King County

2025 STRATEGIC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

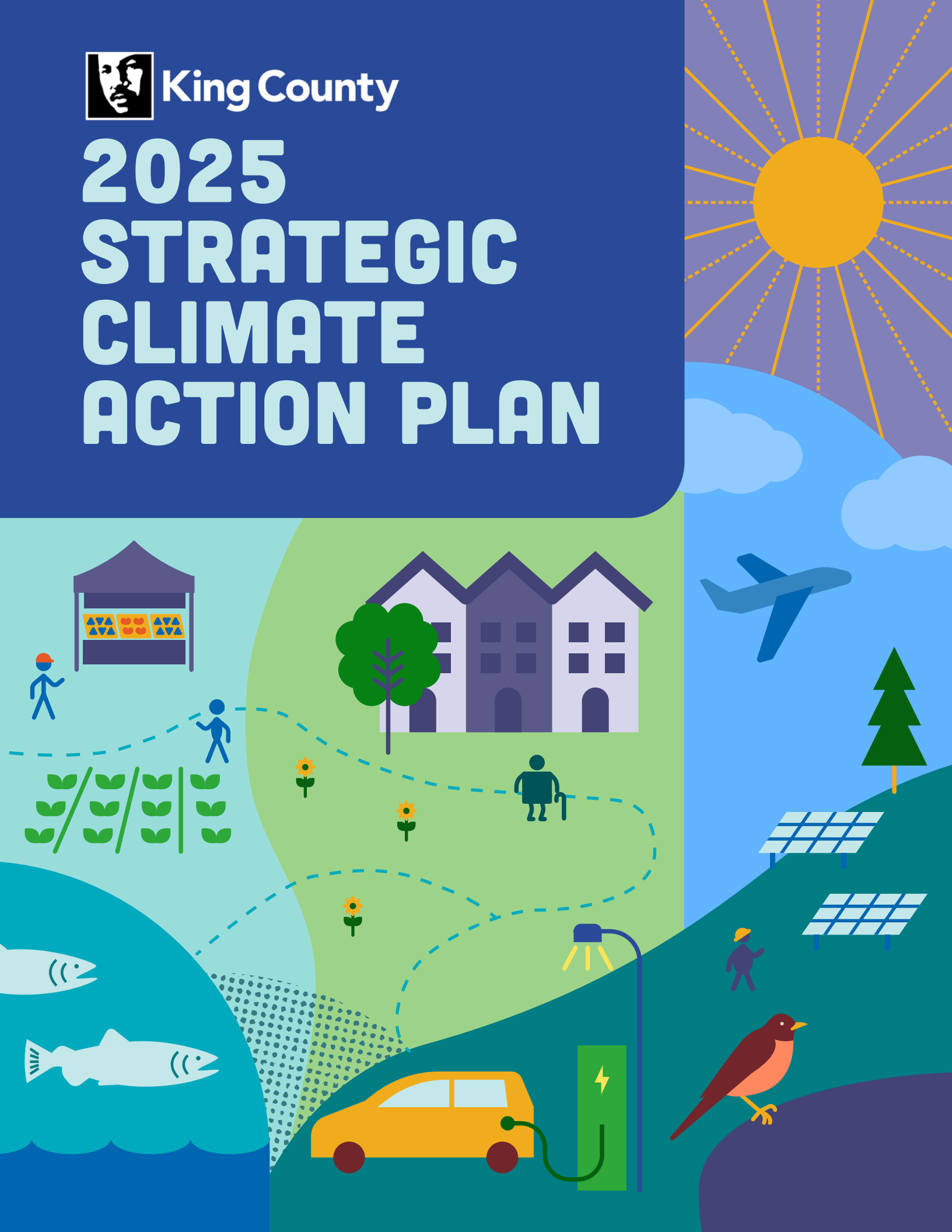


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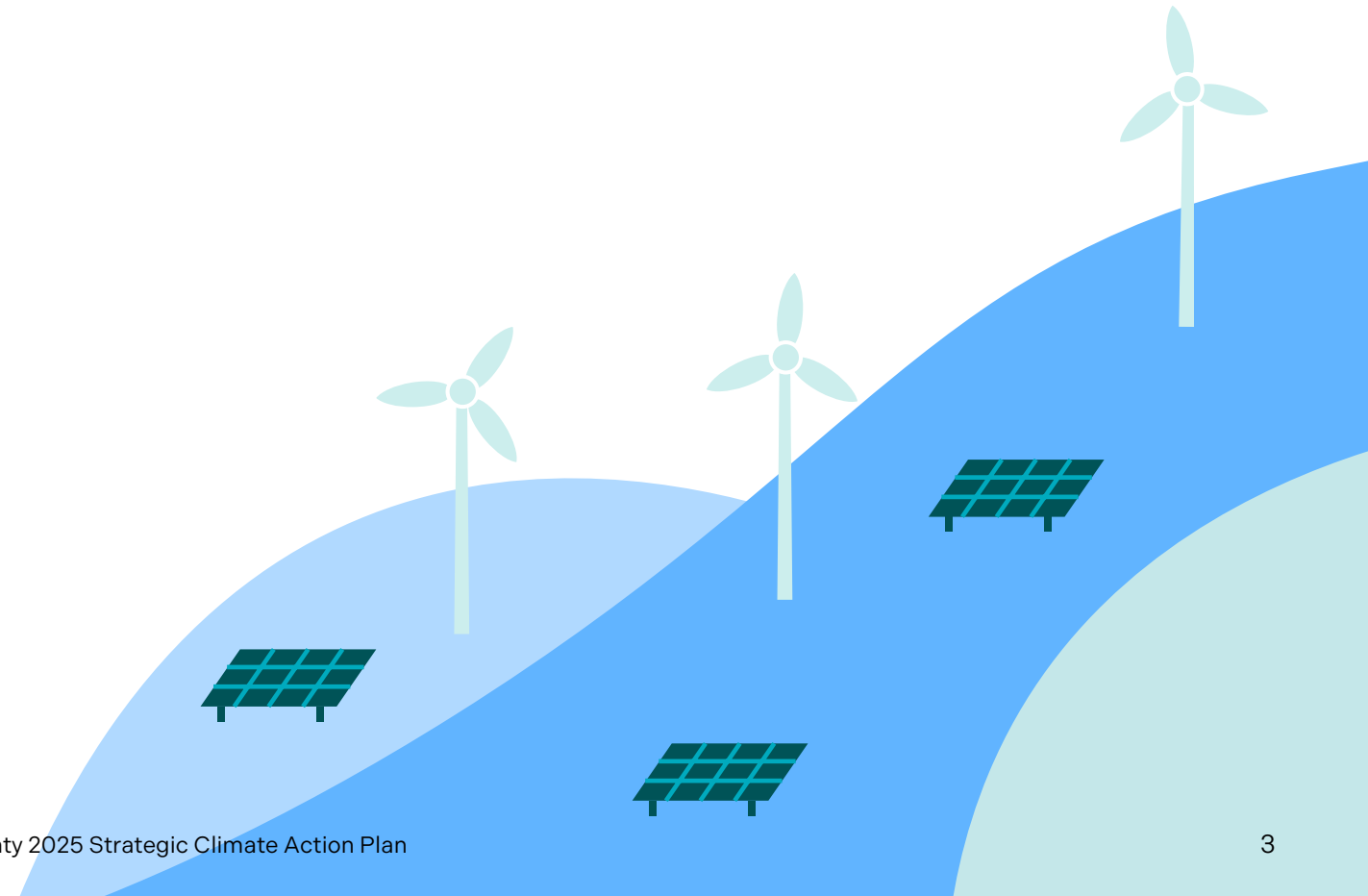
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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE

King County Residents, Visitors, and Partners,

Bold action to confront climate change is nothing new for King County, but this plan marks a fresh chapter in our work to ensure King County continues to lead in the fight against climate change.

For more than twenty years, we have listened to experts, made science-based decisions, embraced innovation, advanced clean energy solutions and forged strong partnerships in pursuit of climate preparedness, resilience, and equity. From adopting cutting-edge technology that reduces greenhouse gas emissions to launching a climate justice framework for strategic planning, we've broken new ground and surpassed our goals. Even as we celebrate that progress, we know that the toughest work is still ahead, and new obstacles continue to surface.

In challenging times and in inspired moments, King County leads with its values. Our compass is fixed on our True North: making King County a welcoming community where every person can thrive. Advancing a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient King County bolsters this vision.

The 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan, SCAP, defines near-term actions, long-range goals, and performance measures to advance King County's climate action leadership. This five-year strategy advances the three main sections of the 2020 SCAP focused on greenhouse gas reduction, sustainable and resilient frontline communities, and climate preparedness, and introduces a new flagship section. The flagships show how our climate actions are integrated with our commitments to: prioritize and empower those most impacted by climate change; ensure every home and workplace can withstand climate risk; make it easy to get where you need to go; create pathways for economic stability and growth; support farms, farmers, and access to nutritious food; reduce consumption, protect our environment for healthier communities; maintain roads, utilities, and services that work now and in the future; and work together for climate action and innovation. This framework is focused on making the whole of our climate action greater than the sum of its parts.

The 2025 SCAP is the fourth climate plan during my tenure as King County Executive. Each SCAP has been developed during a challenging time, but King County has always found a way to keep moving forward. I want to thank everyone who has contributed to this plan and the 2012, 2015, and 2020 climate plans. Countless people have joined together to make King County a climate action trailblazer.

Our charge to ensure the planet and people can thrive for generations is greater than one person, it is about collective action. Everyone has a role in reducing our collective carbon footprint, whether it's choosing transit, buying from local farms, checking on neighbors during a heat wave, or empowering the next generation to lead on climate action. To see and help our commitments and innovations mature over the last 16 years has been a true honor.

We have provided the roadmap for King County to continue advancing climate action over the next five years and beyond. The next page in this plan is intentionally left blank to give King County's next Executive the space to articulate their commitment to climate action as the next chief steward of this essential work.

With Gratitude,



Dow Constantine,

King County Executive (2009-2025)

LETTER FROM THE FUTURE EXECUTIVE

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LETTER FROM THE COMMUNITY

Dear King County Executive Dow Constantine and members of the Metropolitan King County Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Climate Equity Community Task Force (CECTF) and on the Climate Equity Working Group to support the update to the Sustainable & Resilient Frontline Communities (SRFC) Section of the 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP). We were also excited to partner with staff to conduct an equity screening for the GHG Emissions Reduction and the Climate Preparedness sections. Our communities are deeply invested in holistic climate solutions. **This was an important continued step for us and for King County as our communities are on the frontlines of climate change and are facing disproportionate impacts** due to institutional racism and the legacy of historic injustices. These conditions produce unequal outcomes and too often restrict access to resources and opportunity. The community-based solutions included in the SCAP reflect the needs and aspirations of the diverse and distinct communities we represent.

Our participation in the development of local climate policy ensures that climate solutions account for disparities. We know if climate equity is present, we can continue to move the needle towards a climate and environmentally just King County. **We see the SCAP as an opportunity to ensure our communities are not only protected but also empowered to lead in the fight for climate justice.** Without a strong equity lens, policies risk reinforcing systemic inequalities rather than dismantling them. Integrating frontline communities in the policy making process reflects the County's commitment to elevating and aligning with community-driven expertise and knowledge. It also creates a process of accountability between policymakers and the communities most affected by climate and environmental injustice.

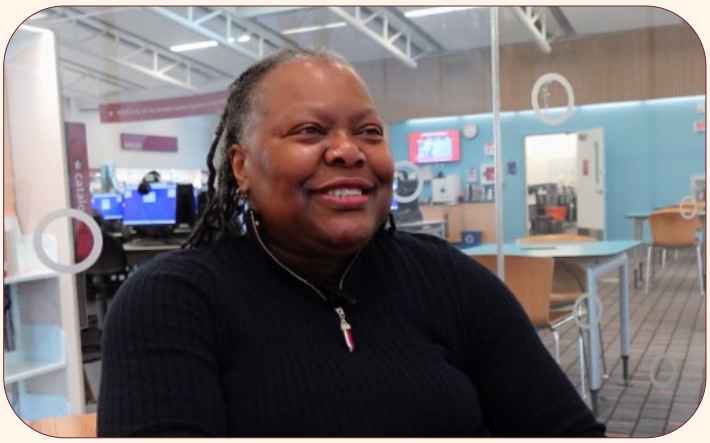
Climate action is not just about reducing carbon emissions; it's about protecting culture, history, and futures. For Indigenous people (native to the region, and from all parts of the globe) living in King County, climate change is deeply personal. It threatens ancestral lands, sacred sites, and the ability to pass down traditional knowledge to future generations. **Climate policy must also be gender-inclusive, recognizing the disproportionate burdens faced by women, nonbinary, and transgender individuals in crisis situations.** We are committed to supporting the SCAP and its efforts to prioritize solutions and uphold self-determination and community resilience, ensuring that frontline communities lead the way in shaping their own futures.

Lastly, we want to underscore that climate action must be sustained and adequately funded. Many frontline organizations and networks are doing the critical work of building climate resilience, advocating for equitable policies, and providing direct support with very limited resources. **King County and funding institutions must commit to long-term, community-driven investments to ensure that climate solutions are both effective and rooted in justice.** Thank you again Executive Constantine and the many County partners who worked to integrate our voices. We look forward to building solutions together.

Sincerely,

Members of the Climate Equity Community Task Force and the 2025 Climate Equity Working Group

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



1. Member of the Climate Equity Community Task Force (CECTF) sharing her climate story for King County climate communications, March 2025.

2. CECTF member making connections during a 2025 SCAP development workshop, August 2024.

3. CECTF member and member of the Heat Mitigation Strategy Work Group speaking during the launch of the King County Heat Mitigation Strategy, July 2024.

4. CECTF member and member of the Heat Mitigation Strategy steering committee and work group facilitating a workshop for Chinese-speaking seniors, June 2023.

5. Members of the CECTF exchange ideas at a King County End of Year event, December 2023.

6. Member of the CECTF at a King County End of Year event, December 2023.

2025 KING COUNTY STRATEGIC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With a population of over 2 million people, King County is Washington's largest county, critical to shaping a healthy, sustainable future for the entire region. The County has a long-standing commitment to bold climate leadership, setting policies and ambitious targets to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and build climate resilient communities. Despite decades of action, GHG emissions in King County are 4 percent higher than in 2007, though 8 percent lower than the 2019 peak. This signals some progress, but not enough.

Emissions reduction is not only a policy goal, but a moral and practical imperative. People across the region are experiencing more frequent record-breaking climate events like heat waves and wildfires. These events pose serious and growing risks to infrastructure, public health, and ecosystems, especially in frontline communities. Emissions reductions are essential to slowing climate change and avoiding its most severe health, economic, and environmental consequences.

Addressing climate change requires an increase in the scale and speed of action while deepening coordination across all levels of government. King County plays a critical leadership role ensuring that communities across the region benefit from stronger, more unified climate policies and investments. The Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) outlines how the County can reduce GHG emissions, center frontline communities, and prepare for climate change impacts.

KING COUNTY'S PLAN: BOLD ACTION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The SCAP serves as King County's five-year roadmap to address climate change, with updates to three sections: Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities, and Preparing for Climate Change. Since its inception in 2012, King County's SCAP has led to significant progress in clean energy adoption, sustainable transportation, ecosystem restoration, and community-led solutions.

The 2025 SCAP includes five sections, nine flagships, 25 focus areas, 178 actions, and 65 performance measures for building a more sustainable, equitable and resilient future for all.

Flagship Outcomes

The 2025 SCAP flagships represent King County's most visible and community-driven climate priorities. They connect actions across SCAP's three core sections–to broader, outcome-driven goals that improve the lives of King County residents. This approach ensures climate action is embedded in transportation, housing, food systems, infrastructure, and economic development, benefiting all residents, especially those most affected by climate change.

The following flagship outcomes represent climate solutions that ensure the work by King County is community-driven, equitable, and built to last:

1. **Put Frontline Communities First:** Investing in leadership, expanding access to resources, and ensuring climate policies are designed with and for frontline communities.
2. **Safe, Healthy, and Climate-Ready Buildings:** Strengthening housing and workplaces to withstand extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and flooding while ensuring affordability and preventing displacement.
3. **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.
4. **Economic Mobility and Career Opportunities:** Ensuring the clean energy transition creates economic opportunities, particularly for historically excluded workers and communities.
5. **Fresh, Local Food for Everyone:** Strengthening food security and sustainable agriculture by supporting farmers, reducing food waste, and increasing access to fresh, healthy food.
6. **Design Out Waste:** Reducing consumption, preventing waste, and reusing valuable materials.
7. **Clean Air, Water, and Healthy Ecosystems:** Protecting and restoring forests, waterways, and green spaces to improve public health, biodiversity, and climate resilience.
8. **Reliable and Future-Ready Infrastructure:** Modernizing roads, utilities, and public services to withstand climate extremes while ensuring equitable access to essential infrastructure.
9. **Collective Leadership and Community-Led Solutions:** Embedding equity in climate governance by ensuring frontline communities, Tribes, and local organizations help shape and lead climate solutions.

Section Update: Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Section

The 2025 SCAP charts a path toward continued greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction. The largest sources of emissions are from buildings and transportation, followed by smaller contributions: refrigerant gases, land use, solid waste and wastewater. Using 2007 emission levels as a baseline, King County seeks to eliminate countywide sources of GHG emissions over the next 25 years. The SCAP calls for a 50 percent reduction by 2030, 75 percent by 2040, and 95 to 100 percent (or net-zero) by 2050.

The 2025 SCAP outlines plans to work with partners and communities over the next five years to do the following:

- **Lead by example,** advocating for stronger GHG emissions policies, demonstrating local leadership, and strengthening accountability within County operations.
- **Accelerate clean energy and zero-emission solutions** through high-performance green buildings, energy efficiency programs, and the transition to zero-emission infrastructure and fleets.
- **Expand access to reliable transportation** by improving public transit, supporting active mobility, and reducing emissions from vehicle emissions.
- **Reduce waste through a circular economy** that focuses on reuse, recovery, and responsible consumption.
- **Take care of natural lands** and prepare infrastructure for the future by supporting farming and forestry practices that capture carbon and building public infrastructure that can handle climate impacts and serve all communities equally.

Outlook

The 2025 SCAP builds on King County's legacy of climate action. However, to achieve significant carbon reductions, climate action must be integrated across the federal, state, and local levels. Implementing existing federal and state emissions reductions measures and those proposed in the 2025 SCAP are only expected to yield a 33 percent emission reduction by 2030. This falls short of the 50 percent target, highlighting the need for additional partnership across all levels of government. As a regional government, King County can directly implement climate actions through its services and plays a key role in convening local partners to advocate for strong federal and state actions.

Section Update: Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities Section

Climate change does not affect all communities equally. Frontline communities—Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant and refugee populations, residents who are low-income, individuals with pre-existing health conditions, unsheltered populations, and outdoor workers—experience the earliest, most severe, and longest-lasting climate impacts. These communities are more likely to live in flood-prone areas, neighborhoods with less tree cover, or near major roadways with high pollution levels, putting them at greater risk of extreme heat, poor air quality, and displacement due to climate disasters.

These climate-driven challenges worsen existing health, economic and social disparities, making it critical to prioritize investments in climate resilience, infrastructure improvements, and community-driven solutions that protect those most at risk.

Community-Driven Leadership and Policymaking

The 2025 SCAP reflects community priorities for policymaking and leadership in climate action. Key focus areas include:

- **Housing security and anti-displacement efforts** that ensure investments in climate resilience do not displace residents by expanding affordable housing, protecting renters, and ensuring equitable access to energy-efficient home upgrades.
- **Expanded access to transit** and affordable, low-carbon mobility options for all communities.
- **Energy justice and utilities affordability** measures reduce energy burdens for households who are low-income, transitioning away from fossil fuels, and expanding clean energy solutions.
- **Green workforce development** efforts help create jobs, training, and economic opportunities, especially in frontline communities and with workers who have been historically excluded.
- **Food security and sustainable agriculture** strengthens food systems by supporting local farmers, reducing food waste, and increasing access to fresh, healthy food for frontline communities.

Outlook

King County is committed to advancing climate solutions that are effective and equitable. The 2025 SCAP reflects this commitment by prioritizing community-led strategies, investing in climate resilience, and ensuring that frontline communities are at the forefront of decision-making. This is the foundation for a future where all residents have access to clean air, safe housing, reliable transportation, and economic opportunities to climate change. The path forward requires continued collaboration, bold investments, and policies that center the voices of those most affected. A resilient King County is one where frontline communities are not just protected from climate change, but are leading the way toward a healthier, more just future for all.

Section Update: Climate Preparedness

The 2025 SCAP sets new targets for addressing climate preparedness. Climate change is already impacting King County, and the pace of it is increasing. The region is experiencing more frequent and severe extreme weather events, posing serious risks to the community, infrastructure, and natural ecosystems. As climate threats like extreme heat events, flooding, wildfires and sea level rise increase, King County is working on strategies to protect residents, businesses, infrastructure, and natural resources to ensure that communities are prepared for the challenges ahead.

To reduce risks and enhance climate resilience, the 2025 SCAP Climate Preparedness section includes the following strategic priorities over the next five years:

- **Help people and communities stay safe and healthy in the face of climate change** by reducing risks from flooding, sea level rise, extreme heat and wildfire; expanding community access to cooling spaces and flood protection tools; supporting locally led heat and wildfire resilience strategies; improving protections for rural infrastructure; and enhancing public health tracking to better respond to climate-related health risks.
- **Build resilient infrastructure** by incorporating climate risks, like flooding and extreme weather, into how the County designs, builds and upgrades capital projects. This includes flood protection, stormwater systems, wastewater facilities, and Metro transit infrastructure. New standards and planning tools will help ensure public investments are built to last in a changing climate.
- **Implement multi-benefit solutions,** including expansion of green infrastructure like stormwater parks, rain gardens, and street trees, to manage flooding, improve water quality, and create healthier communities. A key focus will be growing the urban tree canopy across jurisdictions to reduce heat and support livability, while also accelerating the use of recycled water and nature-based solutions for habitat restoration and agricultural resilience.
- **Increase ecosystem resilience** through the restoration and management of forests, shorelines, and habitat with climate change in mind. Efforts include accelerating forest restoration on public lands, expanding the supply of climate-adapted seedlings, planting more trees, and supporting private landowners in applying best practices. The County will also improve lake conditions for fish recovery and map wildlife habitat corridors to protect vulnerable species into the future.
- **Strengthen collaboration, knowledge, and systems for long-term resilience,** including work with local, regional, and tribal partners to prepare for climate impacts like sea level rise, drought, flooding, and extreme heat. This includes developing shared strategies for high-risk areas such as the Duwamish Valley and supporting climate-informed planning across shoreline and capital projects.

Outlook

King County is committed to building a future where communities, infrastructure, and natural resources are resilient to climate change. The 2025 SCAP strengthens these efforts by expanding investments in climate preparedness, green infrastructure, and community-led resilience programs. Planning for climate impacts is not only about reducing risks, but also about ensuring long-term safety, stability, and well-being of King County's residents and economy. Investing in climate resilience now will reduce future costs and create a healthier, more livable region for everyone. Through stronger policies, partnerships, and on-the ground solutions, the County will continue leading efforts to protect people and places from growing threats of climate change.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

King County will use data to drive action and stay accountable. The SCAP includes updated performance measures that track progress toward GHG reduction, equity, and climate preparedness goals. These metrics help identify what's working, where adjustments need to be made, and how to ensure that climate strategies deliver real results for communities across the region.

LEARN MORE

King County's approach to climate action prioritizes continuous improvement of plans, programs, and activities. This requires ongoing community engagement and responsiveness to evolving climate science and emissions sources, as well as a Biennial Report to inform each five-year update of the SCAP.

For more information about King County climate efforts, please go to www.kingcounty.gov/climate.

To stay up to date on King County climate action, please sign up for the newsletter at: bit.ly/kcclimatenews







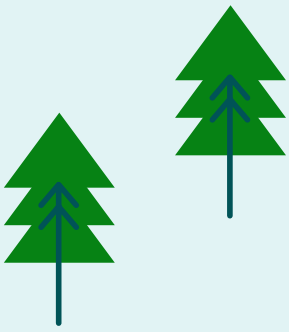
INTRODUCTION TO THE SCAP

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.

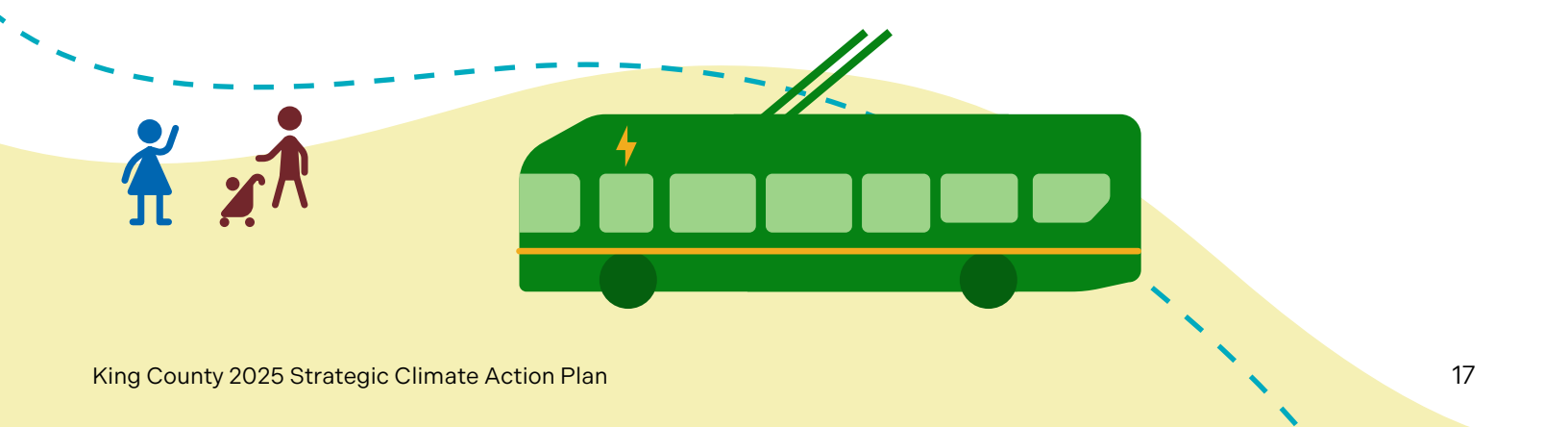
Beyond its geographic boundaries, King County plays a critical role as a convener, collaborator, and partner in the greater Puget Sound region with Washington State agencies and other county and city governments, such as the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA), Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), King 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.

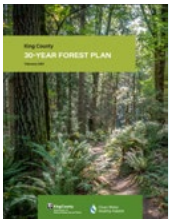
- **Act quickly:** We must move fast to address the climate crisis.
- **Promote fairness:** Focus on racial justice and equal benefits for all communities.
- **Involve communities:** Work with local voices to shape climate solutions.
- **Use science:** Base decisions on the best science available.
- **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.

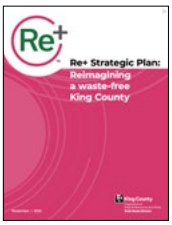
SCAP ACCOMPLISHMENTS BETWEEN 2020–2025

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.



