minds' of youth to encourage them to recognize the value of education in high school and beyond
- Providing job shadowing and internship opportunities at the high school, community college and university levels to increase awareness of professional careers in STEM-related fields
- Fostering student awareness of the determinants of health and equity—and how different environmental factors lead to disproportionate health outcomes among individuals and communities
- Facilitating one-on-one conversations to build self-esteem and create future decision makers.

Environmental Health Services employees participated in the Education Engagement Strategy by serving as adult champions, facilitating school presentations, participating in career day activities and providing job shadow experiences. So far, more than 250 high school-aged students from three different school districts have participated in the program.

Students participating in the Education Engagement Strategy with Greg Wilson of Environmental Health

According to Ngozi Oleru, Director of Environmental Health, "We understand firsthand the value of an education and the importance of students having strong science and technology backgrounds."

Future plans for the Education Engagement Strategy include further expansion at the community, vocational college and university levels, and institutionalizing the program in order to benefit students for years to come. One participating student noted,

"I want to be the first in my family to graduate and go to college."

EMBEDDING AN EQUITY LENS IN THE COUNTY'S BUDGET PROCESS

DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY:
Impacts all determinants of equity.

WHO: Executive Office and Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, working with Council and all departments and agencies.

WHAT: Advancing equity in the budget process through strong leadership, training and equity tools.

Since the budget is one of the County's most important policy documents, embedding an equity lens into its development process is paramount for furthering our goal of advancing Equity and Social Justice (ESJ).

Since early 2011, the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget has been taking steps to ensure that equity is considered throughout the County's budget process. As a first step, a team developed tools to help County staff consider the impacts of budget decisions on equity, and trained budget and agency finance managers in the use of this tool. Agencies were required to indicate if there was an equity impact associated with each budget change, to describe those impacts, and to propose ways to enhance positive equity impacts or mitigate negative impacts.

Jumping forward to the 2014 budget, the Executive and Council requested a deeper analysis and understanding of equity impacts to inform their decision making. Councilmember Larry Gossett (then Chair of the Council) and Executive Dow Constantine attended a training session offered by PSB to impress upon staff how valuable an equity analysis is to their decision making processes, and how the analysis can lead to more equitable outcomes in our communities. Both the Executive and Council have increasingly relied upon demographic and other data related to equity impacts to inform budget decisions.

The following examples show how 2014 Executive-proposed and Council-adopted budget decisions were influenced by equity analyses:

