INTRODUCTION TO THE SCAP

INTRODUCTION

From the shores of Puget Sound to the crest of the Cascades, King County's communities are as unique and varied as its landscapes. As the most populous county in Washington State and 12th nationwide, it serves as home to an increasingly diverse population. The backgrounds, needs, and dreams of long-time locals, new residents, intergenerational families, young professionals, and everyone in between are not one-size-fits-all. Nor is King County's approach to climate action. The approach serves rural lands and urban areas; unincorporated neighborhoods and bustling cities; commuters who drive or take regional trains long distances to work or school and others who can get to their destinations by walking or biking. Some people can afford electric vehicles and heat pumps with air conditioning; others want to reduce their carbon emissions and stay safer with more frequent and intense heatwaves, but don't have the time or resources to invest in these climate mitigation and adaptation measures.

Today's reality is rooted in the way resources drove the region's history. Tribes and bands of Coast Salish people have called these lands home since time immemorial, and the waterways and forests they nurtured also drove settlers' to establish the area as a logging outpost in 1852. Now, nearly 2.3 million people call King County home, spread across 39 cities and towns, from the farmlands of Algona to the lakeside neighborhoods of Yarrow Point.

As King County has grown into a global hub for technology and business its communities and natural environment have come under increasing strain. King County's rivers, coastlines, and mountain ranges and the communities that surround them face heightened risks in the era of climate change: more frequent and severe flooding; wildfire smoke and extreme heat; shrinking salmon runs and struggling orca populations; and diminishing snowpack in the Cascades. Since the mid-2000s, the County has advanced bold policies to cut greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen community resilience, and protect the natural systems that sustain life here. The 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) builds on this legacy, charting a course for accelerated, community-driven climate action in the years ahead.

KING COUNTY'S ROLE IN CLIMATE ACTION

King County's role is to take stock of those challenges and innovate, support, and lead in a way that both connects all people living here and honors their differences. From convening regional partnerships and taking direct action to reduce emissions, to partnering with frontline communities and preparing geographically diverse areas for climate impacts, King County can set an example for other regions and cause a ripple effect of impact.

The County's role also includes implementing climate action throughout its programs and services, which are shared with a wide breadth of rural and urban lands and neighborhoods where it serves as the local government. These include Bear Creek/Sammamish, Four Creeks/Tiger Mountain, Great Maple Valley/Cedar River, Snoqualmie Valley/NE King County, SE King County, Vashon/Maury Island, West King County, East Federal Way, East Renton, Fairwood, Klahanie, North Highline, and West Hills.

Beyond its geographic boundaries, King County plays a critical role as a convener, collaborator, and partner in the greater Puget Sound region with Washington State agencies and other county and city governments, such as the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA), Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), King County–Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C), Coalition for Climate Careers (C3), and the Puget Sound Climate Preparedness Collaborative (PSCPC), on efforts ranging from joint state legislative advocacy to coordinated grant proposals and implementation.

King County also relies on state and federal partnerships to improve people's lives and well-being, while remaining a leader and responsible steward through changes in political and funding landscapes. Supporting sustainability, equity, and resilience remains key to County values, and the County and its partners will continue pushing toward progress to combat climate change.

While state and federal funding and regulatory action play a significant role in shaping climate progress, King County has direct authority over many of the key areas needed to close the remaining emissions gap. Local policies, infrastructure investments, and regulatory frameworks can significantly influence building decarbonization, transportation emissions, and land use decisions—all of which are necessary to meet climate targets. Reaching the remaining emissions reductions will require bold local action and expanded investment in several key areas within the County's control:

- **Public Services and Infrastructure:** King County manages Metro Transit, wastewater treatment, flood risk management, solid waste disposal, and regional parks, all of which provide opportunities for climate mitigation and adaptation. The County can transition Metro fleets to zero-emission, enhance climate-resilient infrastructure, and invest in clean energy solutions.

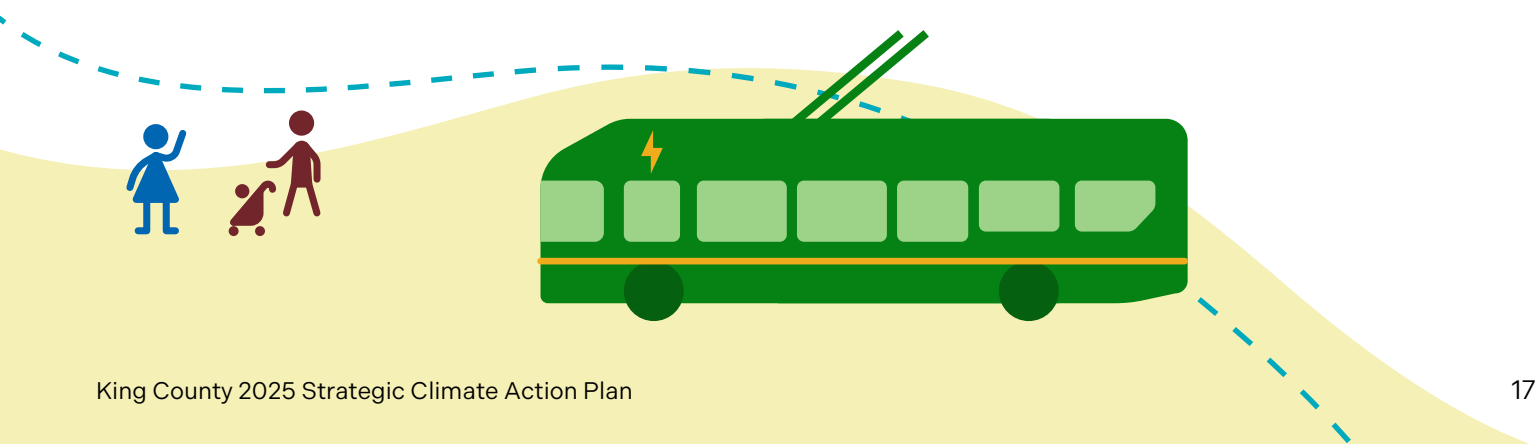
- **Regulatory Powers:** The County oversees land use, building codes, and environmental protections in unincorporated areas, allowing it to promote sustainable development, expand green building standards, and protect critical ecosystems. It also sets waste reduction policies and regulates emissions from County-owned operations and fleets.