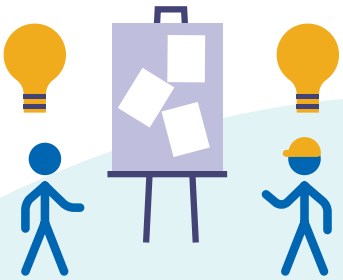
King County's goal for the 2025 update is to be more strategic and more focused on partnerships and community engagement. SCAP contributors worked collectively to develop a more strategic plan focusing on fewer, more impactful actions aligned with targeted outcomes, leveraging and integrating with other 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

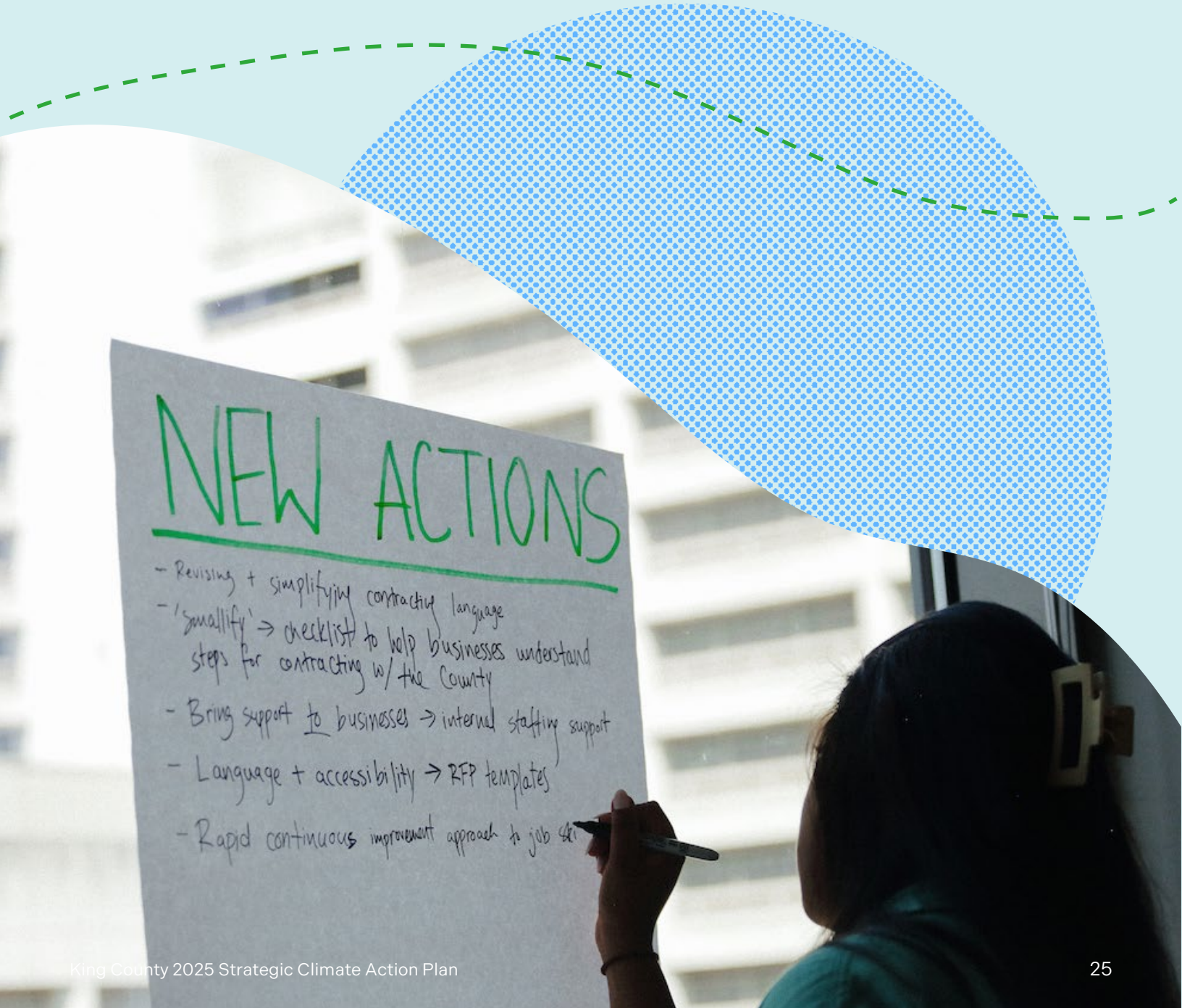
The third phase is where the plan's format and structure began to take shape to reflect the actions developed by the working groups, King County staff, and other subject matter experts. Consultation with department leadership occurred throughout this process. The three main sections to the 2020 SCAP 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, 177 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.

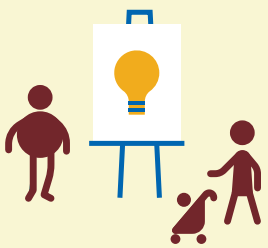
EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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:

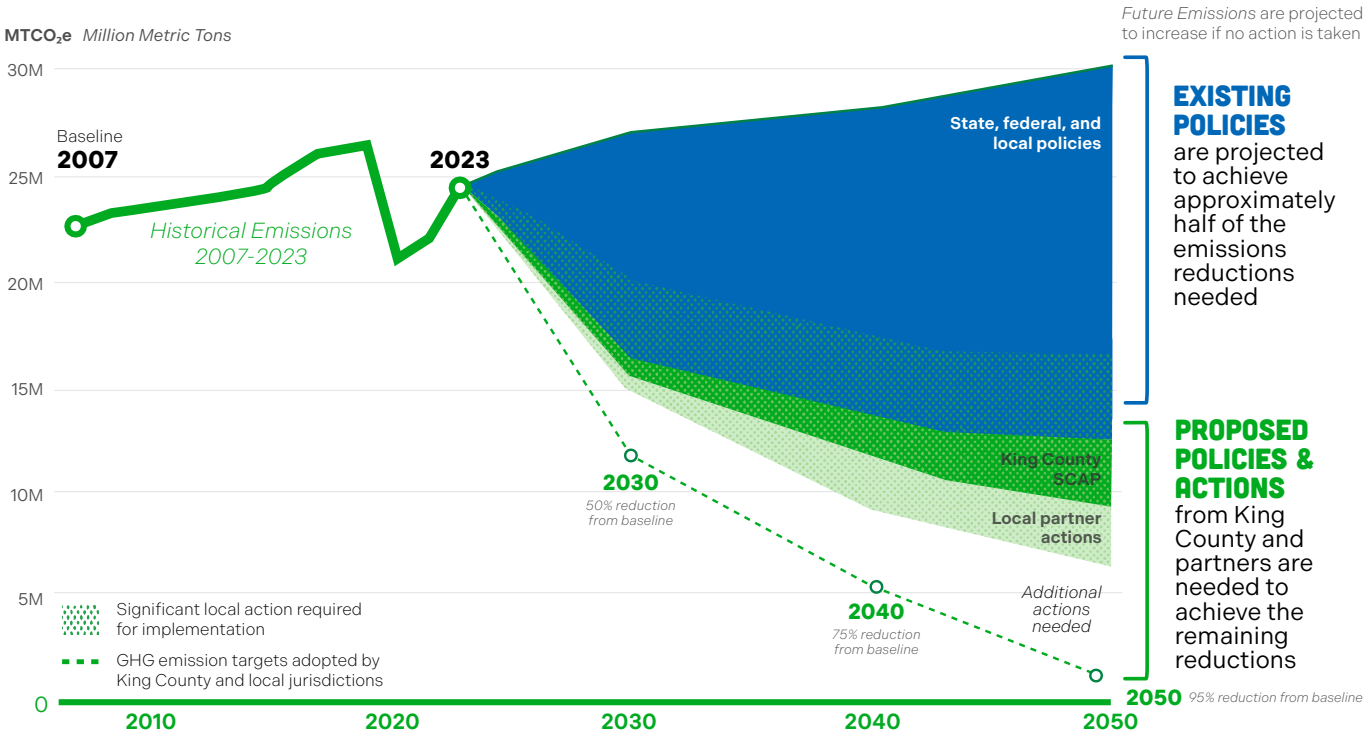
- **Within Current Capacity:** can be supported with existing resources.
- **Additional:** needs more funding to expand or scale up existing work.
- **New:** requires entirely new funding (e.g., for a new activity).

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:

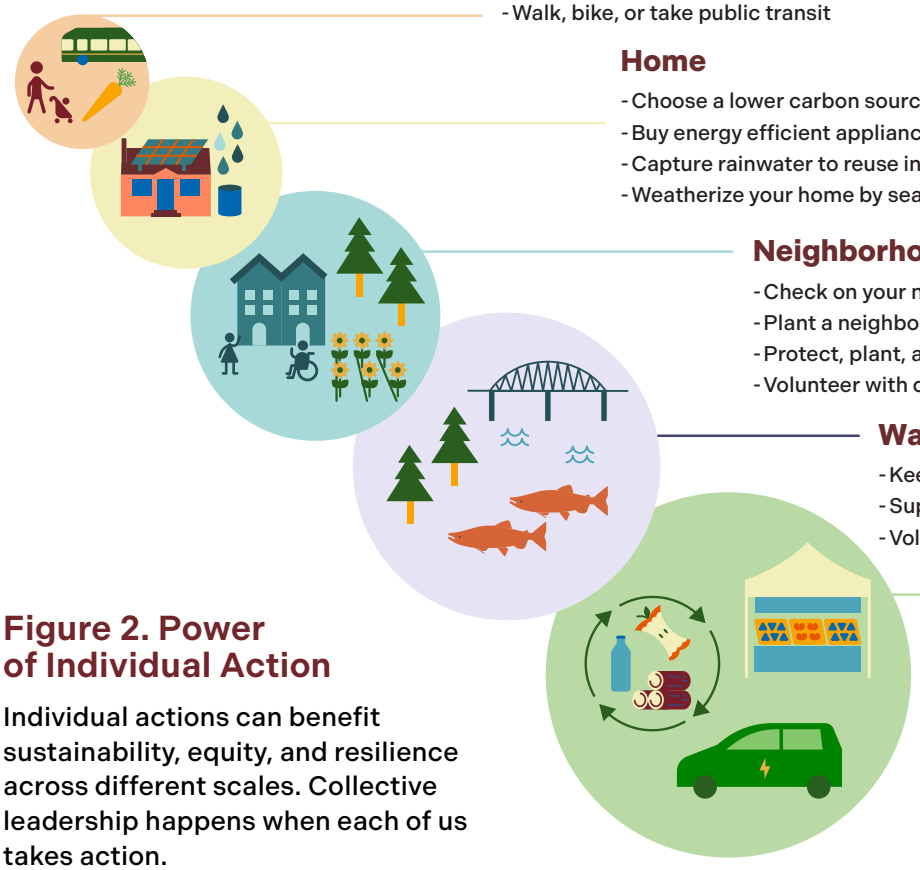
- Expanding transit access and reducing vehicle miles traveled
- Accelerating building electrification and clean energy adoption
- Enhancing waste reduction and circular economy initiatives
- Strengthening climate resilience measures

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.



FLAGSHIPS

FLAGSHIPS

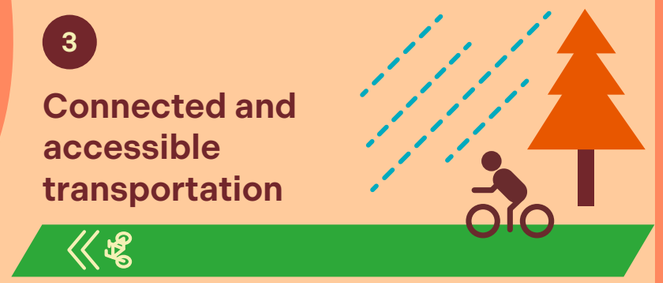
1
Put frontline communities first



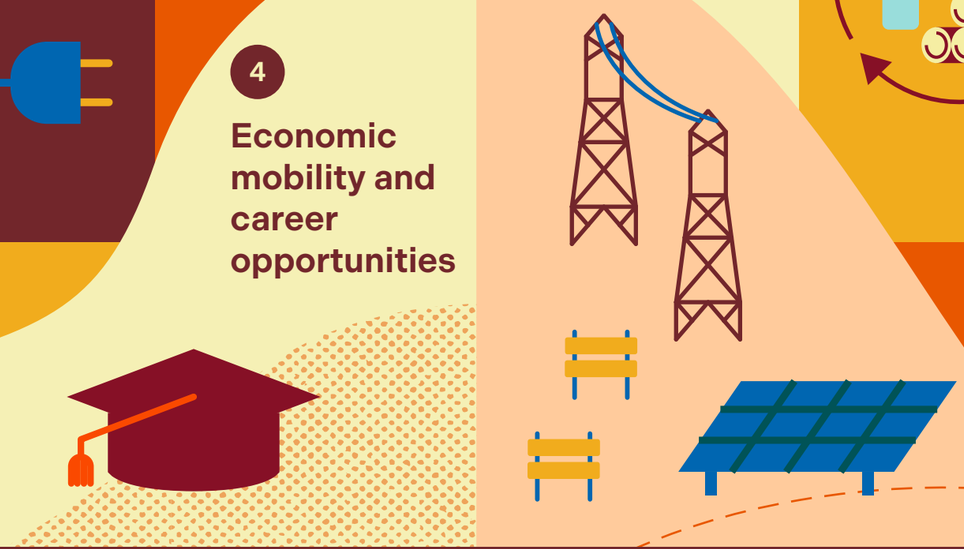
2
Safe, healthy, and climate-ready buildings



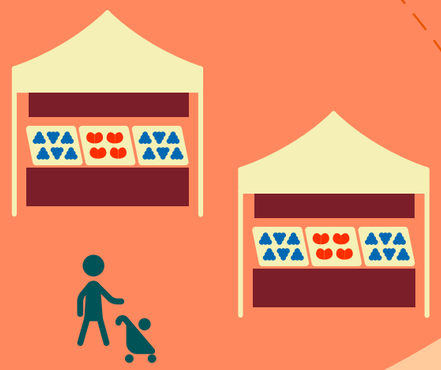
3
Connected and accessible transportation



4
Economic mobility and career opportunities



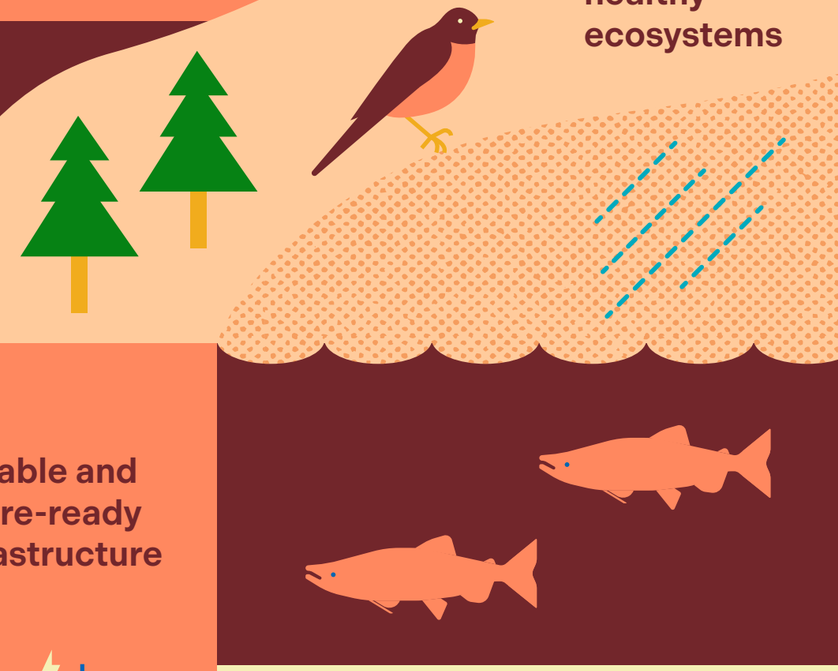
5
Fresh, local food for everyone



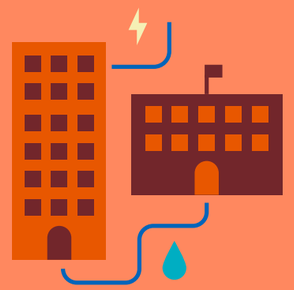
6
Designing out waste



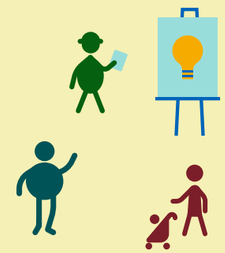
7
Clean air, water, and healthy ecosystems



8
Reliable and future-ready infrastructure



9
Collective leadership and community-led solutions



The Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) translates King County's bold vision for climate action into nine flagship outcomes that drive real impact across our communities. Each outcome reflects our commitment to tackling the climate crisis while addressing the unique needs of our diverse communities. Together, they represent a comprehensive approach—one that cuts greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, builds climate resilience, and ensures that every investment we make contributes to a sustainable and equitable King County. These outcomes are more than goals; they are a commitment to create lasting change that benefits everyone.



1. PUT COMMUNITIES FIRST

PRIORITIZING AND EMPOWERING THOSE MOST IMPACTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

Frontline communities—those with increased sensitivity to climate risks—are often the first to feel the impacts of a warming planet, yet the last to receive resources or representation in decision-making. In King County, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant and refugee populations, low-income residents, outdoor workers, and people with pre-existing health conditions face overlapping vulnerabilities—such as inadequate housing, food insecurity, and limited access to healthcare—that magnify the effects of extreme heat, air pollution, flooding, and rising costs.

Prioritizing these communities is the foundation of a stronger, more resilient region. Frontline community members not only bear the greatest costs of climate change, they also bring deep knowledge of environmental stewardship, mutual aid, and resilience strategies. When communities most at risk are equipped with the resources, decision-making power, and long-term investments they need, they become leaders in shaping solutions that benefit everyone. Building resilience from the ground up ensures that no one is left behind—and creates a healthier, more just future for all.

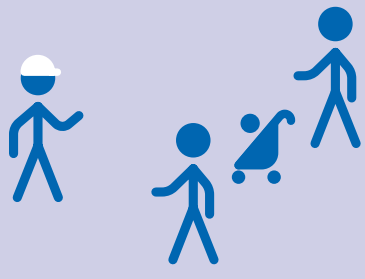
EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

When extreme heat, wildfire smoke, or flooding hit King County, the risks aren't felt equally. Frontline communities—including low-income households, seniors, people with pre-existing health conditions, and outdoor workers—face disproportionate exposure to dangerous temperatures and poor air quality, often without access to safe housing, cooling systems, or healthcare.[1] During the 2021 heat wave, temperatures soared past 100 degrees for three consecutive days, contributing to at least 34 heat-related deaths in King County. Many of those who died were seniors living alone, people with chronic illnesses, or individuals without air conditioning—highlighting how systemic inequities leave certain communities far more vulnerable.

Recent investments show how long-term, community-driven solutions can close these gaps. In 2024, King County partnered with community-based organizations to install energy-efficient heat pumps in adult family homes—small, residential care homes that serve seniors and people with disabilities, many of whom have fixed incomes and limited mobility. These homes often lack adequate cooling or heating systems, leaving residents especially at risk during extreme weather events. By working directly with frontline communities to design and implement these programs, the County is expanding access to life-saving technology, lowering household energy costs, and cutting GHG emissions—all at once. The same approach is needed across other sectors: whether it's ensuring multilingual emergency communication during disasters or making clean transportation options affordable and accessible. Prioritizing investments that are shaped by and serve the communities most at risk builds lasting resilience and ensures no one is left behind as the climate changes.

CO-BENEFITS

- **Advances climate equity by prioritizing communities most at risk**
- **Improves community health by expanding access to clean air, safe spaces, and climate education**
- **Lowers climate risks through preparedness, emergency response, and local partnerships**
- **Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by implementing lower-emission solutions**



LEARN MORE

The SCAP outlines a series of commitments that will prioritize frontline communities to strengthen public health, enhance emergency preparedness, and build community resilience in the face of climate change.

Community Leadership and Community-Driven Policymaking

These actions support partnerships with frontline community leaders, cultivate pathways for emerging leaders, and invest in community-led climate action.

Extreme Heat Adaptation

These actions mitigate extreme heat impacts by expanding nature-based solutions, strengthening community resilience, and enhancing emergency response.

Regional Capacity Across Climate Hazards

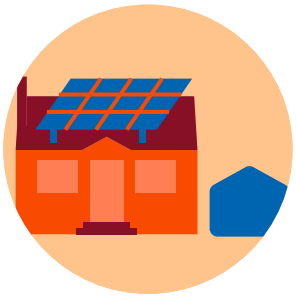
These actions strengthen climate preparedness across King County and the Puget Sound region through internal and external collaborations.

Wildfire Risk Reduction

These actions enhance wildfire resilience through proactive forest management, collaboration, and strategic investments to reduce risks in fire-prone areas.



Classrooms without air conditioning can get uncomfortably hot during heat events—affecting student learning and health. The "Cool Schools" initiative takes a multi-faceted, partnership-based approach to heat mitigation.



2. SAFE, HEALTHY, AND CLIMATE-READY BUILDINGS

ENSURING EVERY HOME AND WORKPLACE IS ENERGY EFFICIENT AND RESILIENT

As climate change reshapes our environment, the link between buildings and resilience is clear. Decisions about where and how homes and workplaces are built can shape vulnerability to climate risks such as extreme heat, wildfire, and flooding. For example, structures that are elevated are likely to be less damaged by flooding and homes that are properly insulated provide better protection against wildfire smoke and extreme heat.[2] At the same time, buildings are the second largest source of climate pollution in King County: residential, commercial, and industrial buildings account for 43 percent of King County's greenhouse gas emissions. Combustion of fossil fuels for heating and cooking also worsens indoor air quality.[3] Ensuring every home and workplace is safe, healthy, and climate-ready means delivering energy-efficient, disaster-resilient buildings equipped with clean, affordable utilities—especially for communities facing disproportionate risks. Investing in equitable building improvements strengthens our collective ability to withstand climate impacts while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

CO-BENEFITS

- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by improving energy efficiency and reducing reliance on fossil fuels
- Protects public health by improving indoor air quality and reducing heat-related illnesses
- Increases climate resilience by strengthening homes and workplaces against climate hazards
- Prevents displacement by ensuring that climate upgrades do not drive up housing costs or force renters out of their homes
- Lowers energy costs over time by investing in high-efficiency appliances, weatherization, and renewable energy solutions

EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

For many King County residents, an energy-efficient, climate-resilient home remains financially out of reach. This lack of access can increase climate risks and affect the health and wellbeing of residents and communities. In areas where wildfire is a concern, for example, residents understand the importance of preparing their homes—clearing vegetation, changing roofing materials, properly sealing vents—but these improvements come with high upfront costs. Installing air filtration may also be needed. Wildfire smoke poses serious health risks to children, seniors, and people with respiratory conditions who lack proper air filtration.

Costs can also be a barrier to installing or using energy-efficient air conditioning systems to stay cool and safe as summer temperatures get hotter. Most King County homes, particularly multi-family units, lack air conditioning, leaving low-income renters and homeowners with few options when it is smoky and/or during extreme heat events. Opening windows may offer temporary relief, but when smoke fills the air, residents are forced to choose between hazardous air quality and hot indoor temperatures.[4] Renters are particularly vulnerable. Even when landlords invest in long-term upgrades, the costs are often passed down to tenants through higher rents and utility bills. Without protections in place, well-intentioned climate improvements can unintentionally widen existing inequities.

Programs like King County's *Energize* show how climate upgrades can be paired with housing stability. Through *Energize* the County partnered with building owners to install energy-efficient heat pumps, providing cooling and cleaner air during extreme heat and wildfire smoke events while also reducing GHG emissions. In return, building owners agreed to keep rents stable for at least seven years, ensuring tenants benefit from healthier, more comfortable homes without facing rising housing costs. This model demonstrates how public investment and clear tenant protections can deliver both immediate benefits and long-term stability. By expanding programs like *Energize* and focusing resources on communities facing the greatest climate risks, King County can ensure that the transition to resilient, energy-efficient housing is equitable and inclusive.



King County's *Energize* Heat Pump Program installs heat pumps and other clean technology to help low and moderate-income homes in King County.

LEARN MORE

The SCAP outlines a series of commitments that will strengthen public health, enhance emergency preparedness, and build community resilience through:



Building Energy and Green Building

These actions improve energy efficiency, reduce utility costs, and enhance well-being for all residents, with a focus on low- to moderate-income households and frontline communities.



Housing Security and Anti-Displacement

These actions strengthen County and community partnerships to support community-driven equitable development and prevent displacement.



Sea Level Rise Preparedness

These actions prepare for rising sea levels to minimize economic and environmental impacts, protect shoreline habitats, and reduce risks to public health and safety.



Wildfire Risk Reduction

These actions enhance wildfire resilience through proactive forest management, collaboration, and strategic investments to reduce risks in areas where wildfire is a concern.



Climate Ready Capital Projects

These actions reduce energy use, lower greenhouse gas emissions, generate clean energy, and stimulate economic growth in the clean energy sector.



Countywide Greenhouse Gas Policy and Leadership

These actions support regional coordination by partnering with cities and jurisdictions to align state legislative advocacy, share resources, and amplify local successes to drive broader national and global climate action.



Extreme Heat Mitigation

These actions mitigate extreme heat impacts by expanding nature-based solutions, strengthening community resilience, and enhancing emergency response.



3. CONNECTED AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

MAKING IT EASY TO GET WHERE YOU NEED TO GO

With King County's population projected to grow by 30 percent in the next 25 years, the way we invest in transportation today will shape both our region's future and our ability to meet climate goals. Transportation is the largest source of climate pollution in King County, responsible for nearly half of all greenhouse gas emissions—totaling 44 percent from on-road vehicles, aviation, marine vessels and off-road equipment.[5] Expanding high-capacity transit, improving walkability and bike infrastructure, and integrating affordable housing near transit hubs will reduce reliance on personal vehicles and lower transportation costs, while providing all residents—especially those historically underserved—with easier access to jobs, schools, services, and emergency resources such as cooling centers and evacuation routes. Prioritizing multimodal, low-carbon transportation options not only cuts emissions and improves air quality but also strengthens community resilience, well-being, and affordability as King County continues to grow.

CO-BENEFITS

- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by increasing transit ridership and walkability
- Improves public health by cutting air pollution in frontline communities
- Strengthens community resilience by ensuring affordable, reliable mobility options
- Creates safer, more walkable neighborhoods that reduce dependence on cars
- Reduces transportation costs by expanding affordable transit and clean mobility options

EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Transportation is one of the clearest examples of how infrastructure decisions can deepen or reduce inequities.[6] Many BIPOC, immigrant, and low-income neighborhoods in King County continue to face the legacy of redlining and disinvestment, with limited access to reliable, affordable transit options. Transit services and facilities need to improve to serve more people especially in these areas of historic underinvestment. More frequent service, better bus stops, improved technology and better multi-lingual resources could make the system more accessible for working families, non-English speakers, people with disabilities, and communities throughout King County. Meanwhile, residents in these same communities often live



Sidewalks, bike lanes, and frequent transit make it easy to get where you need to go.

near high-traffic corridors, where exposure to air pollution and traffic noise contributes to higher rates of asthma and other health conditions. Without deliberate protections, transit-oriented development intended to increase the number of households that live near high-capacity transit can also drive displacement, pricing out the very residents who rely on transit the most.

The transition to a lower-emission transportation system presents a critical opportunity to correct these inequities. By focusing investments on communities historically overburdened by pollution and limited mobility options, King County can ensure that clean transportation benefits are shared equitably. This includes expanding public EV charging stations in neighborhoods identified through the state's Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act framework—particularly in areas where the private sector is less likely to invest. It also means prioritizing deploying zero-emission buses that reduce both greenhouse gas emissions and harmful air pollution first in frontline communities of South King County, improving daily conditions for riders and nearby residents. Supporting mixed-use, transit-connected neighborhoods—with strong housing protections—further strengthens affordability and access while preventing displacement. Centering equity in every step of the transition will help build a transportation system that is accessible, affordable, and resilient for all communities.

LEARN MORE

By prioritizing equitable, accessible, and climate-friendly transportation investments, King County can ensure that every resident benefits from a cleaner, more efficient transit system. The SCAP outlines a series of commitments to strengthen public health, advance transportation equity, and build climate resilience:

Transit and Transportation

These actions reduce reliance on private vehicles, enhance public transit, and minimize traffic congestion in areas with high population and job density.

Transportation Access and Equity

These actions ensure equitable transit planning and expand reliable, accessible transportation options in partnership with frontline communities.

Zero-Emission County Fleets

These actions transition King County's fleet of over 6,000 vehicles—including buses, patrol units, and service vehicles—to zero-emission alternatives to reduce carbon pollution.

Countywide Greenhouse Gas Policy and Leadership

These actions support regional coordination by partnering with cities and jurisdictions to align state legislative advocacy, share resources, and amplify local successes to drive broader national and global climate action.



The King County Parks Levy funded the construction of the White River Bridge, connecting King and Pierce counties via the Foothills Trail.

4. ECONOMIC MOBILITY AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

CONNECTING CLIMATE ACTION AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The transition to a clean energy economy is not just about reducing emissions—it's about creating lasting opportunity. As King County invests in renewable energy, sustainable infrastructure, and energy-efficient buildings, this shift presents a once-in-a-generation chance to stimulate regional economic growth, create high-quality jobs, and ensure prosperity reaches all communities—not just those already positioned to benefit. Meeting the workforce demands of this transition requires urgent action and sustained efforts. The 2024 Washington State Residential Energy Workforce Gap Analysis identified a need for over 550 new electricians focused on residential energy efficiency projects by the end of the decade, in addition to more than 1,100 electricians needed across other sectors. By embedding workforce development into climate action, expanding support for local businesses, and prioritizing access to financial incentives, King County is advancing a clean energy transition that supports both economic mobility and climate goals.

CO-BENEFITS

- Adapts and accelerates investment and outreach for local clean energy needs
- Demonstrates the economic benefit of the clean energy transition within frontline communities and local businesses
- Expands economic opportunity through increased access to living-wage jobs, building a skilled and diverse workforce
- Promotes sustainable business models that reduce waste and lower costs



King County JumpStart participant completing 240-hours of paid work-based learning at contractor host site.

EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

For too many frontline communities, economic opportunity hasn't been evenly distributed. High-paying jobs in the clean energy sector are growing rapidly, but systemic barriers—such as limited access to training, lack of exposure to career pathways, and weak connections to employers—continue to prevent many BIPOC, immigrant, and low-income residents from accessing them.[7] Programs like King County's *JumpStart*, which serves 86 percent Black and Latino youth, are already making an impact by connecting young adults to career opportunities in electrical work, HVAC, solar installation, and project management. Yet many job seekers, including youth from low-income households, struggle to envision themselves in these industries without early exposure, mentorship, and culturally relevant outreach.[8, 9] Without deliberate investment, the clean energy transition risks reinforcing existing inequities, excluding the very communities most impacted by climate change.

This shift presents a powerful opportunity to close long-standing gaps in economic mobility and wealth-building. Partnerships like King County's Climate Equity Capital Pool Project show how public investments can deliver multiple benefits—by requiring sewer districts receiving County grants to offer paid work-based learning, the County helped pre-apprenticeship graduates gain hands-on experience and secure full-time employment in climate-related careers. Beyond new job opportunities, King County can build pathways to ensure that frontline communities also share in profits and leadership opportunities as business owners, contractors, and decision-makers. Programs like *C-PACER*, which increases affordability for building retrofits, and *Energize*, which contracts directly with local companies for heat pump installations for low to moderate income households, are designed to channel economic benefits to local businesses—particularly minority- and women-owned enterprises (MWBEs). Through intentional engagement, expanded internships, certifications, leadership development, and sustained support for local businesses, King County is committed to building a green economy by and for the communities it aims to serve.



King County Metro employees graduate from the Green Custodial Health program, facilitated by the U.S. Green Building Council.

LEARN MORE

By aligning climate action with economic opportunity, King County can create a future where sustainability drives both prosperity and equity—ensuring that every community has the chance to build wealth in the clean energy economy. The SCAP outlines the following commitments to ensure an inclusive and equitable clean energy future:



Climate and Economic Opportunity

These actions integrate climate-informed workforce development into capital projects, expand outreach and engagement, strengthen regional partnerships, and implement the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy



Building Capacity with Frontline Communities and Youth

These actions strengthen County staff capacity to embed climate equity while supporting frontline communities and youth in developing just, community-driven climate solutions



Energy Justice and Utilities Affordability

These actions reduce energy burdens on frontline communities and strengthen community leadership in shaping energy justice policies and programs



Circular Economy

These actions minimize landfill waste, expand recycling and reuse programs, and strengthen community partnerships to create new markets and economic opportunities for a more sustainable waste system



Youth in VR headset explores virtual solar installation training module at 2024 Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit.



5. FRESH, LOCAL FOOD FOR EVERYONE

SUPPORTING FARMS, FARMERS, AND ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS FOOD

Food systems are the backbone of healthy, resilient communities—but climate change is putting them under growing strain. Food is the second-largest source of King County's consumption-based GHG emissions, after transportation, driven by the environmental impact of how food is processed, distributed, and wasted.[10] Industrial farming has expanded global food production, often at the expense of long-term sustainability. These systems rely on monocultures and heavy chemical inputs that degrade soil, deplete water resources, and reduce biodiversity—making farms more vulnerable to drought, floods, pests, and disease. In King County, local farmers, fisheries, and food businesses are facing growing challenges, from extreme weather to rising production costs and supply chain disruptions. Meanwhile, 30–40 percent of food produced goes uneaten, highlighting deep inefficiencies in the current system.[11] Building a more resilient, sustainable food system is essential—not only to reduce emissions and protect farmers' livelihoods, but to ensure fresh, affordable food remains accessible to every community.

CO-BENEFITS

- Advances climate equity by prioritizing communities most at risk
- Improves food security by making fresh, local food more affordable and accessible
- Reduces waste and emissions by strengthening local food supply chains and recovery programs

EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

For many residents in King County, accessing fresh, affordable food is becoming increasingly difficult. Climate change and global disruptions are driving up food costs, disproportionately affecting low-income households and BIPOC communities. This includes access to culturally significant foods like salmon and shellfish, which are vital to Indigenous diets and coastal economies. Immigrant farmers across the region face additional barriers as they work to gain and preserve access to farmland and grow culturally relevant crops that connect communities to their traditions.

These challenges expose deeper inefficiencies and inequities in the current system. While low-income families struggle to afford fresh, nutritious food and producers contend with extreme weather and rising costs, an estimated 30–40 percent of food goes uneaten—generating methane emissions and wasting valuable resources. King County has an opportunity to create a more resilient and equitable food system by strengthening networks that connect small and underrepresented farmers—including immigrant and Indigenous growers—to institutional markets like schools, food banks, and farmers markets. Expanding access to land, improving distribution infrastructure, and investing in food recovery efforts can boost regional food economies while ensuring fresh, culturally relevant food reaches the communities who need it most. By aligning climate action with food security, waste reduction, and local agricultural support, King County can reduce emissions, stabilize food access, and safeguard farmers, fisheries, and food traditions for future generations.



King County's annual CHOMP! festival highlights the regional food ecosystem—local farms, farmers, chefs, restaurants and organizations.

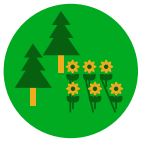
LEARN MORE

A resilient food system does more than withstand crises—it strengthens economy and well-being, supports farmers, and ensures that every resident has access to fresh, local food. The SCAP outlines a series of commitments to strengthen food security and sustainability:



Food Systems and Food Security

These actions invest in farmer economic viability, enhance food rescue coordination, increase food access, and integrate food system goals into broader policy efforts.



Forest and Agriculture

These actions protect and restore high-value forests and farmland by improving forest management and advancing sustainable agricultural practices.



Extreme Precipitation and Drought Mitigation

These actions improve stormwater management, support water quality, and expand recycled water and water conservation in response to changing hydrologic extremes.



Circular Economy

These actions minimize landfill waste, expand recycling and reuse programs, and strengthen community partnerships to create new markets and economic opportunities for a more sustainable waste system.



Countywide Greenhouse Gas Policy and Leadership

Includes action to support regional coordination by partnering with cities and jurisdictions to uphold the Urban Growth Boundary, which protects key forest and agricultural lands from development.



6. DESIGN OUT WASTE

REDUCING CONSUMPTION, PREVENTING WASTE, AND REUSING VALUABLE MATERIALS

Every day, over 100 trucks deliver tons of discarded materials—everything from half-eaten meals to plastic packaging to perfectly good wood—to King County's Cedar Hills landfill. It's the result of a "throwaway economy," where goods are designed to be cheap, short-lived, and disposable. This system wastes valuable resources, pollutes the environment, and fuels climate change—so much so that the emissions tied to the goods and services we consume are more than double the emissions generated within the County itself. It's not just single-use plastics: everything from clothing to electronics to construction materials often ends up in the landfill far too soon. In fact, up to 70 percent of what we send to the landfill could be reused, recycled, or composted. As our population grows and our current landfill nears capacity, King County must rethink how we reduce, reuse, and manage waste. Shifting to a circular economy—where we use less, waste less, and keep materials in circulation—means cutting emissions, creating local jobs, and reducing pollution, while protecting our forests, waterways, and communities most burdened by waste.

CO-BENEFITS

- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by reducing resources used and the impact of what we do consume
- Advances climate equity by shifting power to frontline communities, ensuring they shape policies, funding, and decision-making
- Supports economic stability by investing in job-creating infrastructure and system changes
- Reduces food waste by strengthening local food supply chains and recovery programs
- Promotes sustainable business models that reduce waste and lower costs
- Expands economic opportunity through increased access to living-wage jobs, building a skilled and diverse workforce



A King County employee sorting mercury-containing bulbs at the Factoria household hazardous waste drop-off site.



Re+ engages community members to reimagine a waste-free King County.

EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Historically, low-income neighborhoods, immigrants, and communities of color have borne the brunt of pollution throughout the entire lifecycle of materials—beginning with the extraction of raw resources, through the production and manufacturing of goods, and continuing into our throwaway systems. The production of new materials often results in air and water pollution near manufacturing hubs, which are frequently located near frontline communities, both locally and globally.[12] In King County, many manufacturing and waste facilities are often located near historically underserved neighborhoods, while illegal dumping of construction debris, appliances, and hazardous materials disproportionately impacts these residents. Additionally, the costs for waste disposal can also leave many households without affordable, convenient options to manage their waste sustainably, compounding these inequities.

Yet many of these same communities have long practiced low-waste, circular economy approaches—stretching meals and not wasting food, sharing tools, and repairing items rather than discarding them. King County's Re+ Community Panel ensures these lived experiences help shape waste policies, programs, and funding decisions. The transition to a circular economy presents an opportunity to correct past imbalances by making recycling, composting, reuse, and repair more accessible and affordable. Efforts like Cleanup LIFT lower disposal costs for low-income households, while Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies shift accountability to manufacturers, reducing waste at the source. These changes, alongside investments in local recycling, repair, and composting industries, can ensure that the benefits of a zero-waste future are shared equitably—and no community is left managing more than its fair share of the burden.

LEARN MORE

The SCAP outlines a series of commitments to reduce consumption impacts and accelerate the shift to a circular economy where we waste less and reduce our footprint—equitably, sustainably, and reliably.



Circular Economy

These actions minimize landfill waste, expand recycling, composting, and reuse programs, and strengthen community partnerships to build a more sustainable waste system.



Climate and Economic Opportunity

These actions integrate climate-informed workforce development into capital projects, expand outreach and engagement, strengthen regional partnerships, and implement the 2025 Climate and Workforce Strategy.



Building Energy and Green Building

These actions improve energy efficiency, reduce utility costs, and enhance well-being for all residents, with a focus on low- to moderate-income households and frontline communities.



Sustainable County Infrastructure

These actions reduce energy use, lower GHG emissions, generate clean energy, and stimulate economic growth in the clean energy sector.



Community Leadership and Community-Driven Policymaking

These actions support partnerships with frontline community leaders, cultivate pathways for emerging leaders, and invest in community-led climate action.



Countywide Greenhouse Gas Policy and Leadership

These actions support regional coordination by partnering with cities and jurisdictions to align state legislative advocacy, share resources, and amplify local successes to drive broader national and global climate action.

7. CLEAN AIR, WATER, AND HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT FOR HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS

The forests, rivers, and coastlines of King County are more than just landscapes—they are the lungs that clean our air, the waters that nourish our communities, and the habitats that sustain species and our way of life. These natural systems protect public health and strengthen local economies, yet decades of pollution, development, and climate change have left them vulnerable. From committing $9 billion in the next decade toward protecting water quality and clean habitats to partnering to conserve 65,000 acres of land over the next 30 years, King County has worked for decades to honor our commitments to Tribes and the County's 2.3 million residents. Decisive action is needed to ensure work continues and expands, from restoring habitats to prioritizing green spaces in historically underserved areas. Habitat restoration, urban greening, and multijurisdictional efforts require strong partnerships—with Tribal governments, federal and state agencies, and frontline communities. By implementing nature-based solutions, restoring degraded lands, and making environmental benefits accessible to all, we can ensure that clean air, clean water, and thriving ecosystems remain part of King County's future.



Cougar Mountain Park is part of King County's 30,000-acre park system. Located in the "Issaquah Alps," Cougar Mountain Park preserves important wildlife habitat while offering ample opportunities for recreation.

CO-BENEFITS

- Advances climate equity by prioritizing communities most at risk
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere
- Improves public health by reducing air pollution and expanding access to clean water and forests for recreation
- Strengthens climate resilience through tree cover, clean waterways, and ecosystem restoration
- Protects biodiversity by restoring and connecting habitats for salmon and other species



Children and families volunteer at trail work party at North Shorewood Park hosted by King County Parks and the Washington Trails Association.

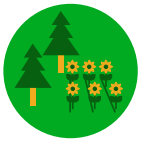
EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

For generations, the health of King County's lands and waters has been shaped by decisions that prioritized development over the wellbeing of ecosystems and the people who depend on them. But the consequences of those choices haven't been felt equally. For tribes, the decline of salmon is not just an environmental loss—it's a violation of treaty rights and a threat to cultural survival. Habitat destruction and polluted waterways are also affecting the health and wellbeing of residents in urbanized areas. Along the Duwamish River, for example, low-income families and tribes alike live with the legacy of industrial pollution, facing higher rates of asthma, cancer, and other chronic diseases.[13] These burdens didn't happen by accident; they are the result of decades of disinvestment and exclusion from the decisions that shape the landscape—leaving certain communities to carry the heaviest costs.

Restoration efforts across King County offer powerful opportunities to reverse this harm and build a more equitable future. The resurgence of kokanee salmon in 2024—following years of collaboration led by the Snoqualmie Tribe—proves that recovery is possible when tribal leadership and knowledge are prioritized. Similarly, while federal agencies lead the cleanup of the Duwamish Superfund site, King County plays a vital role in restoring habitat, supporting public health, and ensuring that both tribal and immigrant communities share in the river's recovery. Beyond waterways, urban neighborhoods also face their own inequities. King County's urban tree canopy is a key defense against extreme heat, air pollution, and stormwater runoff. Historically redlined and low-income areas, however, often lack robust tree canopy—leaving them more vulnerable to extreme heat and pollution. By investing in habitat restoration, tree planting, and community-led solutions, King County can honor treaty rights, reduce environmental health disparities, and reconnect people to the land and waters that sustain them.

LEARN MORE

Restoring healthy ecosystems and protecting community wellbeing requires partnership at every level—from tribal governments to local governments to federal agencies and community leaders. By scaling up and accelerating habitat restoration, pollution cleanup, and urban greening efforts, King County can ensure that clean air, clean water, and thriving ecosystems remain part of our future. The SCAP outlines a series of commitments to protect ecosystems and community health:



Forest and Agriculture

These actions protect and restore high-value forest and farmland by improving forest management and advancing sustainable agricultural practices.



Forest Resilience and Urban Tree Canopy Expansion

These actions invest in forest resilience and support a more robust urban tree canopy, especially in mapped heat islands.



Extreme Precipitation and Drought Mitigation

These actions improve stormwater management, support water quality, and expand recycled water and water conservation in response to changing hydrologic extremes.



River Flood Management

These actions preserve and restore river floodplains to reduce flood risks while enhancing habitat and strengthening climate resilience.



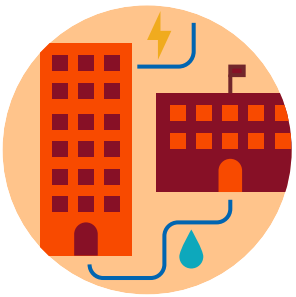
Salmon Recovery and Habitat Connectivity

These actions improve habitat to support native salmon populations and promote habitat connectivity, strengthening ecosystem and species resilience.



Sea Level Rise Preparedness

These actions prepare for rising sea levels to minimize economic and environmental impacts, protect shoreline habitats, and reduce risks to public health and safety.



8. RELIABLE AND FUTURE-READY INFRASTRUCTURE

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING ROADS, UTILITIES, AND SERVICES THAT WORK NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

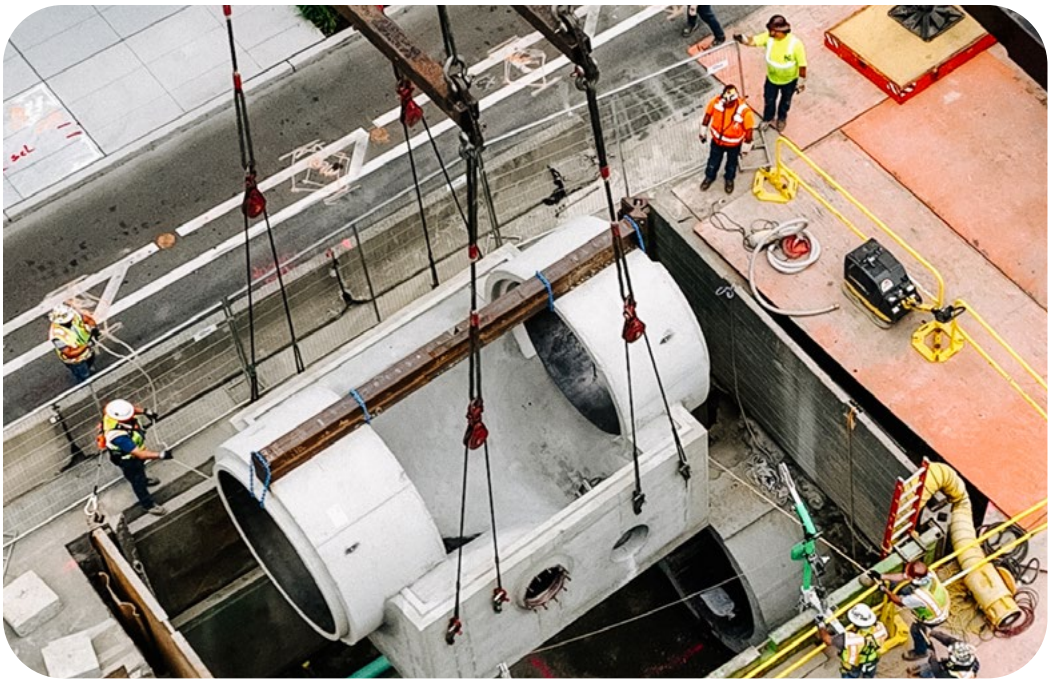
Bridges, roads, stormwater systems, and public transit infrastructure are the backbone of daily life in King County but many of these assets weren't built for the pressures of a rapidly changing climate. Climate change increases the potential for more extreme events, adding further stress to aging infrastructure and increasing the risk of service disruptions, costly damage, and community harm. Meeting the climate crisis head-on requires rethinking how we design, build, and maintain the systems that move people, deliver power, convey water and wastewater, and provide essential services. Meeting the climate crisis also requires bold action to reduce emissions from transportation and building infrastructure, the County's largest contributors to GHG emissions. To create a climate-ready future, King County must invest in infrastructure that can withstand climate shocks, reduce emissions, and reliably serve every community for decades to come.

CO-BENEFITS

- Enhances public safety by ensuring that infrastructure can function well in a changing climate
- Protects and improves public health through cleaner air, walkable and accessible neighborhoods, reliable sanitation, and reduced exposure to pollutants
- Lowers climate risks by making infrastructure adaptable to extreme weather and future demands
- Supports economic stability by reducing service disruptions, lowering long-term costs and creating local jobs through infrastructure improvements



Replacing culverts that block access to high quality stream habitat is important to helping salmon survive and thrive in a changing climate.



King County Wastewater Treatment Division is one of the first wastewater utilities in the nation — and the first in Washington state — to offer sewer heat recovery. Private commercial property owners and developers can recover renewable heat energy from sewer pipes for heating or cooling their buildings.

EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

In November 2024, a bomb cyclone tore through the Puget Sound region, leaving behind more than $11 million in losses in King County that included damaged homes and businesses, collapsed roofs, and widespread power outages.[14] While the bomb cyclone disrupted many aspects of public service delivery, the event also highlighted the value of recent King County investments in resilience at the West Point Treatment Plant. In September 2024, King County completed a two-year capital project to install a unique high-voltage battery system designed to provide stable power to the treatment plant during power surges and outages. As powerful gusts swept through Western Washington overnight, the 16.8-megawatt battery system kept pumps operating continuously, preventing combined sewer overflows and protecting water quality.[15]

Investing in future-ready infrastructure presents an opportunity to address inequities and strengthen community safety and economic opportunity. This includes, for example, installing and operating zero-emission transit bus and EV charging stations first in communities overburdened by air pollution and creating safer, more walkable streets in neighborhoods historically left out of infrastructure improvements. Requiring that infrastructure built by King County achieve the highest green and equitable building practices will help to ensure that design integrates community priorities, local communities benefit from economic development, lessens the burden and impact on frontline communities, and health of nearby residents and employees is protected. Because these requirements start from the beginning, the county is maximizing synergistic benefits that result in the management of public funds achieving multiple returns on a single investment, instead of requesting additional tax dollars to retrofit or redesign facilities to meet public interests and future climate preparedness. Ensuring equitable community engagement early on in the RapidRide H line design, meant that a stop was built right around the corner from a new food bank facility providing families with quick access to the bus line and avoiding having to carry groceries too far. By focusing on the communities most at risk, King County can build a resilient future that reduces our dependence on climate-polluting fossil fuel where every resident has access to safe homes, clean water, reliable power, and affordable transportation.

LEARN MORE

The SCAP outlines a series of commitments to build a future where infrastructure serves everyone—equitably, sustainably, and reliably.



Sustainable County Infrastructure

These actions reduce energy use, lower greenhouse gas emissions, generate clean energy, and stimulate economic growth in the clean energy sector.



Climate-Ready Capital Projects

These actions integrate climate risk considerations into capital planning and invest in resilient infrastructure to maintain reliable public services amid climate challenges.



Building Energy and Green Building

These actions improve energy efficiency, reduce utility costs, and enhance well-being for all residents, with a focus on low- to moderate-income households and frontline communities.



Zero-Emission County Fleets

These actions transition King County's fleet of over 6,000 vehicles—including buses, patrol units, and service vehicles—to zero-emission alternatives to reduce carbon pollution.



Transit and Transportation

These actions reduce reliance on private vehicles, enhance public transit, and minimize traffic congestion in areas with high population and job density.



River Flood Management

These actions preserve and restore river floodplains to reduce flood risks while enhancing habitat and strengthening climate resilience.



Sea Level Rise Preparedness

These actions prepare for rising sea levels to minimize economic and environmental impacts, protect shoreline habitats, and reduce risks to public health and safety.



9. COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

WORKING TOGETHER FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND INNOVATION

Sustained work on climate action requires more than policies and plans—it depends on collective leadership, accountability, and collaboration across communities, governments, and sectors. With a $15.8 billion budget, a workforce of over 16,700 employees, and responsibility for more than 60 services, King County is uniquely positioned to lead by embedding climate action and equity into every aspect of governance. Climate solutions can't be siloed; they must be integrated into how decisions are made, how budgets are spent, and how services are delivered. From operational shifts to large-scale investments, every department and employee has a role to play in advancing science-based, equity-centered, and risk-informed policies that reduce emissions and strengthen community resilience. But leadership doesn't rest solely with government. Lasting solutions must be shaped in partnership with frontline communities, scientists, schools, businesses, and community-based organizations—those who understand their communities' needs, bring trusted relationships, and offer innovative solutions. As a regional government, King County also has a responsibility to work across jurisdictional borders and share decision-making power—ensuring that communities most affected by climate impacts have the opportunity to lead. By centering community voices and forging strong partnerships, we can build a future where climate action benefits every resident, and resilience is shared equitably.



Participants at a SCAP workshop in 2024.

CO-BENEFITS

- **Advances climate equity by shifting power to frontline communities, ensuring they shape policies, funding, and decision-making**
- **Strengthens public health by expanding access to clean air, safe housing, and climate education**
- **Builds climate resilience by replacing crisis-driven responses with permanent, community-led collaboration structures**
- **Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by engaging community and industry leaders to scale emission reduction programs and policies**
- **Enhances disaster preparedness and emergency response by integrating community voices into planning, ensuring faster, more effective action**
- **Increases accountability and innovation by embedding climate leadership across departments and fostering cross-sector partnerships**

EQUITY IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

True climate action requires more than emergency response—it requires long-term investment in community leadership, employee empowerment, and shared responsibility at every level. Too often, frontline communities are left filling gaps without lasting change or resources.[16] But recent successes show what's possible when leadership is collective. In 2023, Metro's shift to prioritize the electrification of its Tukwila base—after strong input from community partners—demonstrated how community leadership can directly shape major infrastructure decisions, ensuring cleaner buses operated first in communities overburdened by air pollution and more equitable service in historically underserved areas. Similarly, when King County employees are empowered to take ownership of climate solutions—from installing LED lighting to supporting zero-emission transit—benefits achieved prove that leadership belongs to every worker who serves the public.

Greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and climate impacts don't stop at jurisdictional boundaries—and neither should the solutions. The health of our air, water, and communities is interconnected across city lines, watersheds, and transportation networks. Through efforts like the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C), King County works alongside cities of all sizes—especially those with fewer resources—to help them access funding, tools, and programs that benefit their residents. But King County's leadership goes beyond policy; it also shapes broader industry standards that influence change across sectors. A clear example is how a bus manufacturer designs electric buses to meet King County Metro's specifications, knowing that if a model can serve King County's diverse and complex routes, it will meet the needs of most communities nationwide. The County's leadership shows that if solutions are built to meet the needs of our most impacted communities, they will work for everyone. By embedding permanent, resourced community advisory roles, ensuring equitable compensation for expertise, and supporting participatory planning processes, King County can continue to shift from short-term outreach to lasting, community-driven partnerships that allow us to build better solutions for our community with our communities. When frontline communities, employees, businesses, and local governments share leadership, climate solutions are stronger, more inclusive, and more effective.

LEARN MORE

The SCAP outlines a series of commitments that will strengthen existing collaboration structures, enhance emergency preparedness, and build community resilience in the face of climate change.



Building Capacity with Frontline Communities and Youth

These actions strengthen County staff capacity to embed climate equity while supporting frontline communities and youth in developing just, community-driven climate solutions.



Community Leadership and Community-Driven Policymaking

These actions support partnerships with frontline community leaders, cultivate pathways for emerging leaders, and invest in community-led climate action.



Countywide Greenhouse Gas Policy and Leadership

These actions support regional coordination by partnering with cities and jurisdictions to align state legislative advocacy, share resources, and amplify local successes to drive broader national and global climate action.



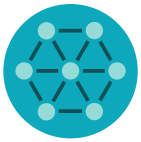
Enterprise Leadership and Accountability

These actions embed equity, efficiency, and accountability into County operations by ensuring employees, leadership, and policies advance King County's climate goals.



Climate-Ready Capital Projects

These actions integrate climate risk considerations into capital planning and invest in resilient infrastructure to maintain reliable public services amid climate challenges.



Regional Capacity Across Climate Hazards

These actions strengthen climate preparedness across King County and the Puget Sound region through internal and external collaborations.

ENDNOTES

1 EPA Office of Atmospheric Programs, "Climate Change and Social Vulnerability in the United States: A Focus on Six Impacts," September 2021. [LINK].

2 National Institute of Standards and Technology, "Protecting Building Occupants from Smoke During Wildfire and Prescribed Burn Events," March 2021. [LINK].

3 King County Executive Climate Office, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data," (n.d.). [LINK].

4 Davison et al., "Creating Clean Air Spaces During Wildland Fire Smoke Episodes: Web Summit Summary," Frontiers in Public Health, February 2021. [LINK].

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12 American Lung Association, "State of the Air: Populations at Risk," 2024. [LINK].

13 Gould, L., & Cummings, B.J., "Duwamish Valley Cumulative Health Impacts Analysis," Seattle, WA: Just Health Action and Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition/Technical Advisory Group, 2013. [LINK].

14 KIRO 7 News Seattle, "King County Estimates Over $11 Million in November Storm Damage," December 2024. [LINK].

15 King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, "King County's New Onsite Battery System at West Point Treatment Plant Proved Its Effectiveness During 'Bomb Cyclone,' Providing Operators with Reliable Power Amid Voltage Sags," November 2024. [LINK].

16 Patschke et al., "2024 Frontline Report on HEAL Progress," Front and Centered. 2024. [LINK].



Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy Release park tour in July 2024

King County released the New Energy design for King County Metro's zero-emission bus fleet - a visual representation of the cleaner, quieter, sustainable buses providing healthier mobility for riders and community.



REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

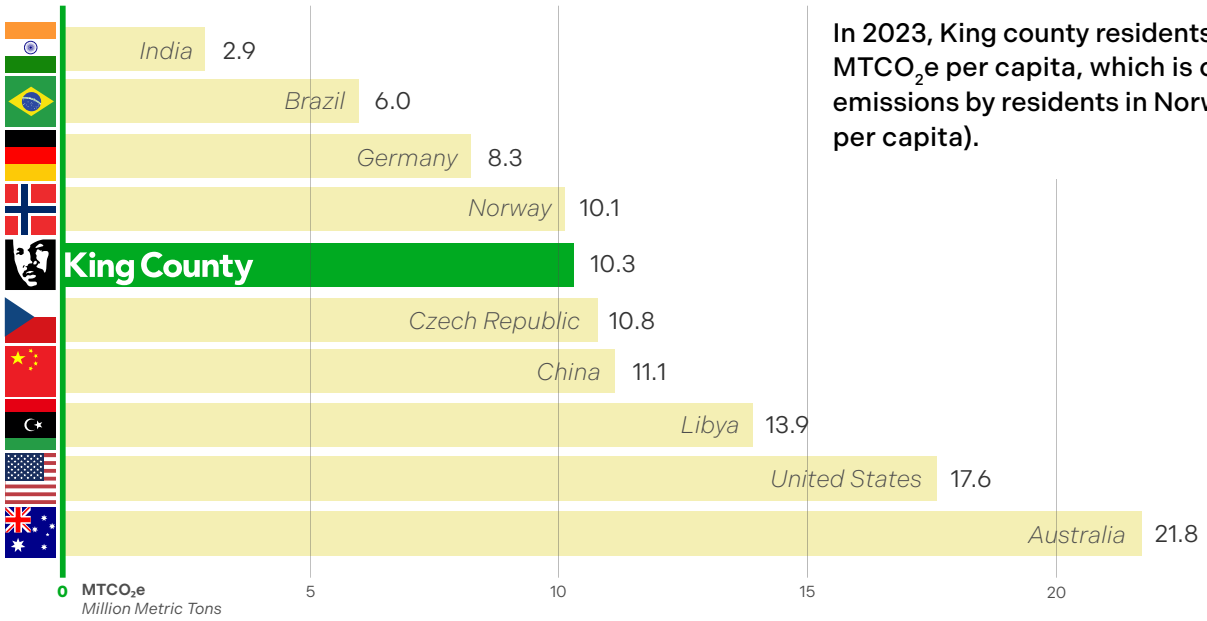
INTRODUCTION

King County has a long history of taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), the primary driver of climate change. GHGs—including carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide—trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere, creating a "greenhouse effect" that warms the planet. While these gases occur naturally, human activities—such as burning fossil fuels for heating and transportation, deforestation, industrial processes, and waste decomposition—have drastically increased their concentration in the atmosphere. This excess heat leads to more extreme weather, rising sea levels, and disruptions to ecosystems and communities. Reducing GHG emissions is critical to slowing climate change, minimizing its most severe impacts, and protecting residents, the economy, and the natural environment. The severity of climate change depends on the level of GHG emissions—the higher the emissions, the more severe the risks.[1] Rapid and deep reductions across all sectors are necessary to limit warming and avoid the worst climate impacts.[2]

Overall GHG emissions in King County remain down from a peak in 2019. Emissions fell sharply due to the COVID pandemic in 2020 and—while increasing slowly—have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. GHG emissions were up 11 percent from 2007 to 2019. In 2023, emissions were eight percent lower than in 2019, an overall increase of four percent compared to 2007 levels.[3] In 2019, projections showed that if no climate action was taken emissions would have increased as a result of population and economic growth, whereas instead they have fallen.[4] The average King County resident's GHG emissions have declined 17 percent compared to 2007 levels. At this level, the average resident in King County contributes 10.3 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e) which is more similar to the average European Union resident of Norway (10.1 $MTCO_2e$)[5] than to the average U.S. resident (17.6 $MTCO_2e$).[6] The recent reduction in GHGs demonstrates that when local, state, and federal action is aligned, there is a greater opportunity to reduce the threat of climate change.

The 2025 SCAP builds on King County's legacy of climate action, outlining both a five-year roadmap and a long-term plan to achieve goals out to 2050. It also identifies priorities for state, federal, and local advocacy to support these goals.

Figure 3. Average Resident GHG Emissions



In 2023, King county residents produced 10.3 $MTCO_2e$ per capita, which is comparable to emissions by residents in Norway (10.1 $MTCO_2e$ per capita).

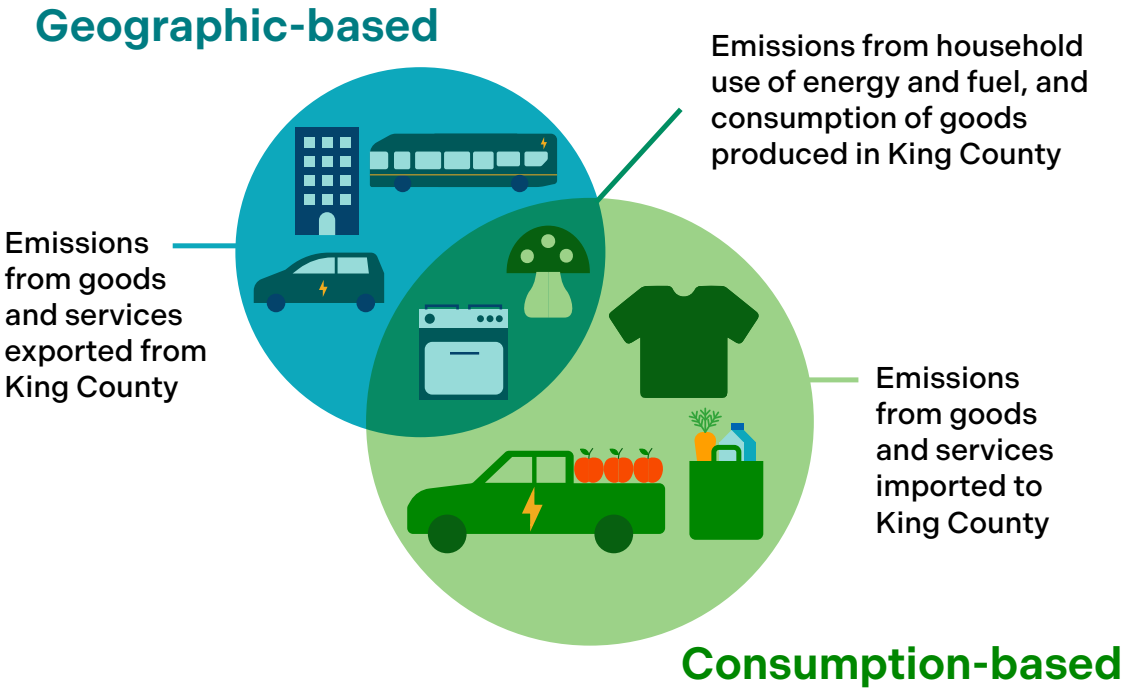
Source: European Commission Emissions Database for Global Atmospheric Research (2024), King County Executive Climate Office (2025)

BACKGROUND

As a regional government, King County can directly implement climate actions through its services and plays a key role in convening local jurisdictional partners, through the King County–Cities Climate Collaboration, to advocate for strong federal and state actions. To achieve significant carbon reductions, climate action must be integrated across the federal, state, regional, and local levels.[7] Integration is necessary due to differences in jurisdictional authority and available implementation tools. For example, to reduce vehicle emissions at the local level, state level action—such as a requirement for renewable electricity production via Washington's Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA)[8]—and federal action on vehicle emission standards are required,[9] since the County does not have jurisdictional authority over utilities or vehicles sold. While those policies require a limited local government role to be implemented, integration looks different in other sectors. For example, home weatherization programs or electric vehicle charging infrastructure development depend on access to state funding from revenues of the Washington Climate Commitment Act (CCA)[10] and federal funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA),[11] yet implementation of programs are most effectively carried out at the local and regional levels, where there are direct connections with residents, building owners, and contractors to ensure benefits are achieved.

King County reduces GHG emissions at two levels: countywide/community scale emissions, which include all residents and businesses, and County government operations emissions, which come from services the County operates such as wastewater treatment and transit buses. The 2025 SCAP includes strategies and priority actions to work at both levels. King County seeks systemic, transformative solutions to reduce countywide GHG emissions while leading by example in cutting its own governmental emissions.

Figure 4. Geographic versus Consumption-based GHG Inventory



COUNTYWIDE GHG EMISSIONS

To understand the full picture of countywide emissions, King County measures both geographic and consumption-based emissions, as shown in Figure 4. Types of GHG Emissions.[12] Geographic emissions occur within King County's borders and include emissions from cars driving on local roads, natural gas in buildings located in King County, and electricity used—regardless of where the electricity is generated. In 2023, GHG emissions in King County were 24.2 million metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent ($MMTCO_2e$) down from a peak of 26.3 $MMTCO_2e$ in 2019.[13] King County emissions are comparable to annual emissions from the nations of either Croatia (25 $MMTCO_2e$) or Lebanon (24.7 $MMTCO_2e$).[14]

The largest sources of emissions are 44 percent from transportation and 43 percent from buildings, followed by small contributions from refrigerants, land use change, and waste (i.e. fugitive methane from municipal solid waste and wastewater treatment), as shown below in Figure 5. Community Scale GHG Emissions by Sector. Carbon is stored in forests and soils, and from waste at landfills. The largest recent GHG reductions at the community scale come from electricity and aviation, while the largest increases observed are due to industrial natural gas usage. At the individual level, per capita emissions in King County have fallen from 12.4 MTCO2e per year in 2007 to 10.3 MTCO2e in 2023.[15] The largest reductions have been from electricity and vehicles, and smaller reductions in fuel oil, aviation, and waste generation.

Consumption-based emissions are those associated with the production, transportation, use, and disposal of the goods, foods, and services that are consumed in King County. Consumption-based emissions are larger than geographic-based emissions and occur all over the world, where the goods and services consumed by County residents are produced and manufactured. In 2023, the average emissions per King County resident was 14.9 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$), a total of roughly 47.3 million $MTCO_2e$ for all of King County.[16]

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONAL GHG EMISSIONS

Operational GHG emissions are those associated with King County government's daily operations and the services that it provides to the community. These include Metro transit fleets, County buildings, fleet services, wastewater treatment plants, landfills, and more. Operational GHG emissions have decreased by 24 percent in 2023, compared to 2007 baseline. The largest reduction in operational emissions, 11 percent, is a result of the purchase of 100 percent renewable electricity from Puget Sound Energy's Green Direct program. Reductions in Metro transit fleet use, as well as building energy use, are the other largest contributors to the reduction in emissions.

Figure 5. Community Scale Geographic GHG Emissions by Sector

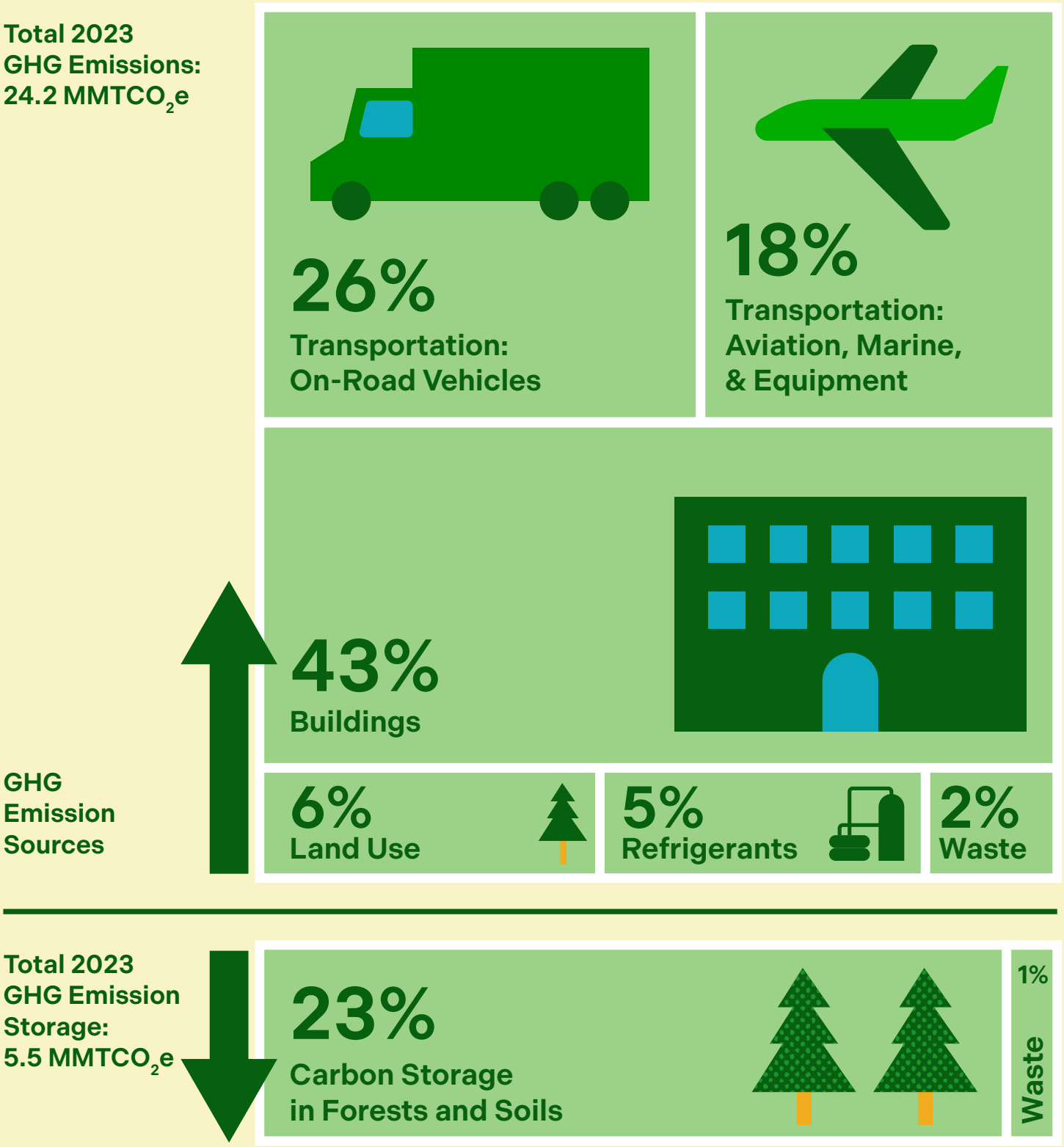
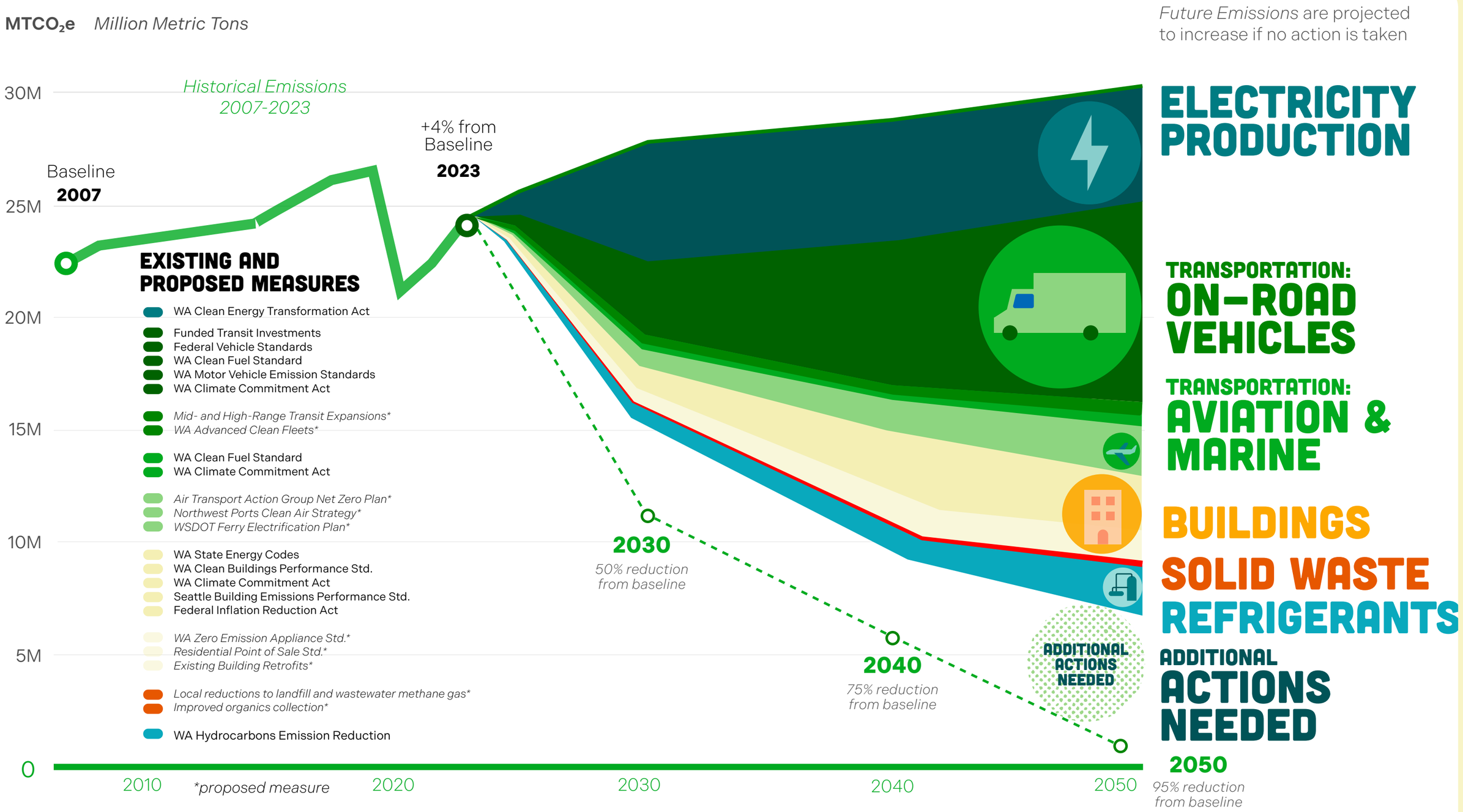


Figure 6. GHG Reduction Wedge — Pathways to Achieve Countywide Emissions Targets



KEY ISSUES

Existing federal, state, and local policies and actions drive emission reductions across many sectors. Local government has a key role to implement policies and ensure that measures achieve intended reductions and benefits for residents and frontline community members. The GHG section of the 2025 SCAP identifies measures and actions to achieve countywide emission reduction goals. It builds on and is informed by technical analyses that identify key opportunities and pathways to reduce emissions. The updated wedge analysis, based on the 2023 GHG inventory, projects emission reductions from federal, state, and local actions, along with key measures identified in the 2025 SCAP.

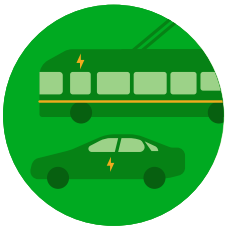


King County Executive and Washington State Governor tour King County Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station, where revenue from the WA Climate Commitment Act will fund solar panel installation.



Countywide GHG Policy and Leadership

- King County's goal is to reduce countywide sources of geographic GHG emissions, compared to a 2007 baseline, 50 percent by 2030, 75 percent by 2040, and 95 percent by 2050 (with net-zero emissions through carbon storage and other strategies by that year), as shown in the wedge analysis. The County will pursue additional goals and actions to store carbon and reduce emissions from consumption of goods and services.
- Existing and proposed federal, state, regional, and local climate measures, combined with the local climate measures proposed in the 2025 SCAP, jointly chart a path for King County to make significant progress toward regional GHG reduction goals. If existing measures are upheld and fully implemented, estimates project a 33 percent emissions reduction in the County compared to 2007 levels. This progress falls short of 50 percent reduction target by 2030. Further cuts in fossil fuel use in buildings, vehicle emissions, and the aviation sectors are needed.



Transit and Transportation

- Transportation is the largest source of GHGs in King County, totaling 44 percent.
- Burning diesel, gasoline, and other fuels for on-road vehicles accounts for about 26 percent of King County GHG emissions. Since 2019, these emissions have overall decreased by 10 percent and per person they have fallen by 10 percent from 3.1 to 2.7 MTCO2e per year.
- Existing measures, including regionally funded expansions to transit service and increased land-use density, along with federal and state vehicle emission standards[17, 18, 19] and WA Clean Fuel Standard[20] and cleaner electricity resulting from the WA CETA will reduce emissions from on-road vehicles, as shown in the wedge analysis. King County is directly involved in the implementation of regionally funded transit improvements and installation of grant funded public EV charging,[21] but will have a limited role supporting implementation of the federal and state vehicle emission standards.
- The 2025 SCAP proposes regional measures to increase and fully fund expansions to transit service and equitable transit-oriented communities in alignment with VISION 2050[22] and Metro Connects,[23] and state measures to adopt Advanced Clean Fleets.[24] Combined, these measures will further reduce on-road transportation emissions.
- Fuel for airplanes, marine, rail, ferries and other non-road equipment (e.g. tractors and construction) accounts for 18 percent of King County GHG emissions. Aviation emissions, quantified in this report using a passenger-based approach[25] for air travel attributable to King County residents and visitors, contribute 13 percent of King County emissions.
- There is limited state and federal jurisdiction over aviation and marine emissions. Emission reductions for aviation & marine projected in the wedge analysis are based on industry climate action plans, including the Air Transport Action Group[26] commitments for net zero civilian aviation emissions by 2050 and Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy,[27] along with the Washington State Ferries System Electrification Plan.[28]
- The 2025 SCAP proposes measures to support sustainable aviation fuel and regional transportation contribute to the goals in partner plans.



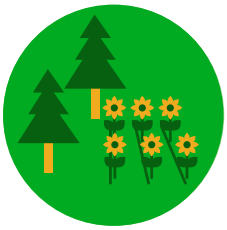
Building Energy and Green Building

- Electricity, natural gas, fuel oil, propane, and industrial processes from residential, commercial, and industrial buildings contribute 41 percent of King County GHGs. Since 2019, emissions from electricity have decreased by approximately 23 percent and increased from natural gas by approximately 20 percent.
- Existing state and local measures through the WA CETA, WA Energy Code,[29, 30] WA Clean Buildings Performance Standard,[31, 32] WA CCA, WA Hydrofluorocarbons use restrictions,[33, 34, 35] and the federal IRA will reduce emissions from buildings in King County, as shown in the wedge analysis. Though these are federal, state, and local programs, King County will need to have an active role in upholding these policies. King County will need to directly support their implementation through 2025 SCAP proposed measures including assistance for commercial building owners through financing, accelerator, and other direct assistance programs.
- The 2025 SCAP proposes measures at the state and regional levels, including zero-emission appliance standards,[36] residential point of sale performance standards,[37] and direct implementation of retrofits funded by the WA CCA and federal IRA,[38] which as shown, further reduce emissions from this sector.
- Additional enabling measures, not quantified in the wedge, at the local and regional level are included in the 2025 SCAP related to advancing green building in new construction and facilitating existing building retrofits to achieve needed reductions in this sector.



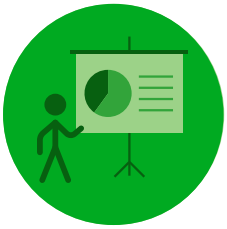
Circular Economy

- Landfills, compost production, and wastewater treatment facilities contribute approximately two percent of King County geographic GHG emissions. Carbon storage in landfills is equivalent to one percent of County GHG emissions.
- Existing regional measures led by King County will directly reduce emissions through improved landfill gas and wastewater methane gas capture. The 2025 SCAP proposed regional measures, in alignment with the King County Re+ Strategic Plan, are projected to support achievement of the WA Organics Management Law target.
- Emissions from the goods and services consumed by residents in King County are only partially captured in the wedge analysis. Most emissions from consumption occur where products are manufactured and produced. The 2025 SCAP includes measures to reduce consumption-based emissions that focus on reuse, repair, and accelerating the circular economy for food, goods, and services.



Forest and Agriculture

- King County forests and farms are a net carbon sink, meaning that they absorb and store more carbon from the atmosphere than they emit. Emissions from land cover changes, including forest harvest or wildfire, contribute approximately six percent of King County GHG emissions. Increased carbon storage on forest and agricultural lands in King County, due primarily to forest growth, is equivalent to 23 percent of the County's GHG emissions. Net carbon storage is not shown in the wedge analysis, but remains a key part of achieving the 2050 net-zero target.
- The 2025 SCAP proposes regional measures to accelerate implementation of the Land Conservation Initiative, King County Forest Carbon Program, and 30-year Forest Plan to expand carbon storage through efforts to protect and restore natural lands.



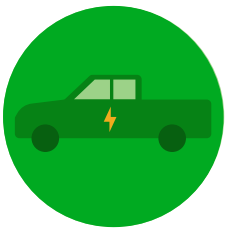
Enterprise Leadership and Accountability

- King County's goal is to reduce total GHG emissions from government operations by 50 percent by 2025 and 80 percent by 2030, compared to 2007 baseline. The largest sources of government operational emissions are building energy use, dependent on maintenance and operations of existing facilities, as well as capital investments in new and retrofitted facilities; fleet and transit fuel use, dependent on vehicle fueling type and fuel purchased; and fugitive methane from landfills and wastewater.
- The 2025 SCAP proposes actions to build capacity of employees to advance climate action, integrate climate action into budgets and planning, and champion leadership for climate action across the King County enterprise.



Sustainable County Infrastructure

- Emissions from natural gas, propane, and fuel oil usage at County owned and managed facilities contributed 7 percent of King County governments GHG emissions. The 2025 SCAP proposes measures to strengthen the Green Building Ordinance (GBO) and capital project management systems to maximize the opportunity to reduce GHG emissions and benefits for community through County investments.
- Emissions from landfill and wastewater treatment at County owned and managed facilities contribute 34 percent of King County governments GHG emissions. The 2025 SCAP proposes measures to improve landfill gas capture and biogas utilization to reduce emissions from fugitive methane.



Zero-Emission County Fleets

- Emissions from diesel, gasoline, propane, and alternative fuels used by County-owned fleets vehicles contribute 57 percent of King County government GHG emissions. The 2025 SCAP proposes measures to transition to a zero-emission fleet and expand the use of alternative low-carbon fuels to reduce fleet GHG emissions.

STRATEGIES & TOOLS

The 2025 SCAP builds on King County's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions equitably and effectively. As both a local government and a regional service provider, the County plays a critical role in shaping policies, programs, and infrastructure that influence emissions across sectors, including transportation, buildings, energy systems, waste management, and land use. By integrating emissions reduction strategies with broader climate preparedness goals, King County ensures that efforts to cut carbon pollution also enhance community resilience, protect public health, and strengthen ecosystems in the face of climate change.

County Policies and Plans

King County is embedding GHG reduction goals into its policies and planning frameworks to ensure that climate action is integrated across sectors, equity-centered, and aligned with regional sustainability efforts. These policies guide investments in clean energy, sustainable land use, low-carbon transportation, and circular economy strategies, all of which are essential for reducing emissions and preparing for climate impacts. Foundational policies and plans guiding the County's approach and how they support emissions reductions include:

- **30-Year Forest Plan (2021).** Expands and protects forests to enhance carbon sequestration and watershed health.
- **Comprehensive Plan (2024).** Integrates climate resilience and equity into countywide planning.
- **Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (2019).** Advances waste reduction, recycling, and circular economy goals.
- **Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan (2016–2022).** Ensures equitable implementation of climate strategies.
- **Green Building Ordinance (2022).** Requires sustainable design and emissions reductions in County-owned capital projects.
- **Green Jobs Strategy (2023–2024).** Expands workforce opportunities in clean energy and climate resilience sectors.
- **Joint Aircraft Emissions Task Force Report (2023).** Recommends actions to reduce aviation-related emissions.
- **Metro Connects Long-Range Plan (2021).** Plan for transit service expansion, speed and reliability improvements, equitable transit-oriented development and reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
- **Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation (2021–2031).** Increases transit ridership, cuts fleet and facility emissions, and advances equitable transit-oriented development (TOD).
- **Open Space Plan (2022).** Guides land conservation priorities to protect green spaces and support climate resilience.
- **Sustainable Purchasing Ordinance and Executive Policy (2018, 2023).** Guidance for reducing embodied carbon in construction, managing waste, and prioritizing sustainable procurement.
- **Re+ Strategic Plan (2022).** Develops a circular economy to cut waste-related emissions.

County Programs and Initiatives

King County also advances GHG reduction through strategic land conservation, clean energy investments, and innovative carbon sequestration initiatives. These efforts focus on protecting natural carbon sinks, reducing emissions from the built environment, and expanding funding for decarbonization projects.

- **Building Decarbonization Grant (CPRG)** – A $50 million federal grant from the U.S. EPA to fund building electrification and energy efficiency projects that reduce carbon emissions in King County.
- **Forest Carbon Program** – Generates carbon offsets by acquiring and preserving forested lands, reinvesting revenue into additional conservation efforts.
- **Land Conservation Initiative** – Protects working forests, urban green space, and agricultural lands, and enhances natural carbon sequestration.
- **C-PACER financing program** – Alternative loan program that allows owners of eligible commercial properties to seek long-term financing for qualified improvements related to energy and building resiliency.

Finally, reducing GHG emissions in King County requires an approach that prioritizes climate equity while ensuring that communities can withstand worsening climate hazards. The County is committed to addressing disparities by integrating equity into emissions reduction policies; supporting workforce development in the clean energy sector; and ensuring that frontline communities have access to affordable, low-carbon solutions that also enhance resilience. Investments in clean energy, land conservation and green infrastructure not only cut carbon pollution but also reduce climate-related risks such as extreme heat, air pollution, and energy instability. By embedding emissions reduction strategies within the broader climate preparedness framework, King County is advancing a comprehensive approach to meeting its climate goals while ensuring that communities are both protected from climate impacts and positioned to benefit from the transition to a clean energy future.

SUMMARY

King County is committed to ambitious climate action. The following pages outline how the County plans to work with partners and communities over the next five years to:

- **Demonstrate leadership** and advocate for additional policies to support GHG emissions reductions;
- **Advance building energy and green building** initiatives;
- **Improve transit and transportation;**
- **Promote a circular economy** to reduce waste;
- **Support forest and agricultural practices** to increase carbon storage;
- **Strengthen enterprise leadership** and accountability within the County;
- **Build sustainable County infrastructure** in preparation for the future; and
- **Achieve zero-emission** County fleets.