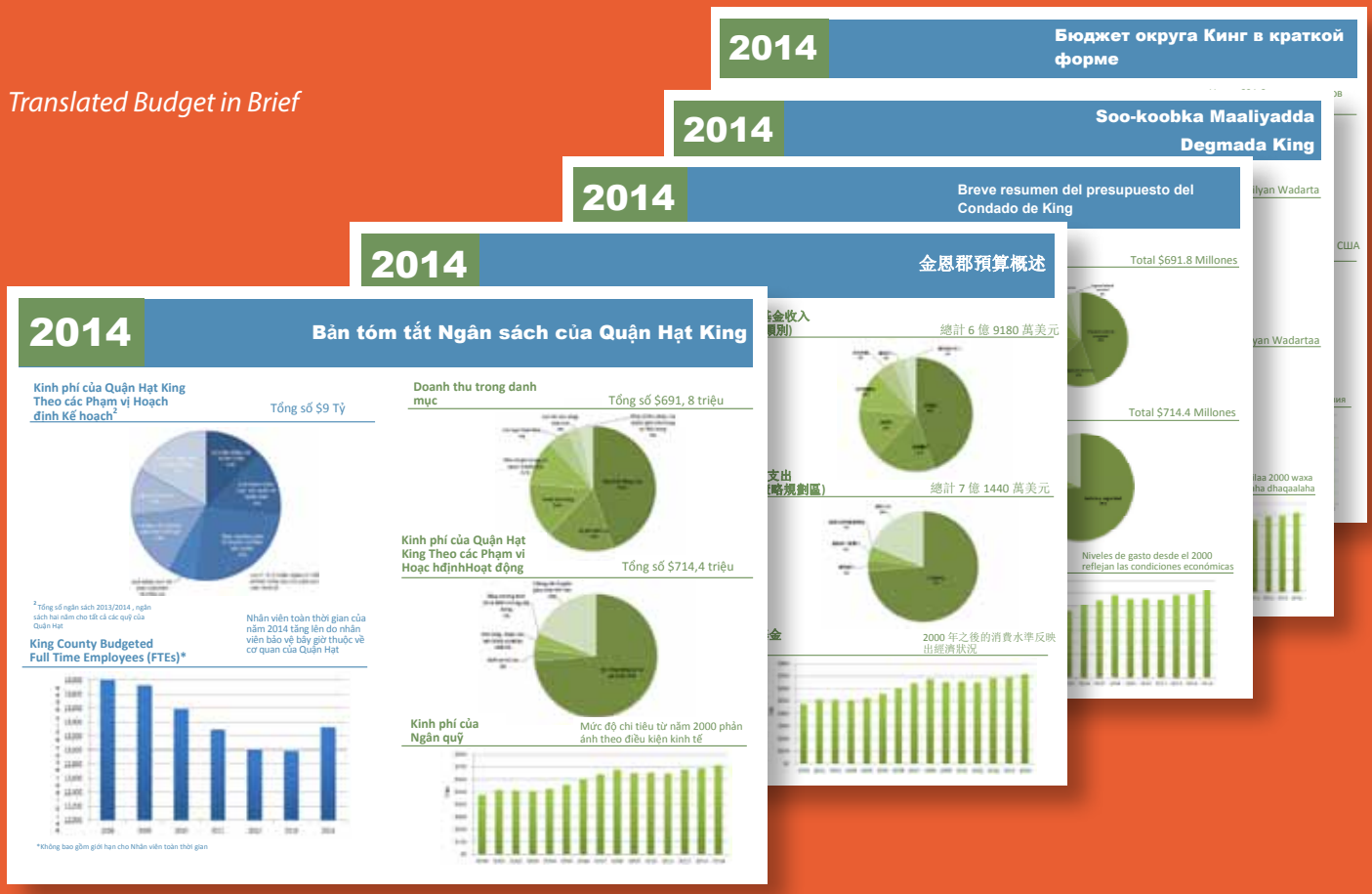
- King County's new Department of Public Defense examined the fee charged to people needing public defense services. Because the large majority of public defense clients are low-income, the department determined that eliminating the fee entirely produced the most positive equity outcomes by far.

- The Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention funded a Recidivism Reduction and Reentry Coordinator. The coordinator's job is to do a county analysis, align activities, and come up with new strategies to address the fact that people of color make up a disproportionate number of those in contact with the criminal justice system.

- The County prioritized funding to maintain two home-visiting Public Health nurse positions in south King County that were threatened to be eliminated due to lack of revenue. Nurse Family Partnership is an evidence-based, two-and-a-half-year intensive home visiting program for first-time, low-income mothers who are primarily from traditionally underserved communities, including African American, Native American, Latino and many residents who have limited English speaking skills.

- The 2014 Adopted Budget included an ESJ Opportunity Fund of $50,000 to support implementation of innovative ideas by County agencies to advance equity. Proposals from agencies were requested through a competitive process and the response was overwhelming, with 39 proposals submitted. Ten projects were

Translated Budget in Brief



funded, including Juvenile Justice Disproportionate Minority Contact Training; Equity Outreach Through Ethnic and Disability Media; Limited-English Speaking Liaison and Marginalized Community Workshop Research and Assessment; and ESJ Capacity Building, Training and Facilitation for Environmental Health.

- King County translated its "2014 Budget in Brief" document into five languages.
- The County funded $1.7 million of capital improvements for the Steve Cox Memorial Park in White Center – which has high numbers of low-income residents and people of color – including converting a ball field into a synthetic, multi-purpose field and upgrading lighting.