- **Local Investments and Budget Priorities:** The County directs funding toward climate programs, sustainability initiatives, and community resilience projects, helping to catalyze clean energy adoption, support workforce training, and invest in frontline communities. By aligning capital projects and procurement policies with climate goals, the County can reduce emissions and drive sustainable economic development.

- **Partnerships and Regional Coordination:** While the County does not regulate cities, it plays a key role in regional climate coordination, collaborating with local governments, tribes, businesses, and community organizations. Through initiatives like the King County—Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C), the County helps cities align policies, share resources, and scale effective climate strategies.

- **Advocacy and Policy Influence:** King County actively engages with state and federal policymakers to advocate for climate funding, strong climate regulations, and policy alignment. By leveraging its expertise and regional influence, the County helps secure resources and shape policies that support local implementation.

While many climate actions depend on external funding and regulatory frameworks, King County has substantial authority to reduce emissions, build resilience, and ensure an equitable climate transition. By strategically using its regulatory tools, public investments, and service delivery systems, the County can lead by example and accelerate meaningful climate progress across the region.



WHAT IS THE SCAP?

King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) has been described as one of the most ambitious climate action plans in the United States, and was awarded the most equitable climate plan by the U.S. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in 2022. The SCAP is both a long-term plan and five-year roadmap for County climate action, integrating climate change into all areas of County services, operations, and work with King County cities, partners, communities, and residents. It outlines the County's priorities and commitments for climate action for decision-makers, employees, partners, and the public, and for County operations and for King County communities. The SCAP also sets performance measures to track progress and create accountability.

Foundational to King County's climate leadership is the practice of updating the SCAP every five years based on the understanding that climate change is an urgent local and global challenge. King County is working to reduce emissions and climate impacts in a dynamic environment with changes in technology, science, partnerships, and available resources. The SCAP updates allow King County to set bold long-term goals, together with near term actions and outcomes that are tracked regularly to monitor and adjust as needed.

The SCAP guiding principles were developed to help ensure King County's SCAP roadmap aligns with our values.

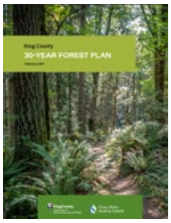
- **Act quickly:** We must move fast to address the climate crisis.
- **Promote fairness:** Focus on racial justice and equal benefits for all communities.
- **Involve communities:** Work with local voices to shape climate solutions.
- **Use science:** Base decisions on the best science available.
- **Think big:** Aim for long-term, transformative change.
- **Work together:** Partnerships are essential to success.
- **Lead locally:** King County must set an example of climate leadership.
- **Support health:** Climate action will improve public health.
- **Be accountable:** Clear goals, tracking progress, and sharing results will ensure the County stays the course.

The initial SCAP in 2012 focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In 2015, the County added climate preparedness. In 2020, the Climate Equity Community Task Force (CECTF) championed a third section empowering sustainable and resilient frontline communities. The 2025 SCAP builds on past work and continues to advance the goals and guiding principles in the SCAP to meet the moment, by adding a new flagship section focused on weaving the three core sections together through outcomes and co-benefits.

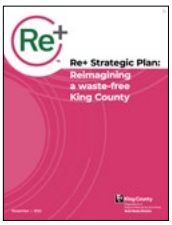
SCAP ACCOMPLISHMENTS BETWEEN 2020–2025

Since adoption of the 2020 SCAP, King County has grown its footprint with new plans and resources detailing specific focus areas, including:

The 2020 SCAP included 242 priority actions across the three main sections, and an additional 10 actions in the Green Jobs Strategy. The 2023 Biennial Report tracked progress toward these actions, highlighting accomplishments across focus areas. (See Appendix C for the final progress report on the 2020 SCAP priority actions).



30-Year Forest Plan (2021): roadmap to protect and manage forests, ensuring they are in good health now and remain healthy as the climate changes



RE+ Strategic Plan (2021): develops a circular economy to keep valuable materials out of the landfill and reduce consumption based emissions

Metro Connects Long-Range Transit Plan (2021): vision for improved mobility services to King County over the next 30 year to support healthy and equitable communities, a thriving economy, and a sustainable environment

Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy (2022): provides recommendations to improve preparedness, response, and recovery to wildfire as the region experiences hotter, drier summers

Green Jobs Strategy (2023): lays a foundation for King County to connect frontline communities to living-wage opportunities to build a diverse and skilled workforce

Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy (2024): takes a comprehensive approach to prepare people and places in King County for hotter summers and more extreme heat events

Climate and Workforce Strategy (2025): expands efforts to increase access to climate-related jobs and ensure a skilled workforce for growing clean energy opportunities

Below are 25 of the most transformational accomplishments achieved since 2020. They demonstrate a growing momentum as the County used lessons learned to propel future work, and began securing significant funding to achieve community-centered resilience priorities.

2020

Wildfire Smoke Protection: Launched box fan filter distribution program to help residents protect themselves against the harmful health impacts of increasingly frequent wildfire smoke events. The County has distributed more than 3,700 filters in high-impact areas.

Urban Heat Mapping: Partnered with City of Seattle to measure heat throughout the county, and demonstrated inequalities in the impacts of heat in different neighborhoods. This work informed future heat mitigation planning and investments in public health.

2021

$20 million in Climate Equity bond funds: Launched one-time capital pool that funded community-driven projects, including infrastructure for farmers to grow culturally responsive food and park lighting improvements to ensure safety in underserved green spaces.

Energy-efficient building codes: Developed and integrated new green building codes into the 2021 Washington State Building Codes to meet energy-efficiency targets. This was achieved through advocacy with cities across the region, as part of the K4C.