COUNTYWIDE GHG POLICY AND LEADERSHIP

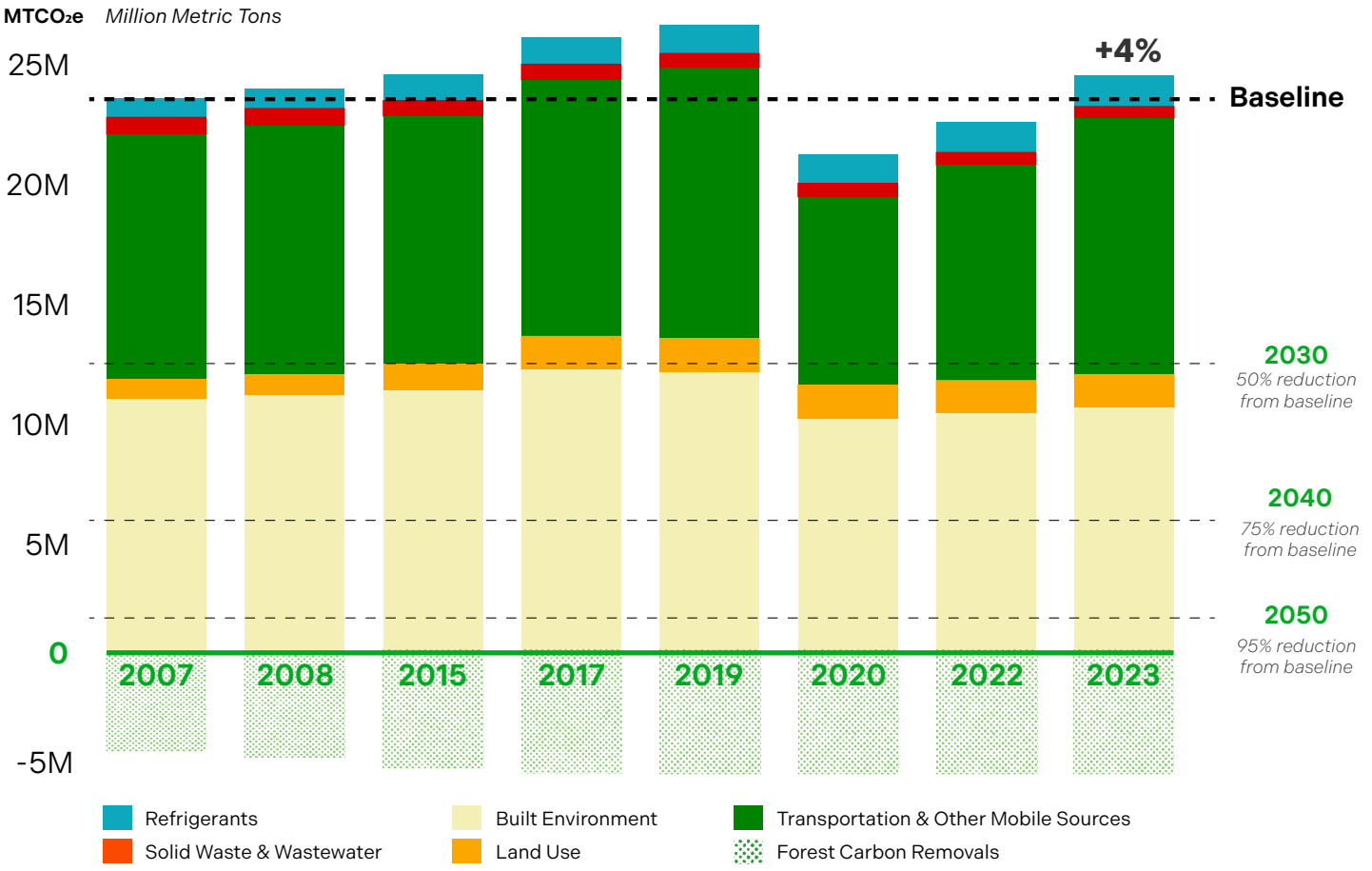
Local governments have a critical role in climate action. King County serves as the regional government for 39 cities and unincorporated areas. The County is one of the largest counties in the United States with a population of 2.3 million, spanning from downtown Seattle to the crest of the Cascades. As the regional provider for services including transit, wastewater, solid waste, housing, legal, regional parks, and public health among others, King County can directly influence emissions from residents and visitors.

King County plays a key leadership role in supporting local jurisdictions to advance climate action. It has demonstrated this by adopting stronger countywide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets through the King County Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC). Cities and counties serve as hubs for innovation, and by documenting and sharing local successes, the County can inspire and encourage climate action across the region.

Local governments cannot take all necessary steps alone, as certain climate action measures fall under state or national level jurisdiction. King County and its partners have a key role convening partners and advocating for strong climate policies at the state and national levels.

Figure 7. King County Community Scale GHG Emissions, by Sector

In 2023, GHG emissions in King County increased by 4 percent when compared to the 2007 baseline.



Source: Executive Climate Office, King County (2025)

WHAT'S AT STAKE

As a County government, King County has direct authority over key services that are required to achieve GHG emission reduction targets. The County has the opportunity to work with partners at the local, state, and federal levels to equitably deliver GHG emission reductions and the benefits of investments to residents. King County is projected to see significant population and employment growth, approximately 30 percent from 2025 to 2050. If no action is taken to reduce GHG emissions, they are projected to grow from 24.2 million metric tons CO_2e to over 30 million, an increase of 30 percent.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County has a vision for regional climate action that can serve as an example of how local governments can collaborate to address climate change at scale. By partnering with cities and other jurisdictions, King County aims to coordinate state legislative advocacy, share resources, and amplify local successes to chart a path toward broader national and global action. The 2025 SCAP serves as a roadmap for how the County, at the local level, can build on federal and state regulations and incentives, to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- King County and the 39 cities in the County strengthened shared GHG emissions reductions targets to 50 percent below 2007 levels by 2030; 75 percent below 2007 levels by 2040; and 95 percent below 2007 levels and net carbon neutral by 2050.
- Advocated and convened partners to successfully adopt a suite of transformative state-level climate policies.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

- **GHG 1.** Share local climate action successes in King County with regional, state, and national audiences
- **GHG 2.** Engage utilities to advance clean energy and vehicle electrification
- **GHG 3.** Advocate for and protect climate policies at the local, regional, state, and federal level
- **GHG 4.** Support local climate action through the King County–Cities Climate Collaboration
- **GHG 5.** Explore utilizing a regulatory framework for city-scale emission reduction targets
- **GHG 6.** Track Climate Outcome Indicators and SCAP Progress through a Public-Facing Climate Dashboard

GHG 1.
SHARE LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION SUCCESSES IN KING COUNTY WITH REGIONAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL AUDIENCES

Beyond direct implementation, one of the most powerful ways that King County can advance climate action is communicating the successes and lessons learned of local action to spur action across the region, nation and the world. King County will lead and coordinate departmental communication teams to tell a unified story about the county's efforts, achievements, and lessons learned regarding climate action. Stories will convey ways frontline communities are driving efforts, show how people can get involved in climate action, and demonstrate the results of grants and additional funding invested in SCAP actions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS-DO; DES-DO; DLS-Admin; DNRP-DO; Metro-GM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Media

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other

GHG 2.
ENGAGE UTILITIES TO ADVANCE CLEAN ENERGY AND VEHICLE ELECTRIFICATION

Utilities will be a major driver and implementer of GHG emission reductions from the state Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA), Washington State Energy Code, Clean Buildings Act, and the Climate Commitment Act (CCA). Utilities have significant influence and capacity to invest in the future of King County's energy and clean building landscape. It is crucial that King County collaborate with utilities and community partners to advance an equitable green energy transition. The County will collaborate and mobilize partners to work with utilities on related efforts and programs, including review of utility integrated resource plans. The County will advocate for grid reliability, grid modernization, renewables access and an equitable, managed transition off fossil fuels for buildings and transportation sectors. King County priorities include reducing impacts of energy transition to low-income households and frontline communities; supporting demand response and storage technologies that reduce peak load and provide grid flexibility; prioritizing underserved communities with community solar on community buildings or similar shared ownership models; and advocating for equitable electricity rates that do not penalize electrification. Contributing to all of these goals, the County will collaborate with utilities to explore a "virtual power plant" pilot program for unincorporated King County, including but not limited to rural areas such as Vashon-Maury Island, which will seek to integrate multiple power sources, such as renewable energy systems and home and EV batteries, into a distributed generation network.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–GM; DNRP–DO; DES–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; utilities; equity and environmental nonprofits.

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington State Energy Strategy – Commerce; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 3.
ADVOCATE FOR AND PROTECT CLIMATE POLICIES AT THE LOCAL, REGIONAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LEVEL

Achievement of King County GHG emission targets is dependent on critical, ambitious climate policies adopted by local jurisdictions, regionally by the GMPC, Washington State, and at the federal level. The County will convene partners to protect against the weakening or repeal of critical climate policies. King County will advocate to protect provisions that require allocation of benefits to frontline communities. As shown in the GHG wedge analysis, successful implementation of the following policies is critical to achieving GHG targets, including: the Seattle Building Emissions Performance Standard, VISION 2050 (limits on growth outside of the Urban Growth Area combined with a Regional Transportation Plan); state legislation such as CETA, CCA, Clean Buildings Act, Clean Fuel Standards, Energy Codes, Zero Emission Vehicle Standards, Hydrofluorocarbon Policies; and federal legislation such as Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Vehicle Standards, and the Inflation Reduction Act. King County will convene partners to support efforts at the federal and international level to regulate emissions from air travel.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PAO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; PSRC; ECOLOGY, Commerce, Washington Attorney General's Office

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Countywide Planning Policies; K4C Washington State Legislative Agenda

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 4.
SUPPORT LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH THE KING COUNTY-CITIES CLIMATE COLLABORATION

The King County–Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) is a voluntary, but formal partnership of King County, 22 cities, and the Port of Seattle focused on coordinating and enhancing the effectiveness of local climate and sustainability action. K4C partners now represent the local governments of more than 87 percent of the King County's 2.3 million residents. The work of K4C partners is guided by the K4C's Joint Climate Action Commitments, which are periodically updated, and shared greenhouse gas reduction targets established in the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

King County will continue to lead coordination of the K4C partnership through a staff steering committee of local jurisdictional staff and an Elected Official Outreach committee. King County coordinates an Elected Official Work Session for elected officials in King County at least annually. Each member city is expected to identify a member of their city council to serve as representative to the K4C. The K4C will work to advance shared climate priorities in the SCAP via coordinated implementation, collaboration on grant support, and Washington State legislative priorities. The County prioritizes using the K4C peer support model to build capacity of local jurisdictions that have fewer dedicated climate staffing resources.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; Port of Seattle; Sound Transit; PSCAA

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Engagement; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Countywide Planning Policies; K4C Joint Climate Action Commitments; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other

GHG 5.
EXPLORE UTILIZING A REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR CITY-SCALE EMISSION REDUCTION TARGETS

All cities in King County have committed to shared GHG reduction targets, however no common mitigation commitments to achieve the targets have been established nor a regulatory framework to ensure that all cities are making progress toward shared goals. King County will work with the K4C and the GMPC to explore using the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) to implement the existing countywide GHG reduction targets at the jurisdictional level. This exploration could include following an approach similar to the recent state requirements (House Bill 1220) used to allocate housing needed by income level for jurisdictions to meet the Growth Management Act (GMA) housing requirements. This could include utilizing the GHG emissions inventory to inform the suballocation process, establishing mitigation measures that all jurisdictions could take to achieve targets, and/or updating the CPPs to establish mitigation measures that all jurisdictions shall take to achieve targets. Implementation would require new technical staff capacity that can work with jurisdictions on their allocations.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Regional Planning

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; GMPC; local jurisdictions;

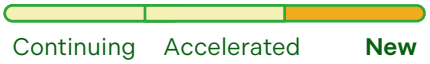
EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Countywide Planning Policies

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



GHG 6.
TRACK CLIMATE OUTCOME INDICATORS AND SCAP PROGRESS THROUGH A PUBLIC-FACING CLIMATE DASHBOARD

King County residents, elected leaders, and partners are eager to better understand the current state of key climate outcome indicators in King County, as well as the progress the County is making toward its climate goals. King County will create, maintain, and regularly update a climate dashboard that includes progress on priority actions and performance targets for the 2025 SCAP, as well as data on key climate outcome indicators. King County will publicly display these in a visually compelling and accessible online format.

Climate outcome indicators will be displayed on the home page of the dashboard and will include:

- Greenhouse gas emissions in county operations;
- Greenhouse gas emissions countywide;
- Water temperature for selected lakes and waterbodies in King County;
- Emergency department visits for heat-related illness among King County residents;
- Locally acquired vector-borne disease in King County;
- Emergency department visits involving asthma among King County residents;
- Available data on health costs in King County related to climate change;
- Available data on clean energy jobs in King County;
- Temperatures in selected areas identified as heat islands in King County Heat Island Map; and
- Available data on consumer savings from energy efficiency standards.

The County will work with partners to improve the quality, consistency, and accessibility of data needed to reliably report on these climate outcome indicators.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–Fleet; FMD; KCIA; DNRP–SWD; WLRD; Parks; WTD; DCHS–DO; Metro–GM; DLS–Admin; PHSKC–DO; PSB–Performance

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County 2025 Budget; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

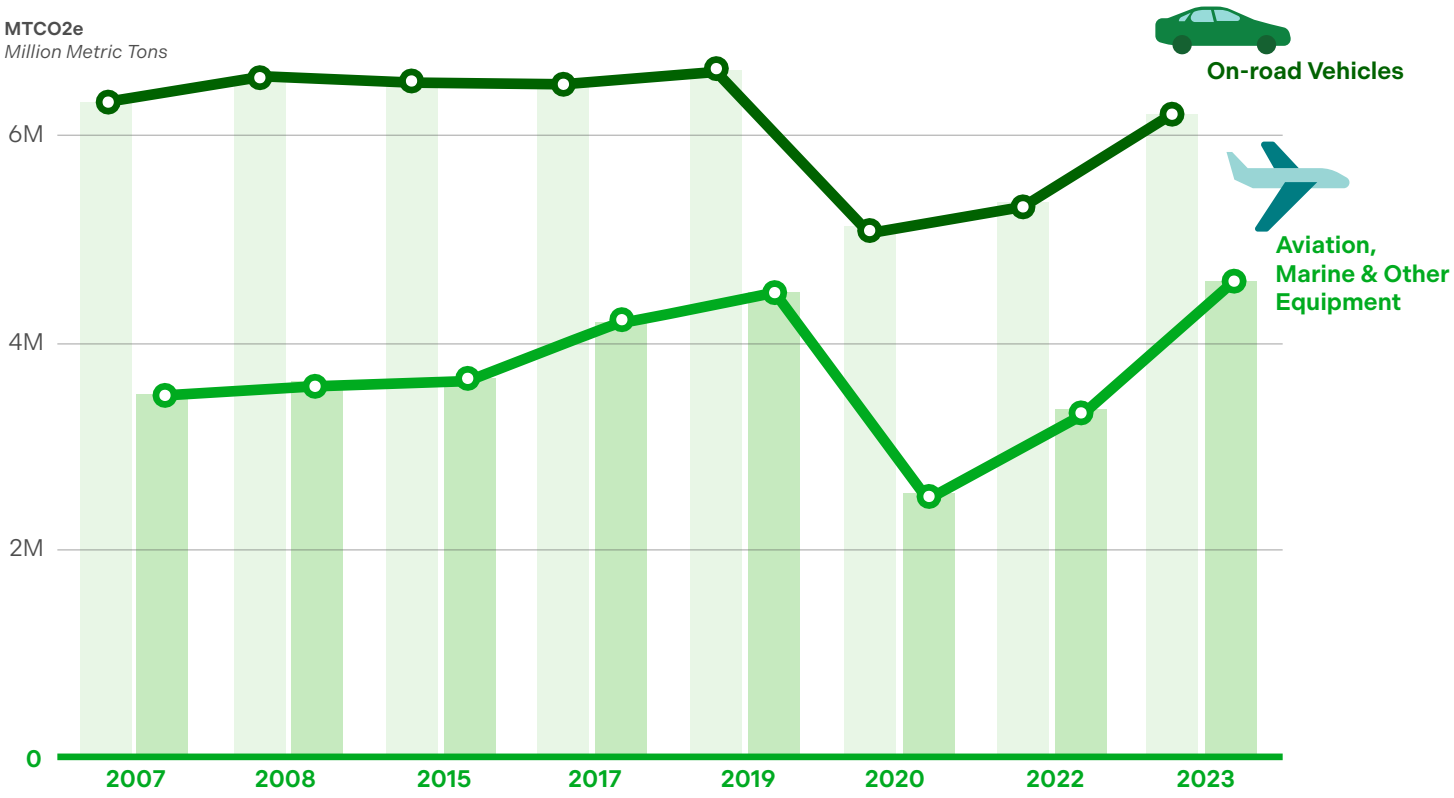
TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION

The transportation sector accounts for 44 percent of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in King County. On-road vehicles such as cars, trucks and buses cause over 26 percent of emissions, while the other 18 percent come from aviation, marine, and off-road mobile equipment. Lowering these emissions will require a combination of reducing car trips overall, using cleaner vehicles, and shifting as many trips as possible from private cars to transit, biking, rolling, and walking. Changes in the transportation sector and shifts in travel behaviors have multiple benefits for the health of all residents and overall quality of life.

Achieving climate gains through transportation and land use actions will mean continuing to advance policies that support safer, healthier, less carbon-intensive, and more efficient modes of transportation, and that encourage and incentivize walkable communities. Ensuring low-carbon modes are less expensive and more convenient to use is key to achieving King County's climate goals and creating a socially equitable and environmentally sustainable future.

Figure 8. Community Scale Transportation Emissions in King County

Compared to 2007, GHG emissions from on-road vehicles decreased by 4 percent in 2023, while GHG emissions from aviation, marine, and other equipment increased by 33 percent.



Source: Executive Climate Office, King County (2025)

WHAT'S AT STAKE

King County has gained over 200,000 residents since 2018 and is expected to have a population of over three million by 2050. Meanwhile, rising housing costs have displaced many low-income households to more affordable but far-reaching parts of the County or region. This means people must travel further, increasing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and associated emissions to get to work, school, and services. If there are not enough accessible options, it will mean more individual cars on the road, increasing gridlock and emissions.

This makes the transition to a sustainable, equitable transportation system more crucial than ever. King County needs to invest in higher frequency transit service and continue its commitment to transitioning to zero-emission vehicles where and when feasible. By increasing the frequency of bus and rail services and supporting non-motorized travel, King County can make public transit a more viable and attractive option for everyone. This will reduce dependence on private cars and minimize traffic congestion, especially in areas with high population and job density.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions connected communities that are more compact and walkable, and transit-served neighborhoods for this growing region. These actions will reduce dependence on private cars and minimize traffic congestion, especially in areas with high population and job density.

Supporting a shift to zero-emission vehicles will both reduce GHG emissions and significantly improve air quality and public health. Emissions from vehicles, especially heavy-duty trucks, profoundly impact the health of adults and children living near roadways.[39] Air pollution from vehicles is linked to increased asthma, respiratory, and cardiovascular health concerns, and disproportionately impacts children, low-income populations and communities of color.[40]

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Implemented Free Youth Transit Pass, launched RapidRide H and G lines, improved connections to Link light rail, expanded flexible transit services such as MetroFlex, and implemented spot improvements for transit speed and reliability.
- Expanded transit-oriented development (TOD) projects, including 232 affordable housing units at Northgate.
- Secured $7.9 million grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce to expand access to electric vehicle (EV) charging throughout the County in fleet, public, and multi-family residential settings.
- Established partnerships with power utilities to pilot curbside EV charging installations and collaborated with adjacent counties to scope the design of a regional EV charging plan.
- Convened Joint Aircraft Emission Technical and Community Task Force to update emissions accounting methodology for aircraft.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

Support state, regional, and federal policy and enabling legislation to reduce transportation emissions:

- **GHG 7.** Improve local mobility by communicating the need for stable, sustained transit funding
- **GHG 8.** Support the Washington State Clean Fuel Standard (CFS) and robust life-cycle emissions accounting of low transportation fuels
- **GHG 9.** Expand public access to EV charging
- **GHG 10.** Support and advance Zero-Emission Vehicle Standards
- **GHG 11.** Advocate for sustainable and ethical procurement, re-use, and recycling of EV batteries
- **GHG 12.** Champion equitable road and vehicle usage pricing, and road use charges

Focus development within proximity of high-capacity transit and safe biking and walking infrastructure:

- **GHG 13.** Advance the development of Equitable Transit Oriented Communities (ETOC)
- **GHG 14.** Grow revenue backing for the Transit Oriented Development bond fund

Provide fast, reliable, frequent, integrated, and innovative transit and mobility services that reduce car trips:

- **GHG 15.** Develop and implement a funding strategy for Metro Connects to create a regional, innovative, and integrated mobility network that is safe, equitable, and sustainable
- **GHG 16.** Grow the number of people served by frequent transit, including RapidRide
- **GHG 17.** Invest in speed and reliability improvements at "hot spots" and along frequent bus routes

Provide enhanced incentives and education for car trip reduction and mode-shift, and disincentives to driving alone:

- **GHG 18.** Expand adoption of commuter benefit ordinances across King County
- **GHG 19.** Enhance transit rider education and incentive programs

Expand and maintain infrastructure that makes it easier and safer to take transit, bike, walk and roll:

- **GHG 20.** Improve access to mobility options
- **GHG 21.** Advocate for Transportation Demand Management Strategies for Washington State Ferries
- **GHG 22.** Advocate for every city in King County to adopt a complete streets policy
- **GHG 23.** Develop regional trails for walking, biking and rolling

Reduce GHG emissions from aviation and marine sectors:

- **GHG 24.** Limit aviation emissions and local air pollution impacts



GHG 7. IMPROVE LOCAL MOBILITY BY COMMUNICATING THE NEED FOR STABLE, SUSTAINED TRANSIT FUNDING

It is critical for King County to maintain existing state and federal revenue streams for public transportation. King County's ability to maintain fleet and facilities in a state of good repair, transition to zero-emission operations (vehicles and facilities), and expand bus rapid transit are all very dependent on state and federal revenue streams. These investments provide safe, frequent, and reliable transit service to reduce VMT and GHG emissions. Over the next five years, the context at the state and federal levels presents several risks to the continued availability of transportation funding. Washington State has identified significant revenue shortfalls in transportation funding to support ongoing and planned future investments. Federal transportation funding authorization in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will expire in September 2026 and the future of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 is threatened. King County will advocate to maintain existing funding and communicate the need for additional funding to maintain and grow transit services and capital investments.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–GM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
PSRC; PSCAA; Regional Transit Committee – King County; King County Transportation Benefit District; local jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; PSRC Regional Transportation Plan; Seattle Transit Measure; VISION 2050; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



GHG 8. SUPPORT THE WASHINGTON STATE CFS AND ROBUST ACCOUNTING OF LOW-CARBON TRANSPORTATION FUELS

The Clean Fuel Standard (CFS) requires fuel suppliers to gradually reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels by 45 percent by 2038, as compared to 2017 levels. Under the CFS, suppliers of fossil-based transportation fuels are regulated entities that must comply with the regulation by reducing the carbon intensity of fuels they sell or by purchasing credits from producers and suppliers of low-carbon fuels. A CFS is a critical policy to support the transition to zero-emission vehicles. King County departments will generate credits, primarily from the use of electricity to fuel County fleet vehicles. King County will reinvest revenues from the sale of CFS credits into climate investments. King County will also advocate for efforts to extend and strengthen the CFS, along with rapid implementation of alternative fueling infrastructure in Washington state, such as the development of hydrogen hubs, to support zero-emission vehicle adoption across all transportation sectors. King County will continue to be engaged in state rulemaking (such as the CFS) to ensure stringency of emissions factors quantification is maintained. King County will ensure life-cycle emissions accounting of zero-emission fuels, such as green hydrogen and biofuels, includes upstream GHG emissions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–GM; DNRP–WTD, SWD; DES–Fleet

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; K4C

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington Transportation Electrification Strategy – EV Council; Commerce; King County Comprehensive Plan; K4C Joint Climate Action Commitments

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



Electric school buses eliminate diesel air pollution, giving kids a healthier start and end to their school day. Washington has 100 on the road today. Funding from the WA Clean Fuel Standard will support efforts to transition to clean electric school buses.



King County departments generate credits under the WA Clean Fuel Standard program for fueling transit buses with electricity, revenues will be reinvested in fleet electrification.

GHG 9.
EXPAND PUBLIC ACCESS TO EV CHARGING

Access to convenient and reliable public charging ranks as a top concern among prospective EV buyers, especially those without the option to install charging at home. Pursuant to state and federal funds being available, King County will continue to work with partners to expand publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure at County facilities and properties, assess fleet depot locations for shared use charging, investigate options for charging hubs with other agencies' fleets, and explore public-private EV charging partnerships. King County will deploy infrastructure programs that increase and prioritize frontline community access to EV charging infrastructure, and ensure that installations occur in "charging deserts," multi-family housing, and other overburdened areas not prioritized for buildout by commercial networks.

To most efficiently identify the top priority locations for future EV chargers, and to develop a portfolio of sites suitable for submission to grant funding opportunities, planners need a charging roadmap customized for the region. King County will collaborate with regional partners and neighboring counties, to support research and publication of a regional EV charger implementation roadmap. An underlying mapping exercise, in coordination with underserved communities and the Climate Equity Community Task Force, will catalog existing charging, identify public EV "charging deserts" and develop a prioritized plan for improved access and investment.

Many residents of multi-family apartment or condo buildings would consider buying an Electric Vehicle (EV) but need help convincing property owners that onsite chargers are worth installing. King County will support promotion of electric vehicle charging installation with commercial property owners by engaging commercial property owners and EV installation companies in specialized support for EV charging installation, including articulation of financial benefit and applicable loan products and state/local incentives or rebates. This includes promotional campaigns and connection to third party technical assistance providers. Specifically, ECO will take the lead on summarizing and packaging technical assistance resources and work with applicable County agencies, such as DLS's economic development team, to disseminate information through established networks and act as a trusted messenger for EV benefits within the local business community in unincorporated King County.

One of the biggest challenges in using public chargers in King County, and along the West Coast, is finding a reliable location where equipment is functioning properly and has not been vandalized. The County will engage with internal and external partners to identify opportunities and funding to support emerging EV charger designs and/or technology that improve overall resilience, increase repairability, and enhance resistance to repeated vandalism at County-owned and other public facilities. The County will seek funds to pilot new public EV charging equipment prototypes at County-owned facilities that can meet more stringent uptime requirements and explore how new ownership and maintenance agreements with third-party providers could serve to improve uptime of public chargers on King County property.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD, DES–Fleet; Metro–GM, Metro–TFD; KCIT; PSB–RP; DLS–DO; OEOCE

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
EV public charging networks; local jurisdictions; Commerce; Ecology; WSDOT; Sound Transit; PSCAA; PSRC; power utilities; charging equipment vendors; K4C; Breaking Barriers Collaborative, Tabor 100, Electric Utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington Transportation Electrification Strategy – EV Council, Commerce; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Green Jobs Strategy Report

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



GHG 10. SUPPORT AND ADVANCE ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLE STANDARDS

Washington has adopted California's vehicle emissions standards, which set requirements for manufacturers to increase the zero-emission vehicle sales of passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty vehicles over time. Clean car regulations have been effective in increasing the supply of zero-emission vehicles available for purchase and in improving regional air quality, but work remains to be done with regards to commercial fleets and trucking operations. King County will protect adopted state Advanced Clean Cars and Clean Trucks standards, and advocate for the adoption of additional zero-emission vehicle standards, including Advanced Clean Fleet rules, pending their approval in California.

King County will also support opportunities to pilot zero-emission medium and heavy-duty (MHD) vehicles in fleets countywide as they become available and engage in the rollout of related state rebate programs aimed at MHD freight vehicles. The County will raise awareness among regional partners and organizations of state rebates and funding opportunities for new technology, seek to collaborate on joint funding proposals aiming first for the most polluting diesel vehicles (including school buses and port drayage vehicles) in the most overburdened areas and freight corridors, and prioritize deployment of EV fast charging equipment in locations and sites that support heavy-duty diesel truck transition to EVs.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–GM; DES–Fleet; KCIT

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; WSDOT; PSCAA; PSRC; EV charging vendors; EV manufacturers; Northwest Seaport Alliance; Port of Seattle; City of Seattle; K4C

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Ordinance 19052; Washington Transportation Electrification Strategy – EV Council, Commerce; WSDOT MDHD Rebate Program; Washington Advanced Clean Trucks Regulations (WAC 173–234); King County Comprehensive Plan; Washington Clean Vehicles Program (Chapter 173–423 WAC); Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy (NWPCAS); City of Seattle's Heavy Duty Vehicle Electrification Incentive Pilot; K4C Joint Climate Action Commitments

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | Implement

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other



Public charging available at King County International Airport.



