

What is the King County Budget?

The King County budget is more than numbers — it's our community's plan for the next two years. It reflects the values we share as a region and sets the course for how we invest in health, safety, housing, transit, parks, and opportunity for all residents. Every dollar is a decision about what kind of community we want to be.

The process begins with the Executive's proposal in September and concludes in November after Council-led public hearings, deliberations, and amendments. This is one of the Council's most important responsibilities, because it determines how policy becomes action in people's daily lives.

Your Voice Matters!

Share your comments anytime:

WEBSITE
bit.ly/kcc-budget

EMAIL
budget.council@kingcounty.gov

The Big Picture

Every dollar is an investment in safe, healthy, and sustainable communities.

TOTAL SIZE

\$19.7+
BILLION

Across many funds.

RESTRICTED FUNDS

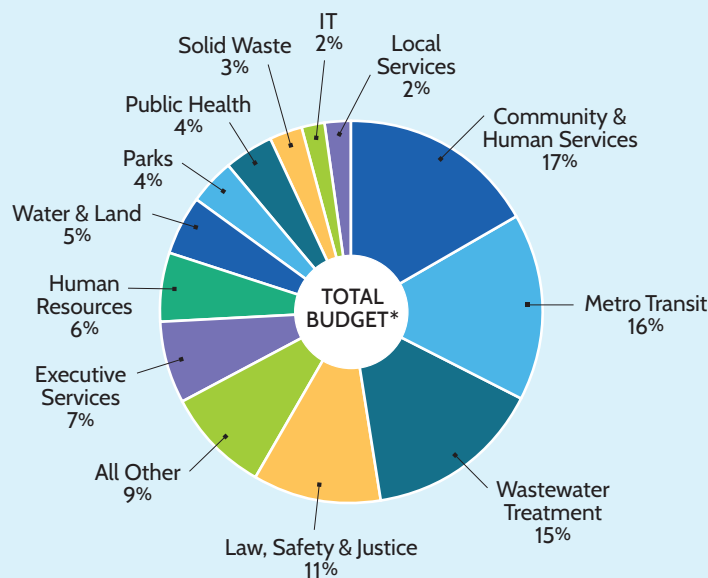
83%

Must be spent on specific things, like wastewater and voter-approved levies.

GENERAL FUND

17%

Flexible fund that pays for local priorities.



**Based on numbers provided by the King County Executive's proposed budget.*

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

- Property tax
- Sales tax
- State and federal funds
- Rates, fees, and fares

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

- Transit: buses, vans, Water Taxi
- Health: clinics, emergency medical services, public health
- Law and Justice: courts, Sheriff, transit security
- Healthy Environment: parks, trails, clean water, salmon recovery
- County Operations: elections, property assessments
- Investing In Residents: veterans, seniors, and kids
- Unincorporated Area Services: roads, permitting

Why the General Fund Gets Attention

The General Fund is only 17% of the total budget, but it covers many services that don't have a dedicated funding source. This is where the Council has the most flexibility — and where we can turn our local priorities into action.

A small slice of the budget with an outsized impact, the General Fund pays for health, justice, safety, and democracy in King County.

GENERAL FUND SERVICES INCLUDE

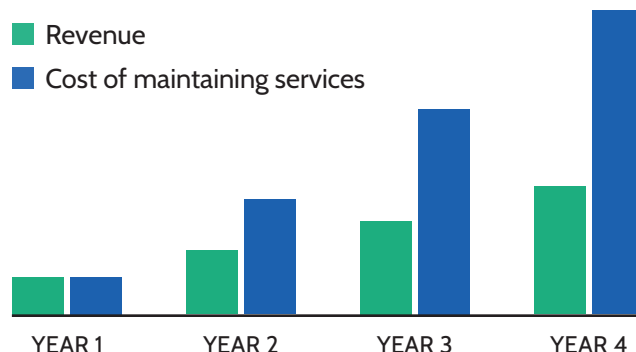
- Courts
- Prosecuting Attorney
- Public Defense
- Sheriff and investigations
- Jails and detention
- Elections
- Emergency management
- Public health

Persistent Deficit

Like households, King County's costs rise each year — healthcare, labor, and construction get more expensive. But state law caps property tax growth at just 1% per year. Over time, revenues can't keep up with costs, leading to an ongoing/persistent budget gap.

Even with this challenge, King County leads with responsibility and fairness — balancing budgets while protecting critical services and planning for the future.

THE EFFECT OF THE PERSISTENT DEFICIT



Timeline

SEPTEMBER

Executive proposes new budget

OCTOBER

Council hearings and public input

NOVEMBER

Council adopts final budget

JANUARY 2026

New budget takes effect

Did You Know?



Every election, King County mails over 1.3 million ballots and operates 70+ secure drop boxes across the region.



Metro provides over 250,000 rides on busy days.



King County maintains 28,000+ acres of parks and 250 miles of regional trails that connect communities.

How to Get Involved

The budget belongs to the people of King County. Your participation ensures it reflects our shared values and priorities.

SUBMIT COMMENTS bit.ly/kcc-budget

EMAIL budget.council@kingcounty.gov

WATCH LIVE

KCTV (Channel 22) or online stream

TESTIFY Public hearings in October and November (in person or Zoom) bit.ly/bfm-committee

REQUEST SUPPORT Free translation, interpretation, and accessibility services. Contact Tera Chea (206) 477-9259 or Tera.Chea2@kingcounty.gov, three days before the meeting.

Together, we can create a budget that invests in people, protects vital services, and sets the tone for responsible, values-driven policymaking across our region.

Quick Guide: County, City or State?

COUNTY

Metro Transit, public health, district and superior court, jails, elections, zoning and sheriff in unincorporated areas, regional parks

CITIES

Police, fire, local roads, neighborhood parks

STATE

Highways, state patrol, universities, statewide laws

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King County