2022

New Wet Weather Station: Opened a new combined sewer overflow control station in the Georgetown neighborhood to prevent stormwater and sewage overflows into the Duwamish River and Puget Sound during heavy rains.

Green Building Ordinance: Strengthened requirements for County-owned or lease-to-own capital projects to meet certain green building requirements that encourage energy efficiency and resource conservation. The County also set up a team to provide resources to help department and project teams meet the requirements.

$150,000 to protect land & prevent displacement: Awarded a $150,000 building grant to the Community Land Conservancy, a BIPOC-led organization that acquires land for parks in underserved communities. The group works to ensure community voices are centered during land use decision-making.

C-PACER Program: Allows owners of eligible commercial properties to seek long-term financing from a private capital provider for qualified improvements related to energy and building resiliency. The program empowers work to use energy efficiently and promote water conservation.

Free Youth Transit Pass: Allows youth to ride transit for free, empowering more young people to get familiar with public transit and encouraging use of lower-emission travel.

Climate Justice Learning Series: Administrated learning series for County staff and community about topics within the climate justice space. This helped increase understanding of challenges within frontline communities and the importance of an equity-centered resilience approach.

2023

South Seattle Community Food Hub: Opened space to increase food justice by connecting farmers, distributors, and community under one roof. It is designed to address systemic gaps in the local food system through community-led solutions.

"Ready, Set, Go!" wildfire evacuation messaging campaign: Partnered with nine counties to simplify language regarding wildfire evacuations and educate communities on how to prepare for evacuation in the event of a wildfire.

Transit-oriented development: Expanded projects to reduce carbon footprint by putting housing near public transit options, including adding 232 affordable housing units at Northgate.

Reinvented region's waste system: Launched Re+, a new initiative to return valuable materials to the economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions created by the region's waste system. It provides actions and services to ensure more materials are reused, recycled, or composted rather than buried as waste.

Energize heat pump program: Created program to install heat pumps in low-to-moderate income homes in South King County, targeting areas disproportionately impacted by poor air quality and extreme heat.

Executive Climate Office: United and empowered County's climate action efforts under one team. The Office has since grown to include more than 25 staff members and connects with team leads in other departments and within partnership organizations.

Transit improvements: RapidRide H line launched with transit improvements spanning 12 miles from downtown Seattle to Burien with upgrades to the speed, reliability, and customer experience for more than 6,000 daily riders. Project achieved Envision Platinum certification in 2024.

2024

$50M building decarbonization grant: Awarded an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) to empower building decarbonization work across four counties.

New clean energy workforce program: Launched JumpStart, a clean energy workforce training program equipping people aged 18–24 with training, paid work-based learning, and mentorships to begin careers in the growing industry. More than half of the first class of graduates secured full-time jobs upon finishing.

$2M Climate Resilience Grant: Secured a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to facilitate regional collaboration for better resilience outcomes in the Puget Sound Basin via the Puget Sound Climate Preparedness Collaborative, a network of local governments, tribes, agencies, and other groups hosted by King County.

Expanded Energize program: Secured funding from Washington State's Climate Commitment Act to expand Energize program, installing heat pumps and offering other weatherization upgrades for adult family homes and family home child cares.

$9M for vehicle charging: Secured $9 million grant to empower vehicle charging across the region. The grant came as King County continued work to transition to more electric and zero-emission vehicles in its own fleet.

Climate & Health Dashboards: Published new set of data dashboards exploring impacts of climate change on health in King County. It allows for tracking of impacts year-to-year based on data from emergency room visits.

$150,000 to prepare for sea level rise: Secured $150k grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) to conduct a coastal hazards assessment for Vashon-Maury Island inclusive of sea level rise and related changes in coastal flooding.

Grants for community-based work: Awarded inaugural Community Climate Resilience Grants totaling $150,000 to five community groups. The grants assisted community-based organizations in continuing or expanding current climate resilience work.

Coalition for Climate Careers (C3): Partnered with other public and private organizations and frontline communities to overcome silos and establish an inclusive and prosperous green workforce in King County. The Coalition offers policy guidance, promotes career opportunities, and fosters cross-community collaboration.

2025 SCAP ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The 2025 SCAP was developed in three phases, with input and oversight from subject matter experts, decision-makers, and implementing partners at each step. Internal partners included King County's Climate Team, Executive Climate Cabinet, the Executive Climate Office, King County employees, and other County subject matter experts. External partners included the CECTF and Community Equity Working Group, K4C partners, participants in three in-person SCAP workshops, participants of community roadshow events with nonprofits and commissions, and attendees at two virtual public meetings.

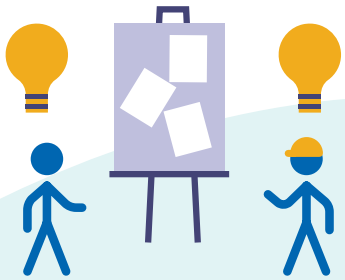
King County's goal for the 2025 update is to be more strategic and more focused on partnerships and community engagement. SCAP contributors worked collectively to develop a more strategic plan focusing on fewer, more impactful actions aligned with targeted outcomes, leveraging and integrating with other County plans and priorities, and breaking down silos to more effectively integrate climate actions. A greater focus on partnerships to strengthen frontline community leadership in climate action and policymaking, engage implementation partners to scale climate initiatives across the County, and build stronger regional alignment for implementation. Engaging community to provide in-person engagement opportunities to support community involvement in climate initiatives, engage frontline communities and youth in SCAP development, and to survey the public for additional feedback.