Moving forward with the 2015-2016 King County budget and beyond, there is still much to do in the area of equity. To this end, the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget is:

- Responding to the Executive's and Council's interest in expanding and deepening ESJ analysis in the development of the county's first biennial budget for 2015-2016.
- More fully incorporating an ESJ lens into analyses of not only budget changes, but also the overall budget and resource allocation. The Office has developed agency ESJ profiles that cover a range of issues – from general ESJ vision to diversity in the workforce.
- Examining agencies' past budget development processes in order to develop improvements to how an ESJ lens is applied throughout the budget process and at all levels in the organization—from program management to agency leadership.

IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN KING COUNTY: MOVING TOWARD EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY:
Impacts all determinants of equity.

WHO: King County working with community-based organizations serving immigrants and refugees.

WHAT: King County engaged the local limited-English speaking community to come up with a plan to better serve their needs.

In King County, there are more than 170 different languages spoken, with a quarter of our residents speaking a language other than English at home. Furthermore, about 11 percent of county residents over the age of five, or nearly 203,000 people, are "limited English speaking" —meaning they speak a language other than English and no one in their household speaks English "very well."

Given these demographic changes, the King County Council directed a cross-agency workgroup to come up with an action plan to increase access to services for limited-English proficient (LEP) residents.

King County South Park Bridge Opening celebration

As a start, the workgroup gathered an inventory of the wide range of programs and activities throughout King County government focused on immigrant and refugee populations in order to build on existing work and best practices. Then, the workgroup solicited feedback and new ideas from local community leaders who candidly expressed the challenges faced by immigrant and refugee residents and organizations when working with King County. Among the community leaders' comments:

- "The County is so siloed, and one department doesn't coordinate with the next one."
- "Many people who want something done locally are able to get 50 of their friends to email their elected leaders and show up to government meetings wearing T-shirts. Our parents don't speak English so we can't do that."
- "The County needs to put its feet in the community and build relationships."

Immigrant and refugee community leaders urged the County to: empower residents so they can solve their own problems; increase investments in smaller community -based organizations so that these organizations can better serve their communities; invest in community leadership development; and pay organizations for their time when we engage them.

Community leaders also asked for county leadership to build meaningful relationships that enable real conversations, and to include community voices in decision-making processes—especially the budget process.

The LEP workgroup also developed the following short- and long-term recommendations:

Statement of values. The Executive should transmit and Council adopt a policy document stating King County's values in serving LEP residents that empowers, engages and develops relationships—while building on current policies like the Translation Executive Order, the Community Engagement Guide and the Equity and Social Justice Ordinance.

Translation and interpretation services. Assigning a Translation Coordinator to improve translation services across the county, and consider additional budgetary support for translation services costs across agencies.

Outreach and engagement. Expand and increase coordination of outreach and engagement efforts to community-based organizations that serve immigrant and refugee communities and residents across the county with an Outreach Coordinator.

Implement a "Community Liaison" model. The county's outreach and engagement efforts should include community liaisons and investing in LEP-serving organizations to help build their organizational capacity.

County workforce and hiring practices. Promote and hire staff who speak languages other than English and make it standard in countywide hiring, plus develop and support apprenticeships and other training programs targeting immigrant and refugee communities.

As a next step, King County government will look to leverage existing and new resources to make the key recommendations a reality.