GHG 11. ADVOCATE FOR SUSTAINABLE AND ETHICAL PROCUREMENT, RE-USE, AND RECYCLING OF EV BATTERIES

Encouraging responsible sourcing is a key strategy to promote environmental stewardship and respect of human rights in the supply chain of primary materials for EV batteries, including lithium and cobalt. King County will advocate for the development of sustainable and ethically sourced batteries for EVs in the marketplace via national and state regulation. Metro will coordinate with the American Public Transit Association (APTA) to advocate for industry standards specifically for ethical EV battery sourcing, such as via the formation of an APTA working group on this topic for transit buses. King County will also support state level regulations for EV battery re-use and/or recycling and to support implementation of the WA Dept. of Ecology's EV Battery Management Study (2024).

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; Metro–Capital, GM, TFD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–DO, FBOD, DO; Metro–GM, TFD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WSDOT; Ecology; Commerce; OEM's; NAATBatt (battery trade group); advocacy organizations; local jurisdictions; public transit agencies

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits;

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Ecology EV Battery Management Report; Washington Transportation Electrification Strategy – EV Council, Commerce; King County Sustainable Purchasing Policy (KCC 18.20)

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | Convene | Implement

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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



GHG 12. CHAMPION EQUITABLE ROAD AND VEHICLE USAGE PRICING, AND ROAD USE CHARGES

Analysis completed by King County in 2020 found that along with increased transit service and land use density, pricing vehicle travel via congestion pricing, tolling, a road usage charge, parking pricing, or similar tools is necessary to achieve goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled. King County will advocate for Washington State to develop equitable road and vehicle pricing, and road use charges from which the revenue generated is flexible and can be used to support transit and other multimodal investments to best meet the needs of the community and help achieve climate goals.

Washington State gas tax has been the primary revenue source to maintain, improve and expand the roadway (highway/local streets) in Washington State and is restricted to roadway uses. The State is looking towards implementing new revenue sources to replace the gas tax due to declining revenues as vehicles become more fuel efficient and more drivers transition to EVs. The State has investigated the creation of a road usage charge—a per-mile charge based on the number of miles driven rather than by the gallon of gas. The needs of the transportation system and the communities that it serves have changed since the gas tax was first enacted and new transportation revenue sources should be designed to meet these needs.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–GM; ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; PSRC; WA State Transportation Commission; public transit agencies

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; VISION 2050; King County Metro Connects

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | Implement

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | **Other**

GHG 13.
ADVANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF EQUITABLE TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES

Equitable Transit Oriented Communities (ETOCs) are mixed-use, transit-served neighborhoods that provide housing and transportation choices and greater social and economic opportunity for current and future residents. King County's ETOC Policy, adopted in 2021, provides a strategic approach to supporting and strengthening ETOC. In addition to TOD projects, where King County owns and leases the land and takes the lead, ETOC supports conditions that facilitate TOD led by the private sector. King County will fund Metro's ETOC program and partner initiatives to build capacity needed for ETOC policy implementation. Additionally, all new Rapid Ride projects will include ETOC studies to ensure communities can align transit investments with supportive development while addressing displacement risks through proactive measures.

King County Metro's ETOC program will support Metro's Real Estate program and will identify and implement strategic real property investments and repositioning in support of ETOC outcomes noted in the policy. King County will work to actively advance identified ETOC opportunity sites within Metro's property portfolio according to agreed-upon timelines and in cooperation with jurisdictional and community goals, per available development funds. The County will work to build capacity to allow for work with communities to slow displacement and provide opportunities to anchor communities in place through ETOC projects, to meet development opportunities currently in its pipeline, to participate in regional resource development to streamline projects where possible and to optimize King County's transit investments and real estate portfolio to bring more people within close proximity of frequent transit.

King County together with partners at the state and local level will advocate for state, regional, and local land use zoning that supports the creation of TOD with inclusionary zoning requirements.

King County will coordinate development of a model code for ETOC with King County jurisdictions to direct local infrastructure investments that support transit investments. Such a model code would include elements such as suggested parking maximums, suggested setbacks, sidewalk widths, appropriate development densities based on surrounding land use, inclusionary requirements and a menu of housing types, and supportive infrastructure. Providing a model code will aid jurisdictions in the adoption of supportive land use codes to support the creation and growth of vibrant transit-supportive communities.

King County will strive to remove historic barriers to funding TOD. The opportunity to successfully implement TOD projects on Metro's own property is limited to properties with clean titles. In Metro's current property portfolio, many sites that were originally owned by Washington State Dept. of Transportation (WSDOT) or purchased with Federal Highway Administration funds have title restrictions tied to the funds used to purchase those properties. Those title restrictions limit the current use of those sites and negatively impact their redevelopment potential. King County will work with the Public Attorney's Office and partner agencies to identify ways to remove outdated requirements that limit the ability to fund projects.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Capital

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–HCD; PSB–RP; DNRP–SWD; DLS–DO, Roads, Permitting; ECO; PAO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Sound Transit; local jurisdictions; private developers; Regional Code Collaboration; K4C; WSDOT

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnerships; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
VISION 2050; King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Metro Connects; King County Comprehensive Plan; Metro's ETOC Policy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



GHG 14.
GROW REVENUE BACKING FOR THE TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT BOND FUND

A Transit Oriented Development (TOD) bond fund was set up by the County Executive following the Sound Transit 3 ballot measure passed in 2016 and is backed by revenue generated from lodging taxes. The current TOD bond authority does not match requested funding needs resulting in many TOD projects not getting funded each year. King County will work to identify additional revenue sources for King County's TOD Bond funding to facilitate increased production of affordable housing units near transit service and maximize the connection between transit investments and housing growth. King County Metro will advocate for support needed for TOD and to align with long-range plans. King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) will manage any future funds.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Capital; DCHS–HCD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; PSB-Budget

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; PSRC

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) Regional Action Framework for King County; King County Comprehensive Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support	Convene	**Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing	Accelerated	**New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy	Moderate	**Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity	Additional	**New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County	Grant	**Other**



GHG 15. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A FUNDING STRATEGY FOR METRO CONNECTS AND BEYOND

Given the urgency of the climate crisis and the need to advance ambitious local action despite uncertainty at the federal level, public transportation must be a cornerstone of the County's climate strategy. Meeting VMT goals is key to meeting communitywide GHG reductions targets, and the County must plan for a more dramatic and transformative expansion of transit service than previously envisioned. Metro Connects, passed by King County Council in 2021, provides a vision for future service networks with fast, frequent, and reliable service all day, every day throughout the County. Implementation of Metro Connects exceeds available funding, and additional resources will be needed for Metro to achieve the vision and goals identified in the plan. The County will collaborate with local elected leaders and community members to develop a decision package and explore a regional ballot funding measure to create a regional, innovative, and integrated mobility network that is safe, equitable, and sustainable. Specifically, the County will seek additional funding to implement Metro Connects and the greater levels of service needed to meet VMT goals, to help sustain and grow service and implement the supportive capital programs. Regional funding will require approval from the King County Transportation Benefit District, King County voter-approved funding, or both. Metro, in partnership with local elected leaders, will continue to evaluate new sources of revenue, many of which may require approval from the Washington State Legislature and ensure support for public transportation is integrated into future climate policy revenue sources. The County will also explore all potential funding options that could be implemented without additional state legislative action or ballot measures.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–GM; Metro–F&A

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County Council; King County Transportation Benefit District

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; PSRC's Vison 2050 and Regional Transportation Plan; Sound Transit 3 (ST3); Washington Climate Commitment Act (RCW 70A.65); King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



GHG 16. GROW THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE SERVED BY FREQUENT TRANSIT, INCLUDING RAPIDRIDE

Frequent transit refers to transit services that run at least every 15 minutes in both directions throughout the day and evening, every day of the week, increasing reliability for riders. RapidRide is Metro's highest level of investment in frequent transit that provides convenience, innovation and reliability. King County will continue to grow access to RapidRide and other frequent transit service. By 2030, Metro will launch two new RapidRide lines (I and J) and continue work to plan two additional RapidRide lines (R and K). The quality of transit service—primarily the three main quality of service factors of frequency, proximity, and reliability of service—is critical to growing ridership and supporting land use change necessary to reducing vehicle miles traveled and the associated GHG emissions. Increasing the number of frequent routes in Metro's system addresses all three of the service quality factors.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility, Capital

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
SDOT; Sound Transit; local jurisdictions; utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



Transit Oriented Development under construction at Northgate Light Rail Station – BRIDGE Housing and Community Roots Housing.



King County launched the RapidRide H line to expand rapid and frequent service.



GHG 17. INVEST IN SPEED AND RELIABILITY IMPROVEMENTS AT "HOT SPOTS" AND ALONG FREQUENT BUS ROUTES

Buses that operate on roadways in mixed traffic can experience delay such as re-entering traffic flow at bus stops and delay at congested intersections, increasing travel times for riders and costs for public transit providers. Investing in transit priority improvements that increase the speed and reliability of buses can help reduce delays and increase transit ridership. Transit priority improvements can range in complexity from less complex, such as traffic signal timing adjustments, to more-complicated projects requiring design and public outreach, such as new bus-only lanes. These improvements can be implemented through a combination of spot improvement and corridor improvement projects. King County will partner with local jurisdictions to complete a minimum of 20 spot improvements and assess needs for two to three corridors every two years. This action will improve bus travel time and reliability throughout King County.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Capital

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; SDOT; PSE; SCL

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; King County Metro Mobility Framework; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



GHG 18. EXPAND ADOPTION OF COMMUTER BENEFIT ORDINANCES ACROSS KING COUNTY

Employer transit subsidies, such as for transit passes, vanpools and bicycle commuting reimbursements, help incentivize employees to travel without driving alone. King County will advocate for all cities in the County to pass and implement commuter benefit ordinances, similar to the example set by the City of Seattle. The City of Seattle's Commuter Benefit Ordinance requires that businesses with 20 or more employees offer employees a pre-tax option for a transit benefit. King County will work with local jurisdictions via the K4C to encourage the adoption of similar ordinances to reduce barriers to accessing transit benefits and enhance the provision of benefits to employees at smaller organizations.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; Metro–Mobility

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; local jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; King County Metro Mobility Framework; King County Comprehensive Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | Convene | Implement

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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



GHG 19. ENHANCE TRANSIT RIDER EDUCATION AND INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs focus on reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips and VMT by encouraging transit use, ridesharing, walking, biking, and telework. TDM programs work to understand and address barriers to using transit or other sustainable modes of transportation to restore and/or rebuild ridership. These programs also help to maximize use of significant capital investments in the region through an operational approach.

King County will implement several key TDM initiatives, including:

- Regional TDM campaigns to coincide with the openings of RapidRide, Light Rail, and other major system expansions or service changes. These campaigns will educate riders about new transit options and provide incentives to encourage them to explore and adopt these services, maximizing use and ridership on the expanding regional system.
- A revitalized In Motion program to deliver neighborhood-scale, community-based social marketing campaigns focusing on both commute and "beyond the commute" trips, given post-pandemic interest and demand to use transit for all trip types. These efforts will promote sustainable transportation choices, reduce congestion and single occupancy vehicle use, and help improve system reliability.
- Expanded Community Mobility and Community Transportation Navigators programs to foster strong relationships with community-based organizations and trusted local leaders to increase mobility access to priority communities. By offering peer-to-peer transit education that is culturally relevant, linguistically appropriate, and rooted in the priorities of local communities, these programs will empower individuals to embrace public transit options and expand opportunities.
- A robust Youth Mobility Program to inspire and prepare the next generation of transit users for long-term ridership. This program will increase awareness and use of the Free Youth Transit Pass Program, encourage young people to adopt transit as their first travel option, and provide workforce development opportunities for those interested in careers in transportation.
- Integration of TDM principles and programming into major land use and capital investment projects to maximize the efficiency of existing transit infrastructure. By syncing sustainable transportation strategies with regional capital investments, King County will increase transit ridership and optimize use of these major investments.
- Pilot innovative approaches to increase transit ridership for public events, aimed at festival and event ticketholders. Often attendees do not consider the option or are unaware of how to access transit. King County will work with external partners to pilot innovative approaches to reach new markets by partnering with event organizers of major cultural, sporting, concert, and festival events. Depending on the size, type, potential impact of and lead-time prior to the event, Metro's support may include facilitating fare sponsorship or transit fare integration with event ticketing (e.g. the Climate Pledge Area model), joint promotion and marketing of events, custom wayfinding, and signage and/or custom and/or shuttle service to/from major events. King County will develop and implement an event support strategy and pilot implementation of this strategy to understand how event partnerships help engage new riders, and expand ridership of existing riders. These pilot events will expand lessons learned to inform future strategies to further promote transit to and from major events across the County for all riders, adding to system reliability during major events.
- Integrate Transit GO rewards program into the ORCA system. The Transit GO rewards program allows riders to earn points by riding public transportation. Rewards points can be redeemed for either free mobile tickets on the Transit GO Ticket app or for credits on private transportation modes including Bird and Lime. King County will advocate for the Regional ORCA Operations Team to incorporate the Transit GO rewards program into the ORCA system and implement ORCA rewards program. King County has successfully utilized limited term local funding and grants to sponsor rewards campaigns for transit travel via the Transit GO reward program. Transitioning this platform to the ORCA system could result in more rewards campaigns with a larger scope of influence. The ORCA agencies will need to agree to add rewards functionality to the ORCA system and prioritize it against other new work.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community based organizations; employers; local jurisdictions; transportation management associations; private sector; major sports franchises; event venues; Sound Transit; ORCA–Regional ORCA Operations Team (ROOT); local transit agencies–ORCA agencies

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnerships; capacity building engagement; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; King County Metro's Long Game; Metro's Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



GHG 20. IMPROVE ACCESS TO MOBILITY OPTIONS

Making car-free access to transit easier helps facilitate greater ridership and can lower local air pollution. This can be achieved through safety upgrades to bike lanes and sidewalks, strategic parking fees, reexamining how Park and Rides are used, and deemphasizing single-occupant vehicles. King County will partner with jurisdictions, community, and private sector partners to deliver these measures with an emphasis on improving access for frontline communities.

- **Enhance zero-emission micromobility connections to transit.** Micromobility devices are small, low-speed, human- or electric-powered transportation devices, including bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles, electric scooters, and other small, lightweight, wheeled conveyances. Micromobility devices offer new and powerful ways to help people meet their transportation needs and can expand the reach of transit. King County will work with the King County–Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) to pilot a regional approach to providing zero-emission micromobility (i.e., bike and scooter share) connections to transit. As micromobility services expand across King County, it is important to ensure that micromobility is integrated with transit as a seamless transfer experience and leverage micromobility as an important zero-emission access mode. King County will partner with Sound Transit and King County cities with micromobility services to incentivize and centralize parking for zero-emission micromobility devices at transit centers, stops and stations.
- **Make walking, rolling and biking to transit safe, convenient, and accessible.** King County transit riders need safe, comfortable, and convenient connections to transit, including sidewalks, street crossings, and protected bike lanes. Metro's 2025 Safe Routes to Transit Implementation Guide will identify improvement opportunities to make walking, rolling, and biking to transit safe, convenient and accessible for all, especially priority populations. King County will partner with cities and other regional partners to develop, prioritize, and help identify and/or secure funding for street and safety improvements that local jurisdictions will deliver on their streets that connect to Metro stops and stations.
- **Re-envision park and ride properties.** Metro's 2024 Park and Ride System Evaluation Study evaluates and recommends actions to re-purpose or improve King County-owned park and rides to better support customer mobility needs, transit operations, and climate action goals. Metro's Park and Ride System Evaluation will create a plan to right-size Metro's transit customer parking and implement alternative transit-supportive uses on park and ride properties, such as mobility hubs, TOD, and terminal facilities. Metro's paid parking program aligns with the ORCA Lift program to prioritize access for people with low-incomes and prioritizing permits for transit customers with low-incomes that need parking to access transit.
- **Bring more mobility choices through mobility hubs.** Mobility Hubs create better access to more ways to get around, especially for those with the fewest choices. King County's Mobility Hubs program works in partnership with local partners to supplement existing transit stops and stations with more multimodal options and travel amenities and bring more mobility choices to existing community destinations. Mobility hubs reduce the need to own or use a car for daily trips and make walking, biking, taking transit, and other zero-emission modes viable options for daily travel. Metro's Mobility Hub Implementation Guide identified hub types and potential locations through partnership with the Mobility Hub Board, community members that represent underserved populations across King County. King County will continue to work with local communities to design and implement mobility hubs. Metro will convene King County partners, like parks, libraries, and community and human services and community-based organizations to bring more mobility choices to community destinations. Metro will also convene internal partners to ensure that bus stop and station improvements integrate multimodal choices and supportive elements.
- **Invest in multimodal improvements in urban centers.** King County's transit-oriented urban centers are 15-minute neighborhoods where residents and employees can meet their daily needs without a car. In transit-oriented urban centers, Metro invests in access to transit through multimodal improvements and programs rather than single-occupancy vehicle parking for transit riders. Multimodal access improvements can be street improvements that make it easier for riders to walk, roll, and bike to transit or programs the incentivize or remove barriers to accessing transit. Metro will partner with local jurisdictions to identify, design, and help identify and/or secure funding for multimodal access improvements for local jurisdictions to deliver in transit station areas and transit-oriented urban centers.
- **Implement a regional paid parking program at transit parking facilities.** Parking at transit facilities is intended to provide access to those who need it most, and who intend to board transit. However, some facilities are used as free all-day car storage for people not using transit or are used by drivers who live very close by and could employ other first-mile-last-mile strategies (other than Single Occupancy Vehicle use) to reach their bus or train. King County will coordinate with Sound Transit and WSDOT to implement a regional paid parking program at transit parking facilities that regularly exceed 70 percent utilization to support access to transit, grow ridership, and incentivize multimodal access to transit. Actively managing public parking at high-demand transit stations will disincentivize driving to transit stations, ensure that people that need to drive to transit have access, and encourage more people to take transit or other access modes to reach transit facilities.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DNRP–Parks; DLS–Roads; DCHS–HCD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; K4C; Sound Transit; SDOT; WSDOT; advocacy organizations; other transit agencies; utilities; libraries; community-based organizations

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnerships; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; Sound Transit System Access and Integration program; Sound Transit Parking Program; Metro's 2025 Safe Routes to Transit Implementation Guide; Metro's ETOC Policy; Seattle Shared Mobility Program – SDOT; VISION 2050; Puget Sound Regional Council Regional Transportation Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

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

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



GHG 21. ADVOCATE FOR TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES

Making ferry travel cleaner and more efficient requires not only vessel electrification, but also strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips and incentivize low-emission travel. More than 40% of Washington State Ferries (WSF) vehicle traffic is carried on King County routes.

King County will work with WSF, the Washington State Transportation Commission, and the Ferry Advisory Committee on Tariffs to align pricing and operations with climate and equity goals, reducing per-person emissions and congestion on cross-Sound routes. Potential areas of advocacy include:

- Advocating for WSF to adopt per-foot pricing for vehicles, ensuring that larger, higher-emission vehicles pay proportionally more while smaller, more efficient vehicles pay less.
- Advocating for WSF loading/unloading policies that prioritize carpools, transit connections, and low-emission vehicles, making sustainable choices faster and more convenient.
- Exploring ways to incentivize personal electric vehicle usage in partnership with regional transportation providers;
- Partnering with Kitsap Transit and other local and regional agencies to make it easier for commuters to leave cars behind when travelling by WSF vessels.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; Metro

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Washington State Ferries; Washington State Transportation Commission; Ferry Advisory Committee on Tariffs; WSDOT

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; King County Metro Mobility Framework

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | Implement

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other



King County Water Taxi provides passenger service from downtown Seattle to West Seattle or Vashon Island.



GHG 22. ADVOCATE FOR EVERY CITY IN KING COUNTY TO ADOPT A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Complete streets designs improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians and enhance community health by encouraging physical activity. Although Washington's 2011 Complete Streets Act encourages cities to adopt related ordinances, not all King County cities have done so. King County will work with K4C members to advocate for an adopted complete streets policy/ordinance in every city. King County Dept. of Local Services will lead implementation of a Complete Streets ordinance for Unincorporated King County that was adopted in 2024.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; K4C

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington Complete Streets Act (RCW 47.04.035); King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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



GHG 23. DEVELOP REGIONAL TRAILS FOR WALKING, BIKING, AND ROLLING

Although King County has approximately 185 miles of mostly paved regional trails, there remain portions of the County with less access to these amenities, or that are less interconnected. King County will work with regional partners to extend existing regional trails and develop major new routes that facilitate walking, biking, and rolling for car-replacement trips, especially in historically underserved areas and communities with poor health indicators relative to the County population.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; advocacy groups; CBOs; and regional coalitions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; engagement; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Regional Trails Needs Report (Appendix C2 – King County Comprehensive Plan); King County Open Space Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

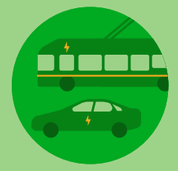
KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



GHG 24. LIMIT AVIATION EMISSIONS AND LOCAL AIR POLLUTION IMPACTS

Aviation emissions are large contributors of GHG emissions, as well as air and noise pollution for residents living near airports and under flight paths. The Community Health and Airport Operations Related Noise and Air Pollution Report prepared by Public Health-Seattle & King County documented that compared to the rest of the County, communities within 10 miles of SeaTac airport, "are associated with higher rates of pervasive health concerns." Both the Public Health report and the King County Joint Aircraft Emissions Technical and Community Task Force report calls for developing and expanding mitigation efforts to limit the impacts of air quality pollution that are especially harmful to frontline communities. To address the health disparities of communities near airports, King County will work with CBOs, non-governmental organizations, and peer local government agency partners to:

- **Promote and implement indoor air quality improvements and pollution mitigation in communities.** King County will promote and implement indoor air quality improvements and pollution mitigation in communities. This could include but is not limited to securing grant funding to support retrofit interventions that pay for improving indoor air quality in the most impacted areas like homes, schools, and day cares; implementing natural pollution mitigation solutions in airport adjacent communities where legally permissible it is allowed by FAA; and similar interventions. The County will build on efforts to educate and engage communities on health impacts of pollution and mitigation Strategies, such as access to health screening and other tools to self-manage improving health and reducing impacts of indoor air pollution.
- **Phase Out Leaded Aviation Gas at KCIA.** KCIA will phase out leaded aviation gas. Lead from aviation gas is the largest source of lead pollution in Washington, which disproportionately impacts frontline and airport-adjacent communities. A rule by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published in 2023 concluded that emissions of lead from covered aircraft engines cause or contribute to lead air pollution that may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health and welfare. Lead presents a significant health risk to children, specifically the EPA finding concludes that, "Given the number of children in close proximity to runways" lead exposure from aviation fuels presents "a potential substantial implications for children's health." KCIA will work with the FAA's Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions program to phase out leaded aviation gas by 2030, adopt unleaded alternatives, and develop a clear plan to phase out use. Considering potential risks, KCIA will try to be early adopters as allowable by FAA.
- **Promote accurate aircraft GHG reporting methodologies.** King County will continue the practice adopted in 2022/2023 GHG inventories to use a passenger-based approach to more comprehensively represent aviation emissions in GHG inventory. King County will continue to provide quantification of the net radiative forcing multiplier in future GHG emissions inventories based on best available science.
- **Advocate for alternative travel modes such as rail.** King County will advocate for alternatives to air travel, such as rail. Expansion of regional rail can reduce emissions by switching from air travel to rail and reduce congestion on roads and highways. King County will advocate and support efforts to improve frequency and reliability of the Amtrak Cascades service in accordance with ESHB 1837 currently serving the Vancouver–Seattle–Portland corridor, as well as other alternative modes. King County will support efforts to educate and engage communities to encourage alternative travel modes.

The King County Office of Economic Opportunity & Creative Economy and ECO will continue work with public and private partners to advance the following measures to reduce aviation GHGs. King County will lead local exploration of high-speed rail. Washington State, in partnership with British Columbia and Oregon, is in the early stages of planning for Cascadia High-Speed Rail. King County will support expanded use of zero-emission aviation technology development and sustainable aviation fuels (SAF). King County will advocate for strong sustainable aviation fuel and hydrogen production life-cycle emissions accounting standards to ensure fuels used provide a net GHG emissions and air pollution benefit. King County will develop regional partnerships with the goal of advancing development of and use of SAF for flights from SeaTac and King County International Airport (KCIA), as allowable by federal regulation (FAA). Activities could include business development and retention, advocating for stringent SAF carbon accounting certification, support for legislative priorities and pilot projects, as well as planning for electrical and hydrogen fuel-cell infrastructure at KCIA to accommodate zero-emissions aviation once approved by regulators.

Aviation emissions are regulated at the federal and international levels. King County will convene partners to support federal and international efforts to regulate aviation emissions. King County will work to raise awareness around the role and need for federal/international action to address emissions from this sector.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; OEOCE

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–KCIA; PHSKC

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
CBOs; Non-governmental organizations including 350 Seattle; Beacon Hill Council; Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility; Washington Community Health Coalition; Climate Solutions; Port of Seattle; Greater Seattle Partners; Snohomish County; Paine Field; WSDOT; FAA; WDOE; CECTF

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Joint Aircraft Emissions Technical and Community Task Force Report; WDOE Proviso support for building retrofits; King County Comprehensive Plan; Community Health and Airport Operations Related Noise and Air Pollution: Report to the Legislature in Response to Washington State House Bill 1109; U.S. EPA 2023 Finding That Lead Emissions From Aircraft Engines That Operate on Leaded Fuel Cause or Contribute to Air Pollution That May Reasonably Be Anticipated To Endanger Public Health and Welfare

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

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

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

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

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

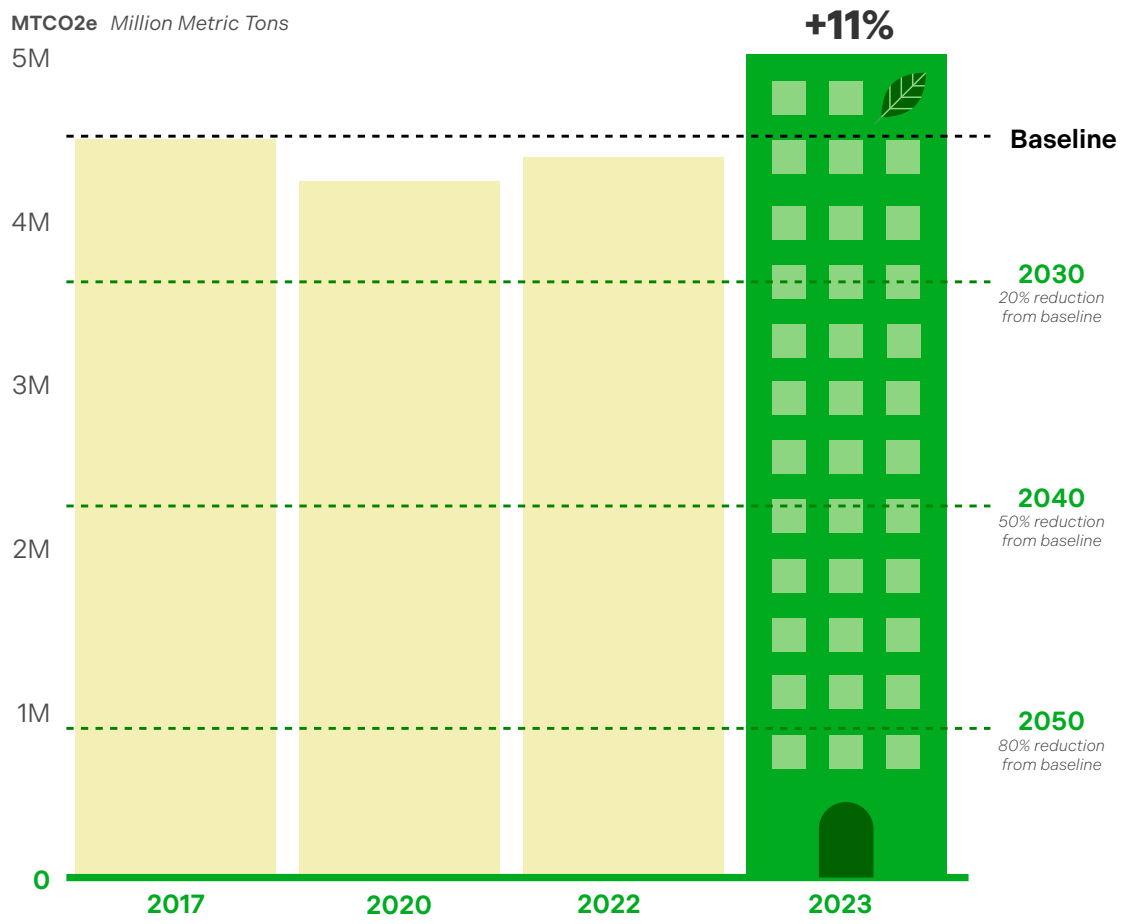
BUILDING ENERGY AND GREEN BUILDING

Buildings are a central part of daily life—they house workplaces, schools, homes, and gathering spaces. However, not all buildings have the same impact. Their effects on people and the environment are shaped not only by how they are used, but also by factors such as age, maintenance, utilities, and the fuels they rely on. These factors all play a role in the amount of greenhouse gases (GHGs) they emit.