SCOPING AND ANALYSIS

The first phase in development of the 2025 SCAP focused on determining the update's scope. The Climate Team worked with subject matter experts to identify where the County's climate actions should lead by asking where we want to be in 2030 and how to get there. The charge was to:

- Focus commitments on outcomes at the desired scale
- Remove the barriers that have slowed down 2020 SCAP priorities to make more substantive progress on these carry-forward actions
- Ensure countywide partners have more ownership in the countywide climate actions
- Develop climate solutions that account for and mitigate inequities
- Embed frontline community voices across countywide climate actions
- Clearly articulate the countywide priorities for preparedness

Based on this guidance, the Climate Team conducted a review of the 2020 SCAP to identify actions to carry forward to 2025, gaps or other barriers to progress, and new opportunities. External partners and the Executive Climate Cabinet were engaged to validate these continuing actions, gaps, and new opportunities.



PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The next phase was to create new or modified actions to address the gaps and new opportunities. King County convened three in-person workshops with approximately 150 participants in July, August, and October 2024. Participants represented community-based organizations, students, academia, environmental, and climate organizations as well as local cities, counties, regional agencies, and state and federal partners. Participants were organized into working groups focused on specific countywide opportunity areas such as building energy and green building, transportation and land use, climate equity, climate preparedness, forest and agriculture, consumption and waste, and green jobs and the economy. Working group members were encouraged to recommend new actions that were urgent and impactful, actions that served as a critical next step or barrier buster, and actions that could be implemented at scale or replicated. King County also launched an online public survey from August–October 2024. Finally, Climate Team members conducted "road show" presentations during the latter half of 2024 on the SCAP to share emerging proposals and gather input with targeted organizations, commissions, and other thought-partners and implementers with expertise and key roles related to specific focus areas. Ten groups were asked for input including the Re+ Community Panel, Regional Code Collaboration, K4C, King County Agricultural Commission, King County Forestry Commission, King County Urban Forestry Forum, and internal workgroups including the Capital Project Management Working Group and Steering Committee, Green Building Taskforce, Building Energy Taskforce, and Fleet Planning Committee.

REVIEW AND REFINEMENT

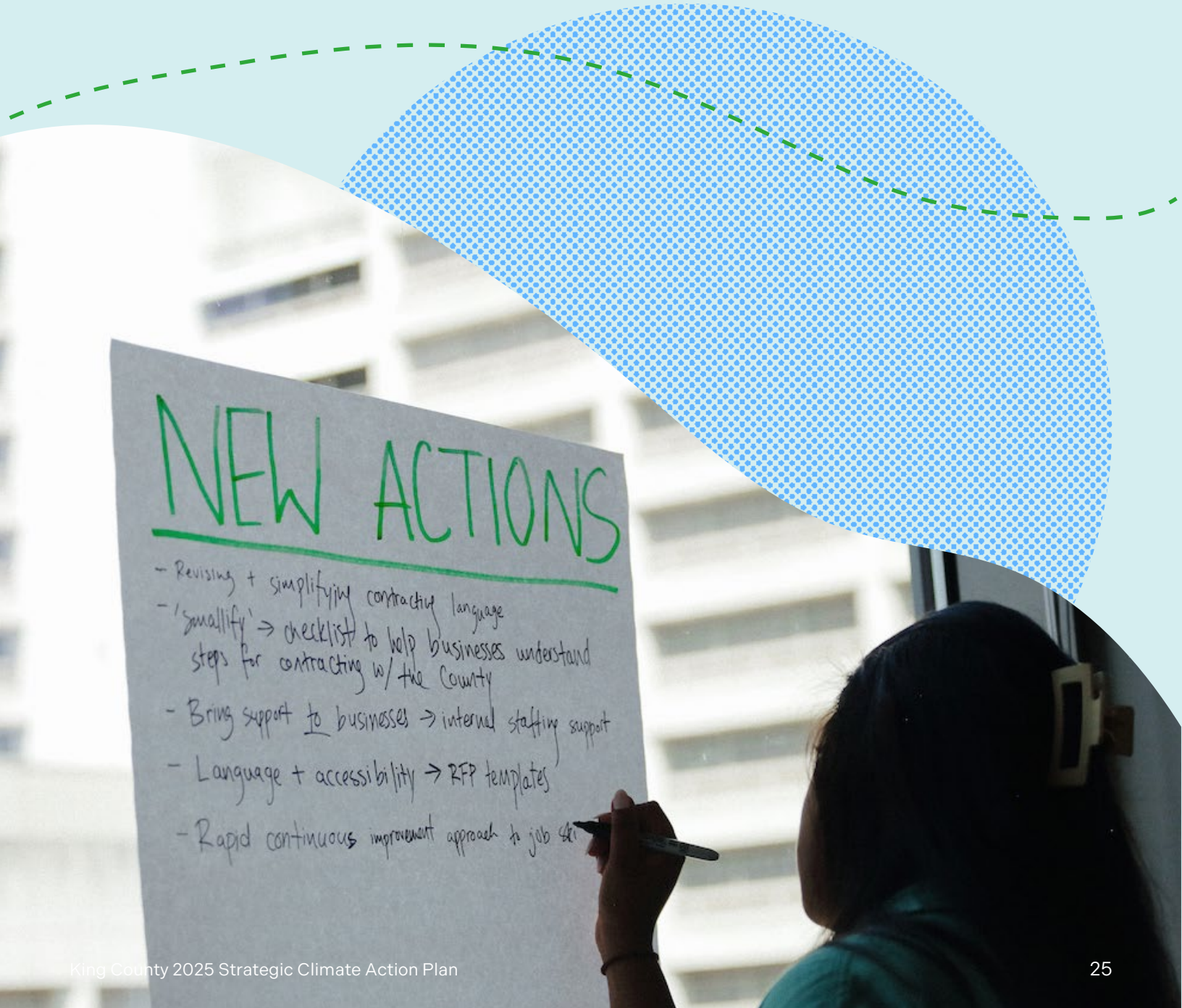
The third phase is where the plan's format and structure began to take shape to reflect the actions developed by the working groups, King County staff, and other subject matter experts. Consultation with department leadership occurred throughout this process. The three main sections to the 2020 SCAP continued to evolve and were joined by a fourth new flagship section to show their intersection and co-benefits.