PERCENT OF LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS

by Census Tract, with Cities,
King County, 5-year Average 2008-2012

LEGEND

King County border

Cities

PERCENT LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING

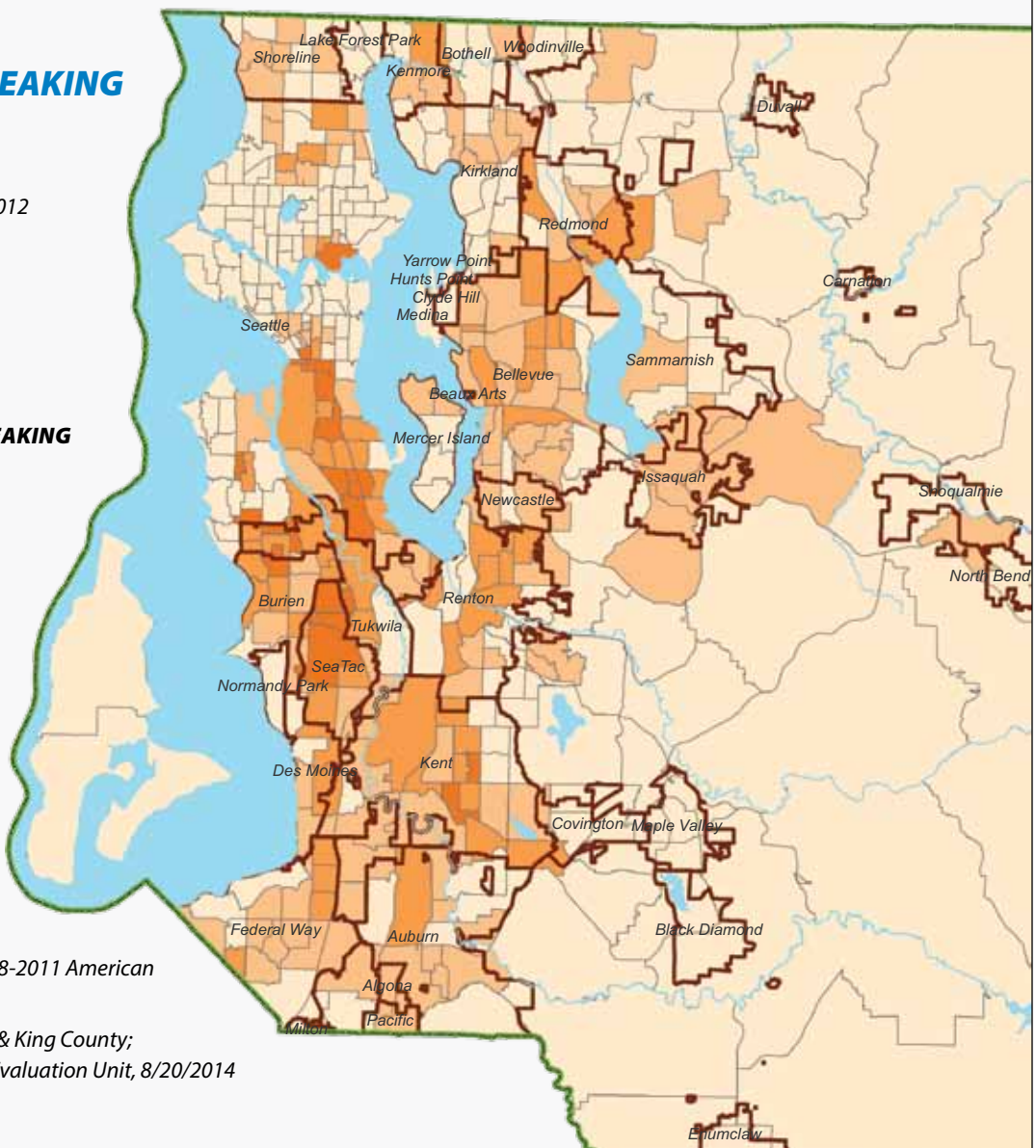
19.1% - 48.6%

10% - 19%

4.2% - 9.9%

0% - 4.1%

King County average: 6.0%



Percent of households in which no one 14 and over speaks English only, or speaks a language other than English at home and speaks English 'very well'.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2011 American Community Survey

Produced by: Public Health - Seattle & King County; Assessment, Policy Development & Evaluation Unit, 8/20/2014

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, COMMON GOALS

DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY:
Impacts all determinants of equity.

WHO: King County with local community-based organizations and residents.

WHAT: Working closely with residents, including immigrant and refugee communities, to update the King County Strategic Plan.

The King County Strategic Plan ("the Plan") is a roadmap that embodies the priorities of residents and our elected officials. The Plan was first adopted in 2010, and the County undertook a process to update the Plan in 2014. As part of that process, we sought input from the public during the past year, with a special focus on community members who have limited English speaking skills.