Residential and commercial buildings currently contribute over 43 percent of King County's GHG emissions through building heating, cooling, lighting, and other energy uses. Existing buildings and new construction both provide opportunities to reduce energy demand and fossil fuel emissions. Stronger building codes, appliance standards, and building performance standards can significantly reduce energy demand and fossil fuel use. Incentive and assistance programs can reduce barriers and accelerate retrofits in existing buildings. Overall, advancing green building ensures buildings have lower climate impacts, are more beneficial for the environment, and are adaptable to a changing climate. It also provides opportunities to improve comfort, lower costs, and promote healthier communities and families.

Figure 9. Fossil Fuel Use in Existing Community Scale Buildings

In 2023, GHG emissions in existing community scale buildings in King County increased by 11 percent when compared to the 2017 baseline.



Source: Executive Climate Office, King County (2025)

WHAT'S AT STAKE

The buildings sector is the second largest contributor to GHG emissions in King County. Both the County and Washington state have made great strides in addressing building impacts through the state Clean Buildings Performance Standard, local performance standards, and the state's Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA), which requires electricity provided by utilities be GHG-neutral by 2030. However, these regulations alone will not achieve emissions reduction goals for the built environment in King County, as many buildings continue to burn fuels onsite (natural gas, propane, and fuel oil) that emit GHGs and other air pollutants even as the electrical grid becomes cleaner.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions a healthier future with cleaner air, more efficient energy use, and less fossil fuel use. The actions in this section demonstrate how the County can improve well-being, comfort, and utility costs for all residents, with a specialized focus on low to moderate-income residents and frontline communities.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Established the C-PACER (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resiliency) program with $80 million of project financing for energy efficiency and water conservation.
- Launched the Energize Program and installed more than 100 heat pumps in low- and moderate- income (LMI) homes in Skyway and White Center.
- Integrated green codes into the 2021 WA State Building Codes through the Regional Code Collaboration.
- Adopted strong green building codes prohibiting new fossil-fueled water and space heating for unincorporated King County.
- Secured federal and state funding to strengthen and expand green building and retrofit programs.
- Increased green building knowledge of building owners, tenants, architects and contractors through the Green Building Handbook.
- Applied $5.5 million of Economy & Climate Equity Capital Pool Funds toward the installation of green building elements/ systems in affordable housing and homeownership projects.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

Promote innovative policies to reduce building emissions:

- **GHG 25.** Defend and strengthen incentives and regulations at the federal, state, and local levels to advance clean electricity and reduce fossil fuel use
- **GHG 26.** Advocate for state or regional adoption of a zero-emission appliance standard
- **GHG 27.** Implement a residential point-of-sale energy disclosure program

Make it easier to upgrade buildings from fossil fuels to efficient electric systems:

- **GHG 28.** Lower the financial and logistical barriers for building decarbonization retrofits
- **GHG 29.** Directly facilitate retrofits of housing and community assets of frontline communities
- **GHG 30.** Collaborate to expand the reach of local building retrofit programs
- **GHG 31.** Maintain a resource hub and coordinated entry system for rebates, incentives and retrofits
- **GHG 32.** Expand clean energy contractor training and support

Establish codes to reduce emissions, boost efficiency, and support green building:

- **GHG 33.** Develop regional green building codes
- **GHG 34.** Achieve embodied carbon reductions through building codes and market support

Enhance programs to promote clean energy and green building:

- **GHG 35.** Promote green building through education and incentives
- **GHG 36.** Strengthen green building and technical enforcement
- **GHG 37.** Incentivize and enforce construction and demolition material source separation
- **GHG 38.** Expand pathways to green, sustainable and resilient affordable housing
- **GHG 39.** Advance sustainable and resilient development in King County Metro Transit-Oriented Community projects
- **GHG 40.** Support district energy and thermal energy network projects
- **GHG 41.** Conduct a Battery Energy Storage Systems siting analysis

GHG 25.
DEFEND AND STRENGTHEN BUILDING SECTOR INCENTIVES AND REGULATIONS

State regulations, including CETA, the State Energy Code, Clean Buildings Act, and Climate Commitment Act (CCA), and local regulations, including the Seattle Building Emissions Performance Standards, and federal incentives through the Inflation Reduction Act are critical to achieving GHG emission reduction goals from the built environment. King County will convene and support partners as needed to defend and strengthen building sector incentives and regulations at the federal, state, and local levels to advance clean electricity and reduced fossil fuel use and ensure policies and regulations are fully and equitably implemented. The County will advocate for new and amended legislative bills that strengthen regulations, including support for Clean Buildings Act amendments that focus on reducing fossil fuel use in buildings, rooftop and community solar-enabling policies, and increasing the solar net metering threshold.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–DO; DNRP–DO; Metro–GM

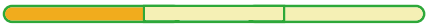
EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Equity and environmental nonprofits; state and local government partners

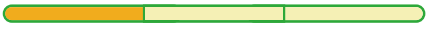
EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

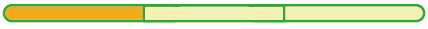
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA); Washington State Energy Code; Washington Clean Buildings Act (HB 1257, 2019); Washington Climate Commitment Act (RCW 70A.65); King County Comprehensive Plan; Seattle Building Emissions Performance Standards; Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA)

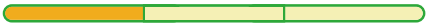
EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:


ACTION TYPE:


IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:


FUNDING NEED:


FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:


GHG 26. ADVOCATE FOR STATE OR REGIONAL ADOPTION OF A ZERO-EMISSION APPLIANCE STANDARD

Appliances, including hot water heaters and furnaces, in homes and buildings are large users of natural gas, propane, and oil. Voluntary incentive programs have existed in Washington for many years, but they are not enough. Achieving King County GHG emission reduction targets requires further regulatory steps to ensure that fossil fuel appliances are phased out at their end of life. Mirrored on a program in California, King County will convene partners to advocate for a state or regional zero-emission appliance standard that would phase in mandatory requirements for the sale of zero-emission space and water heating and cooking equipment. Manufacturers and retail sellers would be required to phase out sale of fossil fuel powered appliances. King County will advocate for measures that reduce the disproportionate burden of any incremental costs associated with zero-emission appliances on low-income households, affordable housing providers, and homeownership, such as first focusing on water heating appliances which are lower-cost to replace, or ensuring appliance replacement or electrical panel upgrade funding is provided for low-income homes. King County will produce an equity report prior to taking action. Once a standard is in place, King County will work with local jurisdictions and partners to educate consumers about pre-approved appliances for smooth implementation.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Equity and environmental nonprofits; local governments; air agencies; state agencies

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts.

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; K4C Washington State Legislative Agenda

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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

GHG 27. IMPLEMENT A RESIDENTIAL POINT-OF-SALE ENERGY DISCLOSURE PROGRAM

Reducing energy and fossil fuel use in residential homes at scale to achieve overall GHG reduction goals will require more than voluntary incentives and locally supported direct retrofit programs. Residential energy disclosure would require, at the point-of-sale, that new home buyers are provided information on the energy consumption and the lowest-cost options to improve a home's efficiency. The County will evaluate options for implementing a residential energy disclosure and performance standard program. King County has the legal authority to implement a program in unincorporated King County, though the intent of this action is to coordinate with other jurisdictions to support program adoption across the County. Program design would prioritize reducing GHG emissions and potential disproportionate impacts for low-income households, including potentially funding audits or retrofits for low-income households. King County will produce an equity report prior to taking action. If implemented, the Department of Local Services (DLS)–Permitting would require additional resources for enforcement.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Equity and environmental nonprofits; K4C; realtors

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Home Energy Assessment (HES) Model Ordinance – Thurston; Home Energy Score Tool (U.S. Dept of Energy); ACEEE – Residential Energy Use Disclosure: A Guide for Policymakers (2014)

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 28.
LOWER THE FINANCIAL AND LOGISTICAL BARRIERS FOR BUILDING DECARBONIZATION RETROFITS

Local action is required to realize emission reductions from state and local regulations. Owners and operators of commercial buildings and larger multifamily buildings are required to achieve efficiency improvements under the Washington State Clean Buildings Act. However, additional support is needed for some owners that lack the operational or fiscal support to achieve improvements in a timely manner. This includes lowering financial and logistical barriers for building decarbonization retrofits by collaboratively developing financing mechanisms and products that fill gaps in loan and incentive offerings for multiple income levels in both residential and commercial buildings. It also includes analyzing gaps in financial offerings by economic status or geography, working with financing institutions, people living with low incomes, underserved communities and other partners. King County will conduct a study that assesses and identifies County actions to advance market development, remove supply chain barriers and support broader use of decarbonization technologies. The County will also develop an Accelerator Network, coordinating with and adding to existing Accelerator programs to fill geographic or support service-gaps for commercial and multifamily buildings.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Nonprofits and CBOs; financing institutions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduces disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County C-PACER – Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy & Resiliency

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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

GHG 29.
DIRECTLY FACILITATE RETROFITS OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ASSETS OF FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

Local action is required to realize the full benefits from federal, state, and local emission reduction policies in the building sector. For building owners, the process of retrofitting a building to improve efficiency and reduce GHG emissions can be daunting. Incentives and utility rebates alone are not sufficient for many frontline community members to implement retrofits. Barriers include not having funds to pay for retrofits or living in rental housing where they do not own the building and cannot themselves conduct improvements. King County can help bridge this gap, by securing federal and state grant funds to directly facilitate retrofit programs in frontline communities to reduce emissions and provide access to cooling. King County will administer a building retrofit program that prioritizes clean-energy conversions for low-income residents, senior residents, oil-heated homes, in-home daycares, and adult family homes. Additionally, the County will pursue retrofits of both subsidized and naturally occurring affordable housing, as well as single-family LMI rental households. King County has secured funding from federal and state grants to support this work and will continue to seek additional funding. The County will conduct a building retrofit prioritization analysis to assess building types and establish retrofit priorities for existing building and occupancy types with the greatest opportunity for GHG reduction and equity benefits. Program design will prioritize installation of heat pumps that provide the added benefit of cooling and reduce health risks during extreme heat events, and will evaluate opportunities to pair solar installations with retrofits to reduce energy costs. The program will also evaluate how to align with other building repair and safety needs at the same time, such as addressing the seismic hazards of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings that often have LMI residents and/or residents that are black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–HCD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Equity, equity and environmental nonprofit organizations; CBOs; state/federal/private funders; utilities; other jurisdictions; program implementers

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy; King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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

GHG 30. COLLABORATE TO EXPAND THE REACH OF LOCAL BUILDING RETROFIT PROGRAMS

Local jurisdictions in King County must work together to support building retrofits. To help achieve communitywide building and energy goals, the County will collaborate with its partnerships, such as the King County–Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) and the Coalition for Climate Careers (C3), as well as utilities, regulators, and other partners to expand the reach of retrofit support programs available to building owners. Currently, Seattle, Shoreline, and five cities working together under Energy Smart Eastside (Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, and Redmond) have programs to directly support retrofits in income-qualifying homes. King County will convene partners to explore opportunities to expand the reach of building retrofits through partnerships, and will explore options for creating climate resilience and affordability. Future programs could include deep energy-efficiency retrofit programs, initiatives to increase green power enrollment in communities, streamlined local renewable permitting, and renewable and electrification retrofit incentives and programs.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; C3; nonprofits; utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County C-PACER – Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy & Resiliency

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

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

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

GHG 31.
MAINTAIN A RESOURCE HUB AND COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEM FOR REBATES, INCENTIVES AND RETROFITS

Home energy rebates and incentives are available for many, if not all, residents of King County and the Puget Sound region. In 2024, the County worked with K4C and regional partners to launch The Switch Is On Washington website as a central resource for residents to find home energy programs, incentives, financing options, and energy-saving technologies. King County will work with local and state partners to maintain and grow the Switch Is On Washington, or similar, website with additional educational materials in multiple languages and with specific examples of home energy improvement opportunities. The County will ensure outreach and engagement materials are culturally relevant to increase usage across multiple communities. Similarly, the different, overlapping household programs for energy efficiency, decarbonization, and utility bill reductions create access barriers. The County will explore and, if feasible, develop a collaborative, coordinated entry, and enrollment system for retrofit programs, or advocate for a state system. The program would support income-qualified individuals submitting a single application that enables a full application, or support applying in part, to all participating programs (i.e., Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Seattle City Light, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), etc.) to reduce barriers and increase their knowledge of all incentives they may be able to pursue.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–HCD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Switch is On; K4C; equity and environmental nonprofits; utilities; Energy Smart Eastside; King County Housing Authority; state agencies

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 32. EXPAND CLEAN ENERGY CONTRACTOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT

To accelerate and expand the decarbonization of buildings in King County, residents need to be introduced to clean energy options by contractors who are aware of and able to install newer, cleaner and greener options. Similarly, with expansion of funding available for larger-scale building decarbonization programs at the County and other jurisdictions, contractors need to be able to navigate the public contracting process. King County will aid in increasing the technical, electrification and public contracting knowledge base of local building developers, designers, and contractors. Training will be conducted at both the individual building scale and the industry scale (e.g. heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) contractors, electricians, plumbers) with a focus on smaller contractor development. These trainings may include contracting fundamentals with public entities, prevailing wage documentation, Women- and Minority-Owned Business (WMBE) enrollment, insurance requirements, proposal development for government programs, and technical support for contract compliance.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Equity and environmental nonprofits; CBOs; workforce development organizations; small businesses; utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Green Jobs Strategy Report; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 33. DEVELOP REGIONAL GREEN BUILDING CODES

Green building codes establish minimum requirements for all buildings that advance community health, resource efficiency, and resilience over the life cycle of a building. Having consistent code language, across multiple jurisdictions, helps reduce builder confusion. The Regional Code Collaboration will lead in the development of strong green building codes for new construction, altered existing buildings, demolished buildings, and building sites. Resulting codes may include but are not limited to renewable and geothermal energy, energy efficiency, water efficiency and reuse, building decarbonization, construction and demolition material management, material salvage & reuse, deconstruction, low embodied carbon and material toxicity, heat island mitigation, low impact development, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and sustainable transportation infrastructure. Codes should also reduce the potential disproportionate burden any increase in cost can have on development. King County will work with local jurisdictions to adopt codes locally and mobilize jurisdictions and industry partners to actively participate in the code amendment processes of the WA State Building Code Council (SBCC), and other local and national code processes. Additional staff resources are needed to adequately enforce building and energy codes to increase countywide code compliance with the latest green building strategies, technologies, and science.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DLS–Permitting

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Regional Code Collaboration; local jurisdictions; industry partners; K4C; utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington Motor Vehicle Emission Standards (Chapter 70A.30 RCW); King County Solid Waste Code – Construction, Demolition and Land-Clearing Waste (K.C.C. 10.30.030): Construction & Demolition Waste; Washington Residential and Nonresidential Construction – Energy Consumption Reduction (RCW 19.27A.160); King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 34.
ACHIEVE EMBODIED CARBON REDUCTIONS THROUGH BUILDING CODES AND MARKET SUPPORT

Embodied carbon represents the GHG emissions from the life cycle of materials used to created something. For buildings, this includes the extraction, manufacturing, transport, construction, and disposal of building materials. Many industrial manufacturers of building materials have fewer GHG reduction requirements under the CCA as Energy-Intensive Trade Exposed industries. Embodied carbon regulations through building codes are an approach to incentivize these manufacturers to develop low-carbon products. The County will work to reduce embodied carbon of construction materials for commercial and large multifamily buildings through building code amendments and supporting applicable state codes. King County will assess potential unintended consequences for affordable housing and homeownership projects, to explore how best to consider this segment of the market, including, but not limited to, considering pursuit of additional revenue or rebates to offset new costs for housing providers. The program will also support private industry in developing and publishing Environmental Product Declarations and set Global Warming Potential limits in public and private construction projects. Program focus materials include cement, concrete, and steel, and possibly wood, gypsum board, and other products as identified through program research. King County has funding for an Embodied Carbon Program Manager to support code development, though additional resources are needed to implement building code updates and construction enforcement in unincorporated King County.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; DLS–Permitting; DCHS–HCD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Carbon Leadership Forum (CLF); Commerce; K4C; WSDOT

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts.

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
U.S. EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Building Decarbonization; Washington State Energy Strategy – Commerce; Washington Buy Clean and Buy Fair Law (HB 1282, 2023–2024); King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



The Southard, a new affordable homeownership development in the city of Tukwila is the first project to be Net Zero and Salmon Safe certified.

GHG 35.
PROMOTE GREEN BUILDING THROUGH EDUCATION AND INCENTIVES

Community members and frontline community partners have advocated for green building education to build the capacity of frontline communities. King County will provide continuing education to residents and industry professionals on healthy and sustainable practices for green building and site development, along with related programs, incentives, and financial opportunities. Language translation, cultural relevance, and outreach to historically underserved communities will be prioritized, with educational materials coordinated with local community groups and will apply to new construction, additions, retrofits, and demolition projects. Incentives can encourage green building practice adoption and innovation and build capacity in development and construction sectors to adopt new practices. King County will explore the best way to utilize incentives promoting the use of green building practices to attract green building participants. Program incentives could be tied to green building certifications, flexible zoning or design departures, incentive bundling, subsidized project consulting services, project and developer recognition and marketing, utility rebate partnerships, grants, rebates, and a reduction in permit fees and process timing. Both energy efficiency and water efficiency will be emphasized through this action, and will include topics such as landscaping, building envelope, indoor water systems and water efficient appliance options, heating and cooling systems, and material management.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting; DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Commerce; certification companies; K4C; local jurisdictions; utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Green Building Ordinance (Ordinance 19402); Washington State Building Code; King County Green Building Handbook; King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 36. STRENGTHEN GREEN BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ENFORCEMENT

Additional building and energy code enforcement is needed to increase countywide code compliance with the latest green building strategies, technologies, and science. If resources are available, King County should provide training and education materials for all DLS–Permitting staff and jurisdiction staff on green building to aid in technical enforcement. Team responsibilities should include the development and implementation of education and outreach materials, training, programs, and incentives associated with green building and more sustainable and resilient building practices.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting

KEY AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; local jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 37. INCENTIVIZE AND ENFORCE CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION MATERIAL SOURCE SEPARATION

King County codes were established in 2015 to direct commingled recyclable construction & demolition (C&D) materials to designated C&D recycling facilities and non-recyclable C&D materials to designated C&D waste transfer stations. However, not all C&D materials that could be recycled or reused are being separated, resulting in the landfilling (at Cedar Hills Landfill and elsewhere) of materials that have value. One primary reason that so many materials with value are not recovered is due to the complexities of separating and cleaning the materials once they are commingled and contaminated. The best way to address this issue is through source separation. In accordance with State and County codes, King County has an important role in enforcing jobsite source separation of recyclable C&D materials from nonrecyclable C&D materials in unincorporated King County. Additional incentives and enforcement are needed to ensure cleaner material streams and better access to recycling and reuse of materials, where possible. King County is committed to also working with other jurisdictions to support the implementation of similar C&D source separation programs and enforcement protocols and requirements.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting

SUPPORTING AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County jurisdiction permitting departments; K4C

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Solid Waste Code – Construction, Demolition and Land-Clearing Waste (K.C.C. 10.30.030): Construction & Demolition Waste; Collection of Solid Waste and Recyclable Materials (WAC 173-345-040); King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan: Action # 26-s, 27-s, 28-s; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



King County's Solid Waste Division is building a workforce trained in deconstruction, an effective alternative to demolition that dramatically reduces the amount of worksite material that ends up in the regional landfill.

GHG 38.
EXPAND PATHWAYS TO GREEN, SUSTAINABLE, AND RESILIENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Permitting delays in unincorporated King County create barriers for affordable housing, homeownership, and behavioral health projects, causing construction and financing setbacks. In collaboration with partners, the County will phase-in solutions to streamline permitting for developments meeting green building performance standards. Efforts may include faster and more predictable plan reviews, fee reductions, piloted managed account services, and application support. The County will also work with other jurisdictions to implement similar improvements. To further support the industry, King County will explore a mentorship model for smaller affordable housing organizations. Additional staffing resources are needed to implement these efforts.

King County will expand green building adoption in affordable housing and homeownership through permitting incentives and new funding sources. Green features improve residents' health, comfort, and energy savings. Funding green building in affordable housing remains a challenge due to the complexity of financing. King County will seek reliable annual funding to support green building elements exceeding Washington State Building Code requirements in new and altered affordable housing, homeownership projects, and Emergency and Permanent Supportive Housing under the Health Through Housing (HTH) Initiative. The goal is to secure new funding without reducing the number of affordable units. If successful, the County will integrate these funds into the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) Housing Finance Program, ensuring no extra administrative burden for developers.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting; DCHS–HCD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Affordable housing developers; Commerce; Housing Development Consortium (HDC); WA State Housing Finance Commission; WLIHA; Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) funding; City of Seattle

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Housing Finance Program; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 39.
ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT IN KING COUNTY METRO TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Sustainable, green building practices help reduce pollution, protect public and environmental health, and reduce long-term utility costs for building occupants. King County advances sustainable development practices in projects on County-owned and real property and supports the inclusion of green building best practices through the implementation of the King County Metro's Equitable Transit-Oriented Communities (ETOC) Policy. The County will require transit-oriented development market-rate projects to achieve advanced green building certification. King County will work with affordable housing developers to determine how best to advance green building practices above and beyond the Evergreen Development Standard where possible or as funding allows. The County will pilot new technologies and/or processes to advance environmental sustainability and resilience when possible, and work with regulators to allow the use of these advanced methods where appropriate. It will also encourage the use of the Metro ETOC Policy, or better, in transit-oriented development not owned by King County to reinforce the expansion of equitable efforts, affordability, and green building throughout the region.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Capital

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–HCD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Sound Transit; private developers; local jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; Metro Transit's Equitable Transit-Oriented Communities (ETOC) Policy; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 40. SUPPORT DISTRICT ENERGY AND THERMAL ENERGY NETWORK PROJECTS

Thermal energy networks (TENs) can reduce GHG emissions in buildings by distributing low-carbon heating and cooling to multiple buildings or facilities. While district energy and thermal energy networks have been used in campus settings for years, recent and proposed state policy changes are creating opportunities for utilities to scale their use in partnership with building owners. King County will support TENs pilot projects that have demonstrated sustainability and GHG emission reduction benefits through education and programmatic support and will advocate for additional state policy changes to enable scaling of TENs. The County will evaluate thermal energy network options for the Harborview Medical Center and Maleng Regional Justice Center renovation and remodeling efforts and will explore opportunities for district energy or TENs projects to help other County facilities meet emissions goals. King County will also continue to support private sector sewer heat recovery projects to heat and cool buildings by using the thermal energy in wastewater flowing through King County's wastewater system.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; DNRP–WTD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD; DNRP–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Utilities; potential future and current energy district managers

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington State Energy Strategy – Commerce; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 41.
CONDUCT A BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS SITING ANALYSIS

Battery energy storage systems (BESS) are key to integrating renewable energy sources into the grid and managing peak power demand. King County will work with utility partners and King County cities, including those that currently have prohibitions on BESS construction, and engage communities to seek to identify areas most suitable for BESS facility siting. The analysis will identify areas with high potential for BESS, focusing on proximity to electrical substations, equity impacts, resource lands considerations, best practices for fire and safety risk assessment and mitigation, and minimizing land-use conflicts. The siting analysis will help the County and local jurisdictions meet or exceed a target to have 100 MW of energy storage per utility serving King County by 2030 and 200 MW per utility by 2045 by designating priority areas for BESS facilities, reducing conflicts, and streamlining permitting. The designations can also provide upfront information to expedite project reviews and may inform future County code updates. As part of the siting analysis, King County will update the countywide BESS target informed by the siting analysis and upcoming utility resource planning.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD; DLS–Permitting; PSB–RP

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Utilities; local jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Ordinance 19824 (Battery Electric Storage Systems in Unincorporated King County); King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

At home, at work, on the move, and in the community, materials and their consumption are at the heart of people's daily lives. The planet's raw materials are the basis for all the products used to improve quality of life, the food that nourishes communities, and the services that businesses provide within the economy. These materials, the goods and foods that are produced, are often extracted, manufactured, or provided from outside of King County, but they're ultimately used and enter the waste stream here. This means consumption decisions made locally reach far beyond the County's borders.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

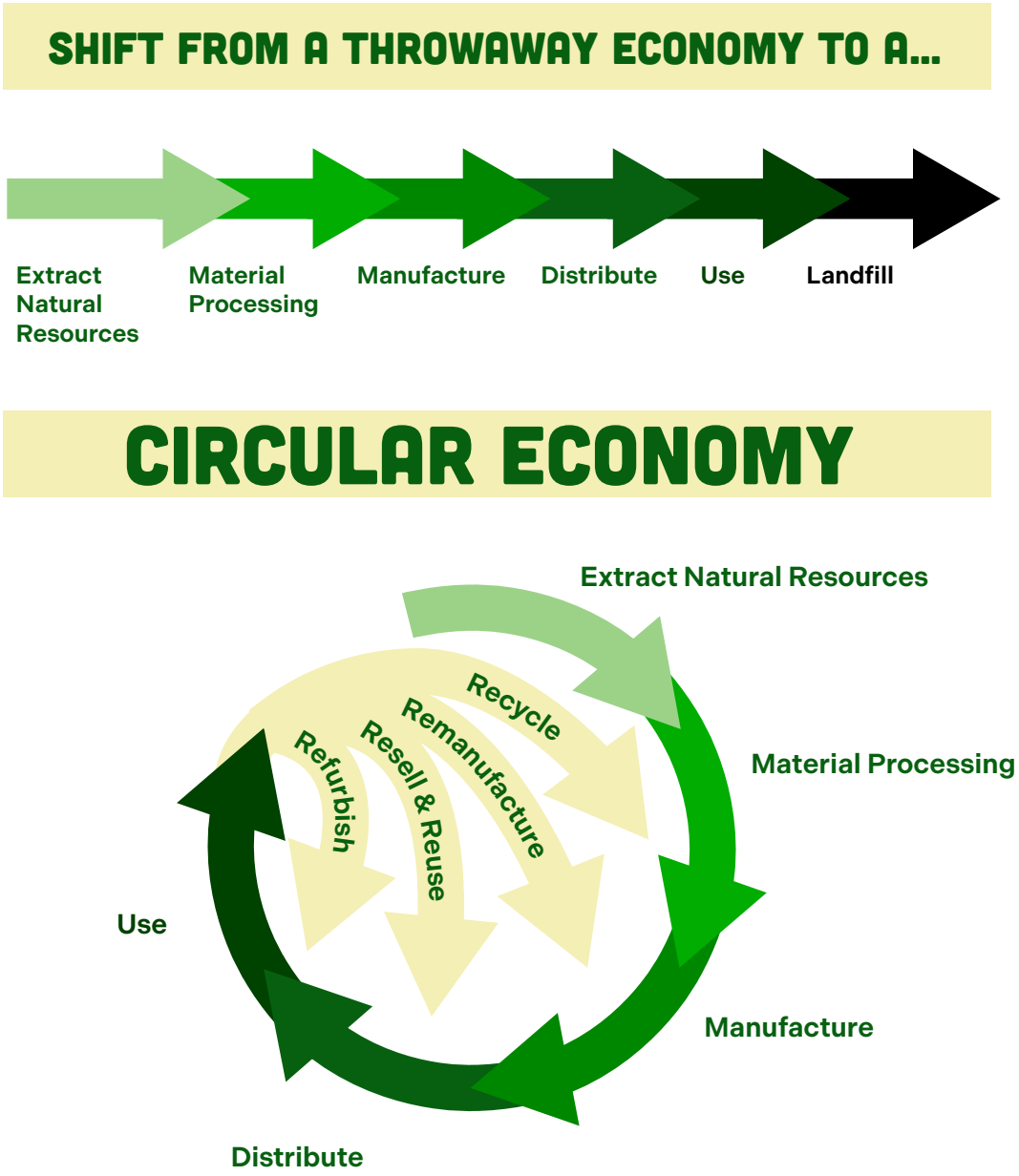
A systemic shift is needed to transition from a linear "throwaway economy" to a circular economy that prevents waste, makes better use of valuable materials, and centers the communities most affected. Products used on a daily basis consume finite resources and energy to produce and discarding them results in a significant loss of valuable materials and incurs high human, environmental, and climate costs. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the production, transportation, use, and disposal of the goods, foods, and services that are consumed in King County are more than double the emissions that occur solely within King County's geographic boundaries. Up to 70 percent of what goes into the region's landfill is recyclable. Materials like paper, plastic, metal, and food waste have value that can be accessed through reusing, recycling, or composting. Materials that could be recycled but end up in the landfill also represent missed opportunities for local job creation and preserving the health of King County's communities, forests, and waterways.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County's goal for a circular economy is to achieve zero waste of resources by reducing consumption and waste generated, and increasing reuse, recycling, and composting. The County is committed to achieving a circular economy where waste is minimized, and materials remain in use longer. This approach reduces GHG emissions and regenerates natural systems. It encompasses not only the principles of reducing, reusing, and recycling but also improvements during the design and production phases, guiding purchasing decisions, reducing consumption, and transforming how products are treated at the end of their lifecycle.