The 2025 SCAP integrated climate equity by partnering with frontline community members. Members of the Climate Equity Community Task Force were joined by newly recruited community members to form a Climate Equity Working Group (CEWG). The CEWG co-developed updated actions for the Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities section, the County's community-driven climate justice framework. In addition to elevating frontline priorities, the CWEG partnered with SCAP leads to conduct an equity screening of topic areas in the Reducing GHG Emissions and Climate Preparedness sections. Common themes from the equity screening process called for expanding culturally relevant education on climate solutions, expanding access to community emergency preparedness programs and to public transit, prioritizing safety, strengthening partnerships, including anti-displacement strategies into an energy transition, and providing financial support for climate action.

Climate Team members reviewed the results of the equity screening to refine existing actions based on community direction. Common revisions included making explicit how actions will take steps to reduce disproportionate impacts and unintended consequences for frontline communities, and ensure language used to describe actions was clear for community.

ABOUT THE 2025 SCAP

This updated vision and new five-year roadmap has five sections, nine flagships, 25 focus areas, 178 actions, and 65 performance measures to serve as a guide on how King County will address the climate crisis. The 2025 SCAP updates the three sections of from previous years—Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities, and Preparing for Climate Change—and introduces a new section with "flagship" outcomes as a way to think about the intersection of sustainability, equity, and resilience. These flagship outcomes emphasize the opportunities for co-benefits as SCAP actions are implemented.



FLAGSHIPS: CONNECTING CLIMATE ACTION TO COMMUNITY IMPACT

The Flagships section in the SCAP represents King County's most visible and community-focused outcomes. They connect actions across the SCAP's sections to broader goals that improve the lives of those who live, work, and visit King County. The flagships show how climate efforts are integrated solutions, not isolated policies, delivering meaningful benefits to people, communities, and the environment.

Through the 2025 SCAP development process, King County identified nine new flagship outcomes:

Put Communities First: Investing in leadership, expanding access to resources, and ensuring climate policies are designed with and for frontline communities.

Safe, Healthy, and Climate-Ready Homes: Strengthening housing and workplaces to withstand extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and flooding, while ensuring affordability and preventing displacement.

Connected and Accessible Transportation: Expanding sustainable mobility options like transit, biking, and walking to reduce car dependency and improve access to jobs, schools, and services.

Economic Mobility and Career Opportunities: Ensuring the clean energy transition creates economic opportunities, particularly for historically excluded workers and communities.

Fresh, Local Food for Everyone: Strengthening food security and sustainable agriculture by supporting farmers, reducing food waste, and increasing access to fresh, healthy food.

Designing Out Waste: Reducing consumption, preventing waste, and reusing valuable materials.

Clean Air, Water, and Healthy Ecosystems: Protecting and restoring forests, waterways, and green spaces to improve public health, biodiversity, and climate resilience.

Reliable and Future-Ready Infrastructure: Modernizing roads, utilities, and public services to withstand climate extremes while ensuring equitable access to essential infrastructure.

Collaborative and Community-Led Solutions: Embedding equity in climate governance by ensuring frontline communities, tribes, and local organizations help shape and lead climate solutions.

These nine flagships show that climate action is not just a set of individual goals but a coordinated effort to create lasting, systemic change.

HOW TO READ THE FLAGSHIPS

Each flagship follows a structured format to help readers understand its intent, benefits, and implementation approach. In addition to describing the climate challenge and context, each flagship includes:

CO-BENEFITS

Climate actions don't just address one issue—they create ripple effects. The Co-benefits section highlights how investments in one area strengthen others. For example, expanding urban tree planting reduces heat risks, improves air quality, enhances public spaces, and lowers energy costs, demonstrating the interconnected impact of climate action.

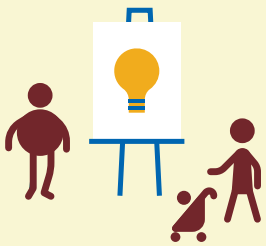
EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Drawing from community engagement themes and the CEWG's climate equity review, the Equity Impacts and Opportunities section ensures policies reflect the lived experiences and priorities of affected communities. The section identifies structural inequities in climate policies and opportunities to embed equity in solutions. It often includes real-life examples of climate hazards—such as extreme heat or flooding—and opportunities to illustrate the urgency of targeted interventions. By addressing barriers to clean energy, safe housing, reliable transit, and economic opportunity, King County ensures climate action advances justice, resilience, and community leadership instead of reinforcing existing inequities.

LEARN MORE

Each flagship concludes with a Learn More section, linking flagship priorities to specific Focus Areas within SCAP's Reducing GHG Emissions, Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities, and Climate Preparedness sections that help to show the interdisciplinary nature of taking climate action. Bullet points highlight key initiatives—such as green infrastructure, workforce development, or fleet decarbonization—and direct readers to the SCAP section where they can find detailed commitments, policies, and programs.

By providing a clear reference to where each initiative fits within the broader SCAP framework, these sections demonstrate how climate actions are coordinated, impactful, and aligned with community needs.



HOW TO READ THE FOCUS AREAS

A total of 25 Focus Areas appear throughout the Strategic Climate Action Plan. Each focus area describes a critical area of the Reducing GHG Emissions, Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities, and Climate Preparedness sections.