Through our local network of community-based organizations that support limited English speaking residents, King County organized focus groups that included more than 100 people from Vietnamese, Russian, Somali, Chinese and Latino communities.

"These focus groups bring us into direct contact with people to understand their hopes and dreams, as well as their challenges, and allow us to paint a richer picture of our community's priorities," said Michael Jacobson, King County's Deputy Director for the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget.

Russian immigrants share their thoughts

The focus group discussions highlighted the many significant challenges some of our residents face. Some examples include:

- A group held at the Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) in Beacon Hill included Russian speakers, many of whom were newly arrived. They shared their stories of struggle and the challenges young mothers face, such as high housing and childcare costs.
- Members of the refugee group held at the Somali Community Services Coalition in SeaTac felt neglected after the initial support they receive from government ran out. Many face homelessness as a result. One woman said, "Why do they bring us here and then tell us to take care of ourselves after only three months?"

■ At the Mandarin and Cantonese focus groups held at the Asian Counseling and Referral Service facility, participants expressed many challenges including crime, language barriers and discrimination.

Almost all focus group participants emphasized the importance of access to affordable housing, living wage jobs and reliable public transportation.

Most participants were thankful that King County reached out to them to discuss personal and community issues. Some offered suggestions on services that could improve their situation and provide more opportunity for limited English speaking populations, such as: more funding for employment centers, creating job pools, connecting job seekers to employers, providing interpreters for community healthcare clinics, and more training for manufacturing jobs.

One Spanish-speaking resident in the focus group at El Centro De La Raza said,

Members of the Somali community in a focus group

A public meeting in Snoqualmie

"We're just like everybody else. We need to work, have a place to live, and a way to get around."

King County is using feedback from these focus groups as we update the King County Strategic Plan. These valuable insights will help us shape our long-term priorities and determine immediate focus areas as we do our part to get our residents the services they need to reach their full potential.

LOW-INCOME FARES: KEEPING TRANSIT AFFORDABLE

DETERMINANT OF EQUITY: **Access to safe and efficient transportation.**

WHO: **Department of Transportation working with an advisory committee including representatives from human services, health, business, cities, County Council and low-income consumers.**

WHAT: **Created new King County public transportation fare options for people with low incomes.**

King County's new low-income fare program is designed to keep transit affordable for those least able to pay for a bus ride. The fare category, proposed by the Executive and approved by the King County Council in early 2014, is groundbreaking for such a large transit agency, and will fulfill Metro Transit's fundamental commitment to fairness and social equity.

King County residents riding the bus

In 2013, Metro convened a 21-member advisory committee, representing a broad cross section of interests, to study the potential for a low-income fare program. The advisory committee unanimously recommended a low-income fare in order to ensure continued access to bus service and jobs for riders of all income levels. Establishing a low-income fare is especially important given four recent fare increases required to help preserve transit service in light of Metro's funding shortage.

"Making transit more affordable for working people is both innovative and the right thing to do, and a reduced fare will help tens of thousands of our neighbors get to work and school,"

said Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness Executive Director Alison Eisinger.

While regular peak-hour fares are currently $2.50 and rising to $2.75 next year, the reduced fare is set at $1.50 per trip for qualifying low-income riders and is scheduled to take effect in March 2015. The fare will be available to those with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level and will require the use of an ORCA card.

Metro will partner with Public Health – Seattle & King County to administer the program given Public Health's successful campaign with health insurance enrollment under the Affordable Care Act. Together, they will develop a countywide network of third-party human service agencies and community-based providers that can verify client eligibility, ensure program integrity, help with enrollment, and provide ongoing support.

RISING ABOVE POTENTIAL DISASTER

DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY: **Affordable, safe, quality housing; healthy built and natural environments; community and public safety.**

WHO: **King County Flood District.**

WHAT: **King County supports residents at the Riverbend Mobile Home & RV Park on the Cedar River to assure their safety.**

The King County Flood Control District engages in significant flood risk reduction projects to protect lives and property throughout the County. One particular project this past year included acquiring the Riverbend Mobile Home & RV Park on the Cedar River from a voluntary sale by the owner and relocating people out of harm's way of major flooding.