There are eight Greenhouse Gas Reduction Focus Areas, which include:

- Countywide GHG Policy and Leadership
- Transit and Transportation
- Building Energy and Green Building
- Circular Economy
- Forest and Agriculture
- Enterprise Leadership and Accountability
- Sustainable County Infrastructure
- Zero-Emission County Fleets

There are eight Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities Focus Areas, which include:

- Community Leadership and Community-Driven Policymaking
- Building Capacity with Frontline Communities and Youth
- Climate and Economic Opportunity
- Community Health and Emergency Preparedness
- Food Systems and Food Security
- Housing Security and Anti-Displacement
- Energy Justice and Utilities Affordability
- Transportation Access and Equity

There are nine Climate Preparedness Focus Areas, which include:

- Sea Level Rise Preparedness
- River Flood Management
- Extreme Precipitation and Drought Mitigation
- Extreme Heat Adaptation
- Forest Resilience and Urban Tree Canopy Expansion
- Wildfire Risk Reduction
- Salmon Recovery and Habitat Connectivity
- Climate-Ready Capital Projects
- Regional Capacity Across Climate Hazards

Each focus area follows a structured format to help readers understand its challenges and opportunities as well as King County's accomplishments and next steps in each area. In addition to describing the climate challenge and context, each focus area includes:

WHAT'S AT STAKE

This section outlines the risks and challenges posed by climate change within the specific focus area. It highlights the potential consequences of inaction and the communities, ecosystems, and sectors most vulnerable.

A BETTER OUTCOME

This section presents the desired vision for the future, describing what success looks like if King County's strategies and policies are effectively implemented.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET THERE

This section summarizes the progress King County has made so far, highlighting key policies, investments, and partnerships.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

This section outlines the specific actions King County will take in the next five years to build on progress and address remaining challenges.

HOW TO READ THE ACTIONS

Each action follows a structured format to help readers understand its intent, benefits, and implementation approach. In addition to a narrative describing the action, each action includes performance measures, timelines, and clear responsibilities for each action. Annual reporting on these items provides transparency and opportunities for continuous improvement.

01

DEVELOP A SEA LEVEL RISE STRATEGY FOR UNINCORPORATED KING COUNTY

01 Sea level rise will have wide-ranging impacts on public and private shoreline infrastructure and shoreline ecosystems in unincorporated King County. To help guide current and future County work on sea level rise, the County will develop a sea level rise adaptation strategy for managing the impacts of sea level rise on public and private infrastructure and nearshore ecosystems in unincorporated King County, inclusive of unincorporated areas in the lower Duwamish Valley. This includes developing organizational policies and guidelines for managing sea level rise across King County programs and identifying approaches to managing the impacts of sea level rise on shoreline infrastructure and ecosystems.

02 **LEAD AGENCIES:**
ECO

03 **PARTNER AGENCIES:**
DES–OEM; DLS–Roads, Permitting; DNRP–WLRD, WTD; PHSKC; PSB–RP

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Shoreline residents; Washington Sea Grant

04 **EQUITY OBJECTIVES:**
Engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

05 **STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:**
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Shoreline Master Program

06 **EARLY ACTION**

07 **KING COUNTY ROLE:**
Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

08 **ACTION TYPE:**
Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

09 **IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:**
Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

10 **FUNDING NEED:**
Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

11 **FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:**
County | Grant | Other

01 ACTION TITLE AND DESCRIPTION

The action title and description provide a brief explanation of a specific climate issue, what action King County will take, and what the projected outcome will be.

02 LEAD AND PARTNER AGENCIES

Identifying clear roles and responsibilities is critical to effective collaboration. This section identifies which King County agencies are responsible for initiating and leading the action, and which agencies are responsible for supporting the implementation.

03 EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Beyond internal efforts, partnerships are critical. This section identifies external partners—such as tribes, cities, regional agencies, businesses, and community organizations—who King County will collaborate with to align policies and scale impact. By leveraging collective resources and expertise, the County can drive large-scale climate solutions that individual jurisdictions couldn't achieve alone.

04 EQUITY OBJECTIVES

Each action also incorporates one or more of the following equity objectives, to ensure that all the proposed climate strategies directly address disparities faced by frontline communities. These objectives reflect key themes identified through community input, emphasizing reduced burdens, enhanced accessibility and engagement, community capacity-building, economic opportunities, and accountability.

- **Accessibility:** The action is proactive in ensuring that benefits are accessible to households and businesses throughout the community — particularly communities of color, low-income populations, and minority-owned and emerging small businesses.
- **Accountability:** The action has appropriate accountability mechanisms to ensure that communities of color or low-income populations will equitably benefit and not be disproportionately harmed. Examples can include planned report-backs to community, transparency in allocation of funds, and demonstrating alignment with community priorities and needs.
- **Alignment and Partnership:** The action aligns with and supports existing communities of color and low-income population priorities; examples can include creating an opportunity to leverage resources to advance community priorities or building collaborative partnerships.
- **Capacity building:** The action helps build frontline community capacity through funding, expanded knowledge base, or other resources.
- **Economic opportunity and workforce diversity:** The action supports communities of color, low-income populations, and minority-owned and emerging small businesses through workforce development, contracting opportunities, or the increased diversity of staff.

- **Engagement:** The action engages and empowers communities of color and low-income populations in a meaningful, authentic, and culturally appropriate manner (i.e., engaging community in planning stages, ensuring language access is resourced, etc.).
- **Reduce disproportionate impacts:** The action mitigates impacts or burdens (including costs), either directly or indirectly, to communities of color or low-income populations.
- **Relationship building:** The action helps foster the building of effective, long-term relationships and trust between diverse communities and local government. These relationships can exist outside of a specific project or effort.
- **Share benefits:** The action's benefits are intentionally directed towards reducing historical or current disparities (i.e., supporting community-owned assets and prioritizing overburdened communities in that support).