This mobile-home community is in the mapped floodplain and floodway and, more significantly, in an area where historically, the river channel has moved, putting the residents at severe risk. During the November 1990 flood event, the river channel undercut mobile homes closest to the river bank, putting them and the residents in jeopardy.

Prior to acquiring the property in 2013, County staff determined that about half of the residents spoke Spanish and that all relocation and project outreach should take that into consideration. As a result, all written materials were translated into Spanish; the relocation team included a bilingual staff person; and community meetings were presented in English and Spanish (and held during both daytime and evening hours).

As of July 2014, the King County Flood District staff has worked with more than half of the residents, and the three-year relocation process is ahead of schedule. Each resident or family has a different set of circumstances that must be addressed, one-by-one. To date, nearly all of the residents being displaced have submitted some type of hardship request to which the County is responding.

Hazard areas at Riverbend Mobile Home Park

Many residents have moved from mobile to fixed homes and others have moved out of state. Some have relocated to apartments and senior housing, while other residents have moved in with relatives. Overall, their feedback about the process, financial assistance and other support has been very positive.

"We feel as though we've been treated fairly and equitably,"

says Jovana Carreno, a bilingual Riverbend resident who, along with her sister and neighbor, Jessica Velazquez Carreno, has been through the relocation process. The Carreno sisters were each in housing considered "NON-DSS" (decent, safe and sanitary). Jovana had no hot water and Jessica was living in a shed. In their new homes, both are in decent, safe and sanitary units at a nearby mobile home park – still living across the street from one another – in Renton.

In early 2013, King County agencies made commitments and created yearly work plans for Equity and Social Justice. This section includes select achievements in the area of policy and decision-making, organizational practices and community engagement.

CONSIDER EQUITY IMPACTS IN ALL DECISION-MAKING

ESJ was central to many decisions, policies and programs in 2013 and early 2014, including:

- In February 2014, **King County Executive Dow Constantine** with support of his policy advising team developed his second-term policy agenda, identifying equity and opportunity as one of three overarching priorities for the next four years. Areas of focus included improved local food access and development of a regional vision to advance early childhood development.

- In December 2013, **King County Executive Dow Constantine** signed into law an ordinance that set the conditions under which the County honors requests from Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement for the detention of immigrants in King County jails. The measure provides that only individuals who have been convicted of a violent or serious crime will have their civil immigration holds honored. Adoption of the ordinance was led by then **King County Council chair Larry Gossett.**

- LGBTQ youth and young adults are overrepresented among our homeless population. Approximately two-thirds of youth and young adults enrolled in Safe Harbors in 2012 were people of color, while people of color constitute only 35 percent of King County's overall population. Concerned by this evidence of disproportionality, the **Department of Community and Human Services** came together with funders, providers, youth and other stakeholders to develop the Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness by 2020.

- The **Office of Economic and Financial Analysis** worked with King County Employment and Education Resources to research the status of jobs and wages in King County. The office has been presenting its findings, and has established resources in this area to help frame the issue of livable family wage jobs and job training as an equity and social justice issue.

- In an effort to improve customer service, particularly to those unable to get to the clerk's office during business hours, the **Department of Judicial Administration** developed and deployed new ways for customers to request, pay for and receive certified copies of court documents and access digitally recorded audio and video files of court proceedings online. This new and very popular service has allowed customers to save energy, time and money by avoiding a trip to their closest clerk's office, eliminating the lengthy delays necessary to communicate by mail, and by enabling customers to promptly access their certified copies electronically.

- People of color, particularly African Americans, continue to be overrepresented within the criminal justice and child welfare systems. Several entities of the County's criminal justice system joined together to address and raise awareness of the growing disproportionalities in the justice system by discussing *The New Jim Crow*, a book by civil rights lawyer and legal scholar Michelle Alexander.

  - The County's **Criminal Justice Council** – which includes representation from **Superior and District Courts, the Sheriff's Office, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and the Departments of Defense and Adult and Juvenile Detention** – convened a Racial Disproportionality workgroup which reviewed Alexander's book and discussed how justice system entities can collaborate to eliminate these disproportionalities.

- The Courts and Community Committee, a judicial committee at the Superior Court, sponsored a six-session reading/discussion of the book for all employees of **Superior Court, Judicial Administration and Adult and Juvenile Detention.** Subsequently, a work plan was developed to address concerns raised by the book and in the discussions. The Courts and Community Committee has started to move forward on several of these items, with targeted support from the court's Executive Committee.

■ The **King County Sheriff's Office** has streamlined the U-Visa process for immigrants who have been the victim of or witness to a violent crime. The Sheriff's Office now has a single point of contact in the records department who handles this process, and each certification passes across the Sheriff's desk for his signature. This new procedure is a huge benefit to members of immigrant communities who would otherwise avoid contacting law enforcement for fear of deportation.

■ The **Assessor's Office** provided property tax exemptions to over 20,000 low-income, disabled and veteran property owners in 2013. To increase public awareness on property- related information, the Assessor's Office worked with over 150 community-based organizations across King County to provide information about what property taxes fund, tax exemptions and deferrals for qualified property owners, and reporting deadlines.

■ The **Department of Transportation's** Fleet Administration Division coordinated the distribution of 4,661 pieces of surplus property and items valued at $843,047 to eligible nonprofit organizations serving low income and special needs populations.

■ In **Public Health,** the 2014-2019 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Vulnerable Populations Strategic Initiative is conducting programmatic, scientific and case-based evaluations to ensure that the interface between EMS and vulnerable populations is of the highest quality.

PROMOTING FAIRNESS AND OPPORTUNITY IN COUNTY PRACTICES

In December 2013, the King County Equity and Social Justice Inter-Branch Team organized a forum in Benaroya Hall with Dr. Manuel Pastor from the University of Southern California. The forum, along with a leadership gathering, centered on our county's changing demographics and how we can work to create a region where everybody can flourish.

■ **Executive Services** has developed new compensation policies to assure fairness and equal opportunity in the County's hiring practices. The new policies require hiring units to:

- Verify internal pay equity among salaries paid to employees working in the same job classification within King County.
- Look beyond what the candidate has requested. Research shows that women and persons of color do not request as high starting salaries as their white male counterparts, thus perpetuating biases by race and gender.

■ The **King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO)** is cultivating a more diverse candidate pool for its employees. Currently, applicants receive a 5 percent bump in their initial public safety test score if they have served in the armed forces. This now jumps to a 10 percent bump if the individual served in a theatre of war. KCSO is also amending the Civil Service to allow for a 10 percent boost to those who can speak a second language, as well as candidates who have served two years in the Peace Corps.

Most agencies, departments and offices now have ESJ teams. Among the teams' accomplishments:

■ **Community and Human Services'** ESJ Leadership Team developed a charter and guidelines for participation. They are already working with staff, management and evaluation groups to adopt a department-specific equity tool and a set of ESJ performance measures.

continued

■ The **Elections Department's** ESJ Committee has identified and planned ongoing educational and learning opportunities that allow all employees to engage in meaningful group dialogue about diversity, inclusion, multicultural, equity and social justice-related matters.

■ With the goal of supporting departmental activities to raise ESJ awareness, The **Judicial Administration** Equity, Social Justice and Diversity Advisory Committee focused their efforts on building a strong internal foundation. The committee finalized its mission statement and charter document and started the process of developing a training plan for all DJA staff.

■ **Natural Resources and Parks** is convening and coordinating division-level ESJ teams and processes. DNRP is using the ESJ teams to develop tools and curricula to address and explore Equity and Social Justice.

ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS

■ **Transportation's Airport Division** targeted the limited English speaking population to participate in the Residential Aircraft Noise Remedy Improvement Project with "Don't Miss Out" funds. The outreach campaign used the funds to place ads in non-English newspapers and door-to-door canvassing of 58 homes to enhance signups for the program before the final deadline response in March, 2013. The noise remediation program pays for noise abatement improvements to residential homes near the airport.