05 STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

This section highlights the connections with strategies and metrics provided in other King County plans. Specific King County plans that connect to this work include, but are not limited to the following:

- 30-Year Forest Plan
- Department of Local Services Subarea Plans
- DNRP Implementation Plan for a Carbon Neutral King County Government 2016
- King County Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan
- King County Comprehensive Plan
- King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan
- King County Countywide Planning Policies
- King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016–2022
- King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy
- King County Flood Management Plan 2024
- King County Green Building Handbook
- King County Green Building Ordinance (Ordinance 19402)
- King County Green Jobs Strategy Report
- King County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- King County Metro Long-Range Plan – Metro Connects
- King County Metro Mobility Framework
- King County Open Space Plan
- King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) Regional Action Framework for King County
- King County Shoreline Master Plan
- King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy
- Lake Sammamish Kokanee Blueprint
- PHSKC 2024–2029 Strategic Plan
- PHSKC Blueprint for Addressing Climate Change and Health
- PHSKC Wildfire Smoke Response Plan
- Re+ Strategic Plan—King County
- Regional Stormwater Action Goals
- Regional Trails Needs Report
- Regional Wastewater Services Plan
- Skyway Stormwater Management Action Plan
- Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Recommendations
- Solid Waste Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
- WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan
- WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Plan

06 EARLY ACTION

This section indicates whether the action is either ongoing work or work that is critical to be prioritized first or expected to be kicked off and implemented by the end of 2027. Actions in this category should show progress by the plan's mid-point.

07 KING COUNTY ROLE

This section specifies King County's role for the action. It will fall into one of three categories:

- **Advocate/support:** to educate and articulate the need for action.
- **Convene:** to invite partners to engage or collaborate on shared action.
- **Implement:** to take direct action to implement or operationalize.

08 ACTION TYPE

This section categorizes actions based on their status and level of change:

- **Continuing:** an ongoing effort with little to no change in scope or scale.
- **Accelerated:** an existing effort that is expanding significantly in scope, scale, or pace.
- **New:** a completely new effort being introduced.

09 IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY

This section assesses the feasibility of implementation:

- **Easy:** straightforward to implement with minimal challenges.
- **Moderate:** requires effort or coordination but is achievable.
- **Hard:** complex to implement due to significant barriers.

10 FUNDING NEEDED

This section identifies the funding needs for an action:

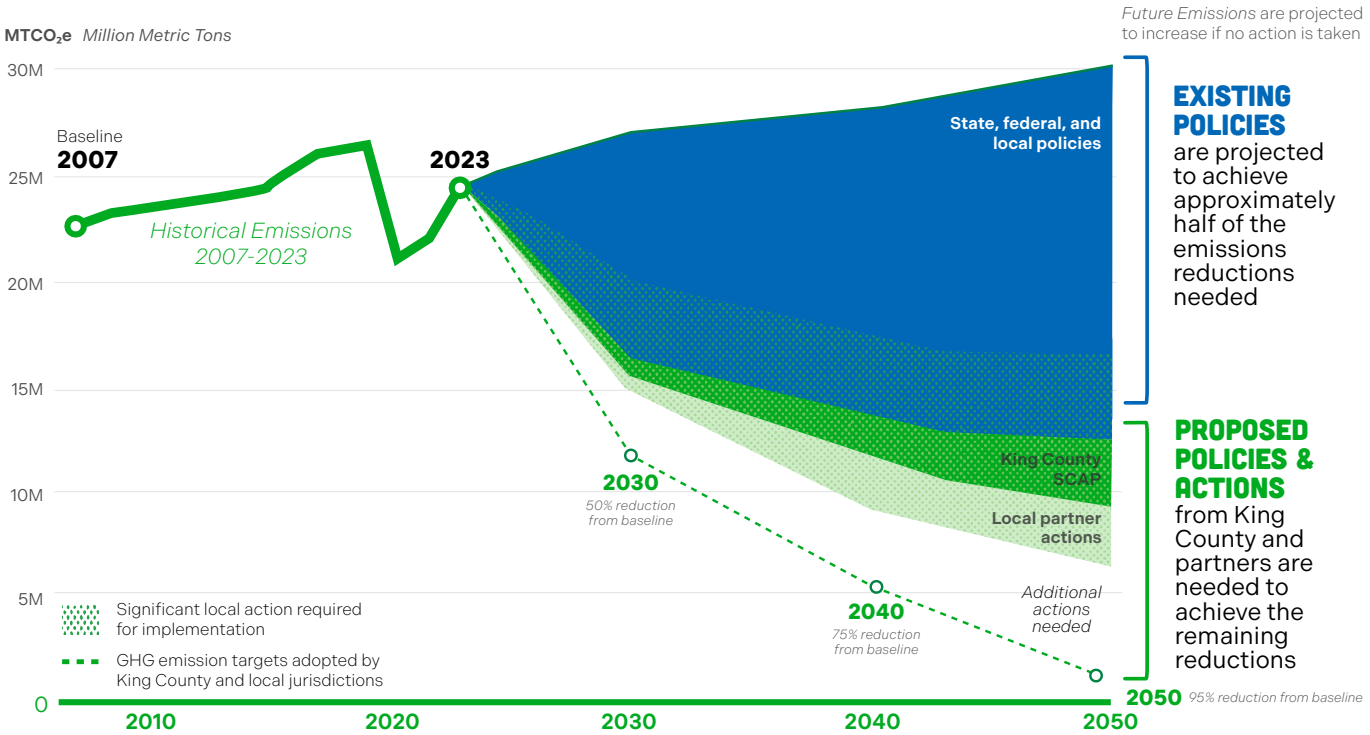
- **Within Current Capacity:** can be supported with existing resources.
- **Additional:** needs more funding to expand or scale up existing work.
- **New:** requires entirely new funding (e.g., for a new activity).

11 FUNDING DEPENDENCIES

This section identifies the primary funding source for an action:

- **County:** relies mainly on the County budget for implementation.
- **Grant:** depends primarily on grant funding.
- **Other:** funded mainly through alternative sources, such as user fees, voter-approved levies, or contributions from other agencies.

Figure 1. Role of Local Action to Achieve GHG Emissions Targets



Source: King County Executive Climate Office (2025)

LOOKING AHEAD

Analysis of existing federal, state, and local policies, along with proposed measures in the 2025 SCAP, is projected to reduce emissions by close to 33 percent by 2030, as shown in Figure 1. Progress is dependent on existing state and federal policies, where limited local action will be required to implement such as the WA Clean Energy Transformation Act, as well as policies where significant local action will be required to implement, such as the WA Clean Buildings Act. State and federal policies provide critical funding and regulatory support for clean energy, transportation decarbonization, and emissions reductions. The WA Climate Commitment Act (CCA)'s cap-and-invest program prices climate pollution and reinvests revenues in climate solutions, requiring that emissions in Washington State are reduced by 95 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. In 2024, Washington voters upheld the CCA, preserving this key funding mechanism.

Achieving King County's climate goals requires strong policies and stable, long-term funding. Climate solutions depend on sustained investments in infrastructure, clean energy, and community resilience programs. However, the broader funding landscape in 2025 has become increasingly uncertain. Potential shifts in federal priorities, regulations, and budget allocations could impact key state and local programs. To stay on track, King County must continue leveraging state and federal resources while also identifying new local funding sources to implement SCAP strategies effectively. Many of the actions outlined in this plan rely on sustained investment, and without it, progress on climate and equity goals could be delayed.

At the same time, roughly one third of the emissions reductions needed to reach our goals depend on local actions and shifts in behavior. Key priorities for local action in King County include:

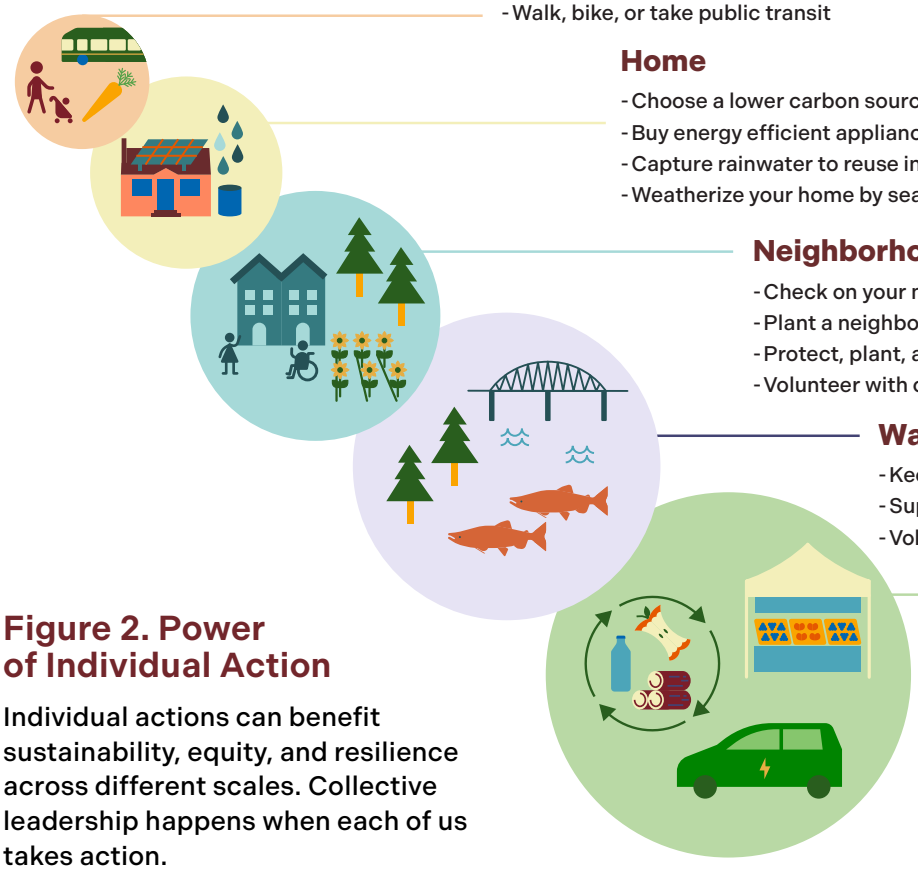
- Expanding transit access and reducing vehicle miles traveled
- Accelerating building electrification and clean energy adoption
- Enhancing waste reduction and circular economy initiatives
- Strengthening climate resilience measures

To make these sustainable choices more accessible and achievable, systemic changes are needed. Investments in clean energy, public transit, waste reduction infrastructure, and climate resilience will help remove barriers and expand opportunities for individuals, businesses, and communities to take part in climate solutions. When these systems are in place, sustainable choices become easier, more affordable, and more widely adopted.

However, King County government alone cannot drive these changes at the scale or speed required. Transformative climate progress demands broad-based, sustained leadership—across all levels of government, the private sector, advocacy organizations, community groups, and individual households. Systemic change happens when people, policies, and investments align to make sustainable choices accessible, affordable, and equitable for everyone.

To deliver the future we all want, King County needs partners who are willing to stand up and demand the necessary change—whether by pushing for bold climate action at the local, state, or federal level; advocating for investments in transit, clean energy, and resilient communities; or shifting cultural norms around consumption and sustainability. Collective action, backed by community voices and leadership, has the power to accelerate change, influence policy, and shape the markets and systems that define how we live and work.

Every action matters. Whether you're reducing waste, adopting clean energy, choosing sustainable transportation, or advocating for stronger policies, you are part of the solution. King County's climate future depends on all of us—residents, businesses, community leaders, and elected officials—working together to create a healthier, more resilient, and more equitable region.



Individual

- Adjust outdoor to indoor activities when it is hot or smokey
- Try meatless Mondays
- Walk, bike, or take public transit

Home

- Choose a lower carbon source of energy when possible
- Buy energy efficient appliances when it is time to replace
- Capture rainwater to reuse in your garden
- Weatherize your home by sealing and insulating

Neighborhood

- Check on your neighbors during extreme weather events
- Plant a neighborhood garden
- Protect, plant, and maintain trees to grow the tree canopy
- Volunteer with community programs

Watershed

- Keep the environment clean
- Support salmon recovery
- Volunteer for invasive weeds removal

County/Region

- Buy locally sourced goods and services
- Reduce, reuse, repair, and recycle
- Transition to electric vehicles to improve air quality

Figure 2. Power of Individual Action

Individual actions can benefit sustainability, equity, and resilience across different scales. Collective leadership happens when each of us takes action.