■ **Natural Resources and Parks** established a Green Grants program to promote partnerships and provide small-scale environmental and economic opportunities in the Lower Duwamish area communities.

■ In addition, **Natural Resources and Parks** continued Solid Waste Division's "Recicla Mas" outreach program on garbage and recycling for Latino residents by recruiting and training additional community educators, the Facilitadores de Reciclaje. They also expanded their Latino media partnership for deeper outreach within the community.

■ **Judicial Administration** completed phone interpretation training for all employees with customer contacts to improve customer service for limited English proficiency customers. Each employee was also provided with a quick reference guide, FAQs, a list of languages available and tips for working with the interpreter.

■ **Judicial Administration** also contracted with a national plain language resource to translate high use public documents and information into "plain language." Through the process, DJA staff learned plain language concepts that have proven useful in reviewing and developing additional information-sharing resources.

■ Boards and Commissions, with guidance from **Executive Services,** developed a tool kit with resources and form templates that help incorporate ESJ principles into recruiting and appointments of more diverse candidates.

■ The kingcounty.gov re-architecture project by **King County Information Technology,** launched in late 2013 with the new King County website, offered a unique opportunity to improve access and use of county services and information online, especially for low-income residents. The website includes new navigation, as well as new ways to use and interface with county services. With pages built to fit any screen size or device, the improved website also allows people with older phones, smaller screens and lower bandwidth devices to interact with the county. This new accessibility was developed in recognition of our diverse county residents, who were part of the testing and focus groups for the redesign project.

LOOKING FORWARD

In coming months, the County will involve the community, County agencies and County employees in the development of an ESJ Strategic Innovation Priority (SIP) Plan – in essence, our first comprehensive strategic planning process for equity and social justice. This plan will include goals and strategies for how we can most effectively advance equity within county government and in partnership with the community to improve access to the determinants of equity.

While this strategic plan is in development, significant ESJ work will continue, such as with the Health and Human Services Transformation Plan and Communities of Opportunity, addressing disproportionality in the juvenile justice system, and the implementation of Transit's low-income fare. The Executive has also proposed that the County begin to implement recommendations in its report on how to increase opportunities and access to county services for limited English speaking residents.

In addition, new initiatives are underway. On the top of this list is Best Starts for Kids, a regional investment in healthy children and communities. In this initiative, Executive Constantine will work with community partners to develop a funding proposal for 2015 that ensures every baby born and every child raised in King County has a strong start in life and enters adulthood ready to succeed.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to those who contributed ideas, energy and data to this report, including all the members of the Equity and Social Justice Inter-Branch Team. Contributors for the articles in this report include James Bush, Jennifer DeYoung, Keith Seinfeld, Kirsten Wysen, AJ McClure, Holly Rohr Tran, Jason Argo, Paula Harris-White, Nancy Buonanno Grennan, Greg Wilson, JoAnne Fox, Cristina Gonzalez, Steve Stamper , Michael Jacobson, Betty Gulledge-Bennett and Saffa Barbaro.

Special thanks to Arun Sambataro and Elizabeth Ambriz for project management support, Lynn Argento for her work on the infographic, as well as Bill Johnson for the design and Laurel Preston and Wendy Collins for graphics. The photo on page 16 is by Mel Ponder.

King County acknowledges the support and inspiration of Place Matters, an initiative of the National Collaborative for Health Equity convening communities nationally to address the social, economic and environmental conditions that lead to inequities.

For detailed information on data sources used in the infographics, go to:

kingcounty.gov/exec/buildingequity/sources

Alternative Formats Available

Affordable, safe, quality housing
Access to parks and natural resources
Equity in County practices
Access to affordable, healthy, local food
Equitable law and justice system
Community and public safety
Access to safe and efficient transportation
Quality education
Family wage jobs and job training
Early childhood development
Strong, vibrant neighborhoods
Access to health and human services
Healthy built and natural environments
Economic development

King County