Figure 10. Shift to a Circular Economy

A circular economy keeps materials and products in circulation for as long as possible.



Source: U.S. EPA (2025)

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Launched King County's Re+ Strategic Plan—an ambitious effort to reach zero waste and create a circular economy. Since then, several Re+ actions have been implemented including to establish the Re+ Community Panel; fund Re+ City Grants and Circular Economy Grants; collaborate to help pass impactful statewide organics legislation; and sign King County cities on to support the Re+ campaign.
- Furthered development of new recycling infrastructure and options such as the South County Recycling and Transfer Station (planned to open in 2026) and to increase recycling of key materials such as Construction and Demolition (C&D) materials at transfer stations through customer outreach, regulatory improvements, and staff support.
- Increased focus and progress to reduce food waste, through efforts such as the "Food: Too Good to Waste" program; work on statewide organics policies; and internal actions and policy to increase compost use by King County agencies.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

Implement and expand policies and plans to minimize landfill waste:

- **GHG 42.** Pursue and expand Extended Producer Responsibility legislation
- **GHG 43.** Prevent waste through policies and programs that reduce or avoid waste before it is generated
- **GHG 44.** Require King County Single-Family customers to actively manage food waste
- **GHG 45.** Update and align Waste Management Plans to incorporate Re+ approach

Strengthen partnerships and provide resources to communities to reduce consumption, minimize landfill waste, and promote reuse:

- **GHG 46.** Empower partners and communities to reduce waste with grants and capacity building resources
- **GHG 47.** Collaborate with cities, partners, residents, and manufacturers to reduce waste
- **GHG 48.** Implement organics diversion policies with businesses
- **GHG 49.** Provide resources and education for residents and partners to reduce consumption-related GHG emissions

Enhance recycling, composting, and reuse within King County's Solid Waste system:

- **GHG 50.** Support waste management accountability at King County transfer stations
- **GHG 51.** Develop new infrastructure to increase reuse and recycling at existing solid waste and county-owned facilities.
- **GHG 52.** Increase reuse and recycling of building materials



GHG 42. PURSUE AND EXPAND EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY LEGISLATION

The growing climate impact and financial cost of increasing waste from materials from products and packaging requires a new approach that shifts the burden of recycling and disposal from residents and local governments to producers. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach that shifts the responsibility for end-of-use management of products and packaging from local governments to producers. EPR requires companies to fund and manage the recovery, reuse, and recycling of their own products and packaging. These programs provide residents and businesses convenient alternatives to disposal at no costs and are effective at recovering materials from the waste stream. King County will pursue new statewide EPR policies for high-impact product categories such as: packaging and paper products, mattresses, sharps, tires, textiles, etc. The County will also work with new and established EPR programs to ensure successful implementation that benefits King County businesses, communities, and residents.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
NWPSC; Ecology; Local jurisdictions; AWC; WSAC; Waste Management Service Providers; environmental nonprofits; CBOs; K4C

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; economic opportunity and workforce development; engagement; reduces disproportionate impact; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Re+ Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; E-Cycle Washington; Washington Battery Stewardship Law (Chapter 70A.555 RCW); Safe Medication Return – Washington State Department of Health; Paint Stewardship: PaintCare – Washington Department of Ecology; LightRecycle Washington; Washington Solar Panel Stewardship Law (RCW 70A.510.010); King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | Convene | Implement

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



GHG 43.
PREVENT WASTE THROUGH POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT REDUCE OR AVOID WASTE BEFORE IT IS GENERATED

The most effective way to reduce GHG emissions and waste-related costs is to prevent waste before it is created. King County will implement policies and programs that emphasize waste prevention, promote sustainable consumption practices, and reduce reliance on single-use items to combat escalating issues of waste generation. Efforts to reduce waste need to go beyond recycling and compost. Waste prevention focuses on upstream activities, including encouraging County residents to consume less by having durable products that are easier to repair, encouraging sustainable consumption behaviors, reducing the use of single-use items, sharing, donating, reusing, repairing, reselling, and repurposing. Waste prevention reduces the number of natural resources and energy needed to produce products. King County will continue and expand a broad range of waste prevention programs such as campaigns, grants, pilots, technical assistance, and services and will develop new waste prevention policies and program.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP-SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WDOE; local jurisdictions; SPU; NWPSC; Waste Management Service Providers; environmental nonprofits; CBOs

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Re+ Strategic Plan; Re+ Circular Economy Grants – King County; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; NextCycle Washington; Waste Reduction and Recycling Education Grants – WWDOE; The Local Solid Waste Financial Assistance Program – WDOE; Reuse Commons; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



GHG 44. REQUIRE KING COUNTY SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTS TO ACTIVELY MANAGE FOOD WASTE

Nearly 20 percent of single-family households in King County do not have organics (food and yard waste) recycling services—rising to almost 50 percent in unincorporated King County. This represents a significant opportunity to increase waste diversion and recycling and reduce GHG emissions. The County will work to ensure all single-family King County residents subscribe to organics services or actively manage food waste on-site by 2030 and investigate a pathway for multifamily organics service adoption. About 81 percent of King County single-family households using waste collection services also choose the additional curbside organics collection service offered. However, reaching the additional households who do not subscribe to curbside organics service or otherwise separately manage organics materials represents a significant opportunity. Some residents will be required to divert organics by 2030 under the statewide Organics Management law, but 21 jurisdictions (with populations below 25,000 residents or that dispose of less than 5,000 tons of solid waste annually) within King County are exempt. To increase access to organics services, the County will develop and adopt code recommendations and work with city partners to adopt code changes requiring diversion of food waste for single-family households and to create a strategy for ensuring multi-family households have more opportunities to divert organic material.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DLS–Permitting

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Re+ Community Panel; Ecology; Algona; Beaux Arts; Black Diamond; Carnation; Clyde Hill; Covington; Duvall; Enumclaw; Kenmore; Lake Forest Park; Newcastle; Normandy Park; North Bend; Pacific; Snoqualmie; Tukwila; Vashon Island; Zero Waste Washington

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Statewide Organics Management Law; Re+ Strategic Plan – King County; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 45.
UPDATE AND ALIGN WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANS TO INCORPORATE RE+ APPROACH

Re+ is King County's approach to keeping valuable materials out of the landfill and reducing climate impacts. Related plans and policies need to be updated to incorporate Re+ so that the entire solid waste system is moving comprehensively towards a circular economy. The County aims to prevent, reduce, recycle, and locally reuse organic waste. King County's Re+ approach ensures that materials with economic value stay in use and out of landfills and creates an equitable system centered on community needs. This plan transforms King County's solid waste system from disposal-based to reduction, recovery, recycling, and regeneration. Since 2019, efforts have enhanced the regional compost market, supported by the Washington Organics Management Laws. King County will align and update waste-related plans and codes, including but not limited to the Comprehensive Waste Management Plan, the Re+ Strategic Plan, and the Regional Organics Market Development Plan. Through collaborative engagement, the Re+ Strategic Plan will be assessed, updated, expanded, and refocused. Additionally, the 2019 Comprehensive Waste Management Plan will be updated and expanded to include code updates, disposal restrictions, and accepted recyclables. This plan, required by RCW 70.95, guides actions by King County, its cities (excluding Seattle and Milton), and private recycling companies over the next six to twenty years. Further focus is needed on reducing input material contamination through education, outreach, and policy to ensure high-quality compost.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD, Parks, WTD; OEOCE

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local businesses; CBOs; local jurisdictions, WDOE; KCD; K4C; WSU; WORC

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington Organics Management Law (HB 2301); Compost Procurement Ordinance; Re+ Strategic Plan – King County; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Plan – King County; King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 46.
EMPOWER PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES TO REDUCE WASTE WITH GRANTS AND CAPACITY BUILDING RESOURCES

King County has provided waste reduction and prevention grants since the 1990s that have led to the distribution of over $30 million to its cities. King County will increase rates and C&D collection fees in 2025 to boost funding for waste prevention grants, including grants focused on food waste prevention and consumption reduction strategies. These grants will be available to King County partners and communities to increase funding for programs and projects such as repair events, tool libraries, textile upcycling, food recovery and assistance, and technologies that support our broader waste reduction goals. King County will also use these additional resources to expand workforce training opportunities for C&D management along with technical assistance and engagement and outreach programs to help communities comply with waste management laws and policies, including the organic management law., As part of these engagement and outreach programs, the County will continue to communicate about the Re+ program, the Consumption Emissions Toolkit, and grant funding opportunities for waste prevention and reuse efforts. These grant funding opportunities include continued support of the NextCycle WA grant programs.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
NextCycle Washington; Local jurisdictions; CBOs; Re+ Community Panel; C&D business owners and partners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Re+ Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; NextCycle Washington Circular Funding Resource Guide; Re+ Circular Economy Grants – King County; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 47.
COLLABORATE WITH CITIES, PARTNERS, RESIDENTS, AND MANUFACTURERS TO REDUCE WASTE

King County recognizes that the most effective strategies for reducing consumption. minimizing waste, and increasing reuse are often influenced or controlled by others. King County will collaborate with cities and other partners through the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management and the Solid Waste Management advisory councils on policies, projects, and programs dedicated to consumption reduction, waste prevention and reuse, extended producer responsibility, recycling, composting, and beneficial use initiatives. This work will leverage and empower external organizations and committees such as the Re+ Community Panel, CBOs, Zero Waste Washington, Ecology, and others to implement initiatives aimed at reducing consumption and waste. King County will also collaborate more broadly to reduce waste, for example, through the U.S. Plastics Pact (USPP).

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Re+ Community Panel; local jurisdictions; K4C; USPP; MSWAC; SWAC; Recycling Coordinators Meeting; Zero Waste Washington; Ecology

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnerships; engagement

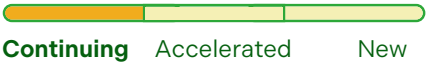
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Re+ Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee; Charter – King County; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



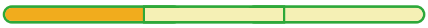
IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



GHG 48. IMPLEMENT ORGANICS DIVERSION POLICIES WITH BUSINESSES

Increasing organics diversion at commercial businesses presents unique challenges, as the volume, type, quantity, and handling requirements differ from residential settings. King County will grow partnerships and programs, lead outreach, and establish a technical assistance program to support businesses and overall waste diversion practices. The County aims to develop and implement policies and enforcement support, including the statewide Organics Management Law, and grow partnerships to reduce the volume of business-generated organic waste currently going to landfill. To ensure equitable implementation, it will focus on accessibility by ensuring businesses have access to necessary resources and information, with specific programming and technical support for BIPOC/minority owned businesses. Capacity building will be addressed by providing training and resources to businesses, particularly those in underserved communities, to help them implement sustainable waste management practices. Engagement with diverse partners, including businesses from various sectors and communities, will be prioritized to ensure inclusive policy development and implementation. Relationship building between King County, businesses, and community organizations will be fostered to create a collaborative environment supporting long-term sustainability goals.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–DO; OEOCE; DLS–Permitting; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; CBOs; K4C; local jurisdictions; Waste Management Service Providers; Envirostars

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnerships; capacity building; engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Re+ Strategic Plan – King County; Washington Organics Management Law; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



GHG 49. PROVIDE RESOURCES AND EDUCATION FOR RESIDENTS AND PARTNERS TO REDUCE CONSUMPTION-RELATED GHG EMISSIONS

GHG emissions from the production, transportation, use, and disposal of the goods, foods, and services that are consumed in King County are a large and overlooked part of King County's footprint. Residents are interested in how they and their communities can reduce their own GHG emissions footprint. King County will implement the King County Consumption Emissions Toolkit (CET) as a dynamic, evolving resource that highlights the experiences of frontline community members. The toolkit will provide resources, tips, and information to help reduce emissions associated with consumption. As part of this, King County will amplify and adapt the CET based on community feedback and needs, including translation and accessibility services, ensuring a responsive and collaborative approach that all community members can benefit from. King County will also organize and collaborate with jurisdictions to implement community workshops and outreach, and engagement opportunities focused on reducing consumption and sustainable consumption practices.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Re+ Community Panel; CHOMP! (annual local food and sustainable living event); Envirostars; Zero Waste Washington; K4C; CECTF

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnerships; engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Re+ Strategic Plan; Comprehensive SW Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Regional Organics Market Development Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other



GHG 50. SUPPORT WASTE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AT KING COUNTY TRANSFER STATIONS

A significant amount of recyclable and reusable material is currently being dumped as waste at King County transfer stations. To address this and increase material reuse and recycling, the County will enhance enforcement and compliance at its facilities by leveraging technology to identify Waste Acceptance Rule (WAR) violations and increasing enforcement staff at modern transfer stations. The initiative includes expanding the number of waste inspectors, ensuring that Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are available for operational questions and violation identification. King County will assign additional staff to support city contracts with Waste Management Service Providers, shifting enforcement responsibilities to these providers while King County transitions to an auditor role. This approach will increase hauler accountability and incentivize self-regulation, with King County auditing and regulating haulers to ensure enforcement is equitable. Learning from experience from the City of Seattle's model, the program will start with often less resourced, smaller cities and expand to larger jurisdictions. Implementation will include targeted education and outreach for neighborhoods struggling with compliance and will focus on specific items, such as organics, for enforcement action.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C; local jurisdictions; Waste Management Service Providers

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
City of Seattle's Waste Enforcement and Outreach Program; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; Re+ Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



GHG 51. DEVELOP NEW INFRASTRUCTURE TO INCREASE REUSE AND RECYCLING AT EXISTING SOLID WASTE AND COUNTY-OWNED FACILITIES

Customers within King County's service area can drop off waste and recycling at one or more of the eight transfer stations and two drop boxes operated by the County. There is opportunity to significantly increase material reuse and recycling at these facilities and reduce associated GHG emissions and operational costs.

King County will increase recycling at transfer stations by expanding Public Deck Spotter staff and by providing information, enforcement, and education about material diversion and sorting. It will continue to expand resource recovery by extracting valuable materials that enter facilities by expanding its fleet of equipment for resource recovery, including excavators, magnets, scrap handler buckets, and belts. The County will also increase the recovery of reusable materials at other King County facilities by creating and/or expanding space at its office buildings, warehouses, transfer stations, and closed landfills dedicated to material recovery and reuse and by increasing resources dedicated to recovery and reuse. Examples of additional infrastructure investments include the construction of an organics collection structure as part of the existing Vashon Transfer Station. At Vashon and Shoreline, King County will install cardboard balers, helping to reduce the required transportation by approximately 75 percent and decreasing the associated GHG emissions. The County will complete the South County Recycling Transfer Station, which is set to open in 2026, and build the Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station, projected to be completed in 2029.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD, Fleet

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; waste management service providers; MSWAC; SWAC; WSRA; WRRA

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity;reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; Re+ Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 52.
INCREASE REUSE AND RECYCLING OF BUILDING MATERIALS

When buildings are demolished, large amounts of materials, such as wood, are sent to landfills. Increasing the reuse and recycling of these materials would have significant climate and economic benefits. King County will continue to develop and implement construction, deconstruction, and building removal programs and policies for the reduction, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling of building materials. By 2030, SWD will explore implementing the development of a public-private circular economy business park for salvaged lumber, implementation of deconstruction requirements for County-owned structures, and establishment of a community-based deconstruction/rebuild program. King County's $50 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) award from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funds a Circular Economy Salvaged Lumber Program Manager to support these efforts.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local deconstruction, salvage, and reuse businesses; wood processors and manufacturers; UW; Salvaged Lumber Consortium; SPU

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Solid Waste Code – Construction, Demolition and Land-Clearing Waste (K.C.C. 10.30.030): Construction & Demolition Waste. Collection of Solid Waste and Recyclable Materials (WAC 173-345-040); King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

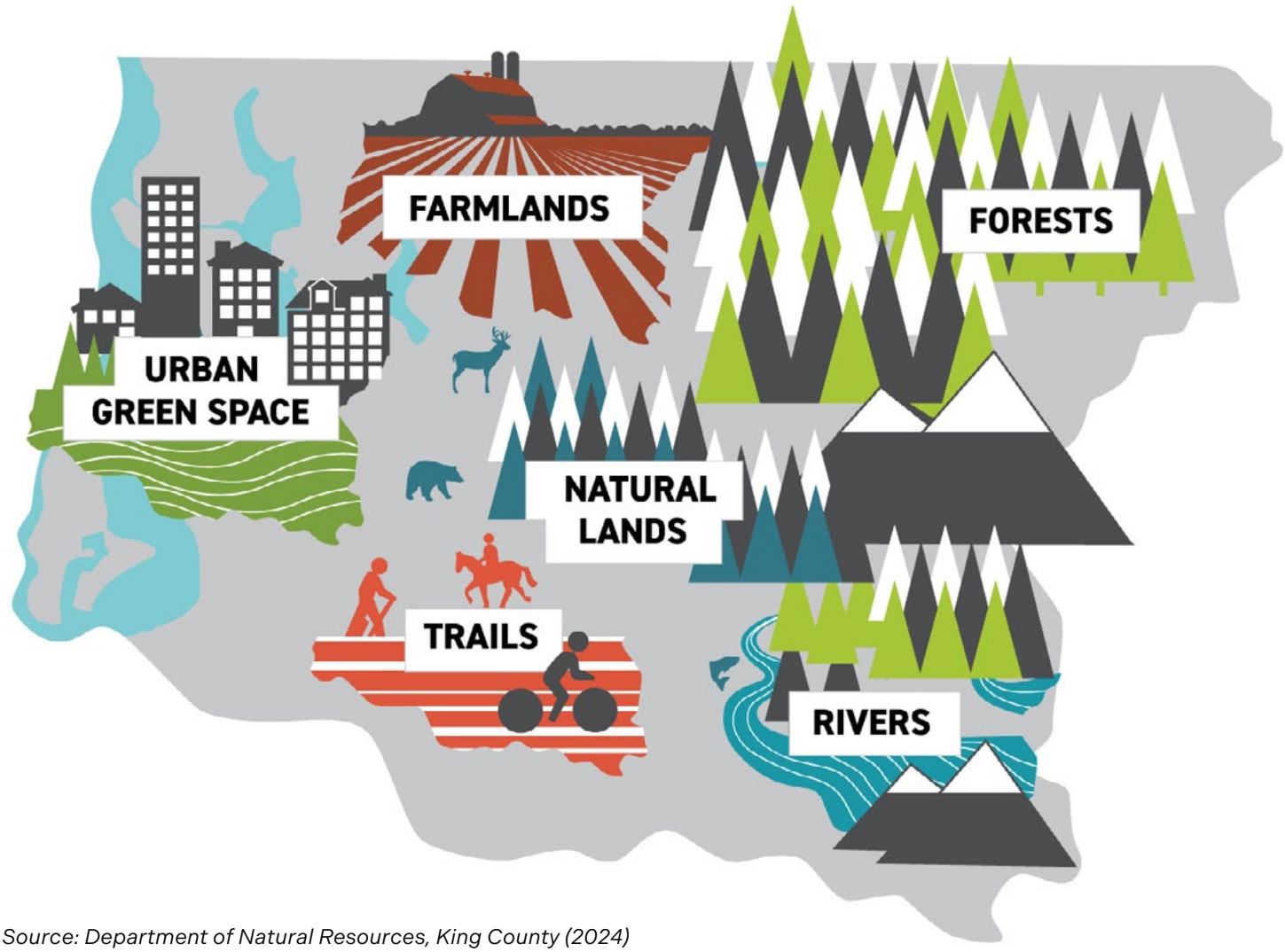
FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | **Grant** | Other

FOREST AND AGRICULTURE

Forests and farmland provide benefits to communities throughout King County. Along with storing carbon, which is important for the climate, forests also improve water and air quality and provide habitat for salmon and other wildlife. Forests also reduce the amount of stormwater runoff that reaches rivers and streams and provide places for recreation and cool shade for streams and sidewalks. King County is also a productive agricultural region with dairies, livestock operations, row crops, flowers, and berry fields. Trees and plants in forests and farmland pull carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas (GHG), from the atmosphere and store carbon in trees and soils, as shown in Figure 11. King County is prioritizing preserving natural areas and green spaces.

Figure 11. King County Land Conservation Initiative

The Land Conservation Initiative is a regional collaboration between King County, cities, businesses, farmers, environmental partners, and others that has created a strategy to preserve our last, most important natural lands and urban green spaces. 65,000 acres have been mapped and prioritized within the six land categories below.



Source: Department of Natural Resources, King County (2024)

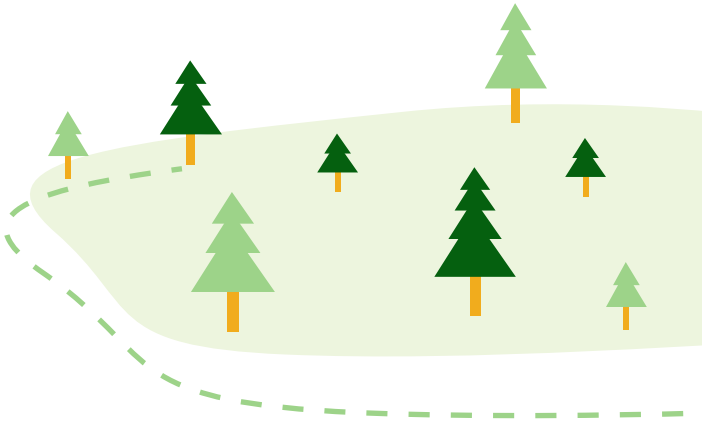
WHAT'S AT STAKE

A net carbon sink absorbs more carbon dioxide than it emits, helping reduce GHGs in the atmosphere. In King County, forests and farmlands serve as net carbon sinks, capturing carbon and playing a vital role in climate mitigation. It is estimated that on balance forests sequester approximately 23 percent of geographic-based emissions in the County. Estimates suggest that despite the Puget Sound region supporting naturally carbon rich forests, due to past management those in King County are well below their ecological potential. When land is converted to agricultural use and practices such as tillage, overgrazing, and removal of crop, soil carbon content is reduced.

Without proper preservation and management of forests and farmlands, King County would miss out on these important climate and environmental benefits.

A BETTER OUTCOME

Protecting and restoring high-value forests and farmland by improving forest management and adoption of regenerative, climate-smart agricultural practices can improve forest and soil health, sequester additional carbon, and create more resilient, ecologically sustainable landscapes.





Community forest restoration event at Big Finn Hill Park in Kirkland, WA

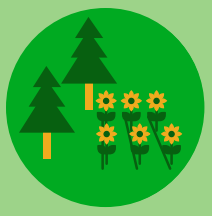


WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Protected 4,480 acres of forests, natural areas, and urban greenspace from 2016–2024.
- Awarded Healthy Communities & Parks grants to 114 projects from 2022 to 2024.
- Accelerated restoration of county-owned forest and natural areas, on track to restore 2,000 acres by 2030.
- Begun implementing the 30-year Forest Plan, including pilot projects and expanded capacity to focus on urban forests.
- Made progress finalizing and drafting Forest Stewardship Plans.
- Supported adoption of regenerative agricultural practices on county-owned and privately owned farmland.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

- **GHG 53.** Protect remaining high conservation value lands
- **GHG 54.** Enhance climate resilience and carbon benefits of old growth/mature forests
- **GHG 55.** Expand the Forest Carbon Program for forestland preservation, increasing carbon sequestration potential, and financial and ecological benefits
- **GHG 56.** Support adoption of regenerative, climate-smart agricultural practices
- **GHG 57.** Improve quality and increase use of commercially produced compost



GHG 53. PROTECT REMAINING HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE LANDS

By accelerating open space investments, King County can secure the livability, health, and ecological integrity of the region—for everyone. This action is a commitment for King County to continue the accelerated rate of protection of priority farms, forests, parks, and natural lands through implementation of the King County Land Conservation Initiative (LCI). The goal of LCI is to protect the last, best natural areas and working lands within a generation while closing gaps in equitable access to open space. LCI supports King County's commitment to eliminate net loss of forest cover within any major watershed in the County, using a suite of tools including tax breaks, easements, and acquisitions to achieve conservation goals while incentivizing community-led projects that advance equity.

Using tax incentives to protect land from development, as an alternative to acquisition, is an important strategy identified as part of implementing the King County LCI. King County is committed to strategically implement and expand Current Use Taxation (CUT) and Public Benefit Rating System (PBRS) to support land protection. These programs provide a property tax reduction incentive to private landowners who voluntarily preserve working farms and forests, natural areas, and other types of open space in King County. King County will focus additional resources on CUT and PBRS to provide short-term protection of LCI-identified lands targeted for fee or easement acquisition and provide long-term protection for lands with lower risk of conversion.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD, Parks

PARTNER AGENCIES:
KC Assessor's Office

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local jurisdictions; nonprofits; WA Department of Revenue

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership engagement; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Land Conservation Initiative; 30-Year Forest Plan Clean Water Healthy Habitat Plan – King County; King County Local Food Initiative; King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 54.
ENHANCE CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND CARBON BENEFITS OF OLD GROWTH/ MATURE FORESTS

The importance of "old growth" forests have long been recognized. There is growing scientific and public interest in climate benefits of "mature" forests, those forests in the growth stage just before reaching old growth status. King County will assess the strategic importance of "old growth" and "mature" forest stands on lands owned by King County and forestland managed by the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for the benefit of King County and other trust beneficiaries. Additionally, the County will develop forest stewardship plans or revise existing forest stewardship plans to enhance potential for long-term carbon sequestration and contribute to overall ecosystem health.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD, Parks

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WA DNR; Washington State Parks; public landowners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnerships; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Plan – King County; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 55.
EXPAND THE FOREST CARBON PROGRAM

Building on the success of the King County Forest Carbon Program, there is opportunity to expand by enrolling more land and exploring new types of forest carbon projects. The King County Forest Carbon Program preserves forest land, increases carbon sequestration potential, and provides financial and ecological benefits This action generates carbon credits by protecting and managing forests that were available for development or intensive management and using the revenue to support County land acquisitions. King County will explore opportunities to significantly scale up the Rural Forest Carbon Project, through actions such as acquiring a large block of working forestland and extending rotation length or partnering with DNR to defer harvest on its lands where King County is a trust beneficiary. King County will ensure that revenue from carbon credit generation and timber sales is dedicated to land acquisition and management.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WA DNR

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Plan – King County; 30-Year Forest Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 56. SUPPORT ADOPTION OF REGENERATIVE, CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

Regenerative and climate-smart agriculture works with natural systems to improve agricultural viability and resilience, minimize environmental impacts, and support a healthier, more sustainable food system for communities. King County will support development and implementation of farm plans that fully integrate regenerative, climate-smart agricultural practices. Additional activities include increased education, technical training, exploration of technologies such as biochar as a soil amendment to enhance carbon storage in soils, and financial incentives to promote adoption of best management practices that focus on soil health, irrigation efficiency, and ecosystem enhancement that have co-benefits of reducing GHG emissions and increasing carbon sequestration potential. Joint public-private ventures will make greater use of recycled water, compost, and other capital-intensive projects to enhance farm viability in a changing climate.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD, SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCD; WSU; WSDA; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Plan – King County; King County Local Food Initiative; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other

GHG 57. IMPROVE QUALITY AND INCREASE USE OF COMMERCIALLY PRODUCED COMPOST

Expanding the use of locally produced compost—from food waste, yard debris, and biosolids—offers significant agronomic and climate benefits. It reduces landfill emissions and reliance on fossil fuel-based fertilizers, enhances agricultural productivity, increases carbon storage in soil, and improves soil health and resilience. However, challenges exist to expanding local compost production and use. King County will work with commercial compost producers to address challenges to generating higher-quality, near plastic-free product, and will proactively support increasing local capacity to process compost, including by exploring opportunities to establish compost facilities that can produce organic compost locally. The County will explore providing financial incentives to commercial compost producers and buyers to ensure high-quality compost is readily available at a reasonable cost, and demand for compost increases. King County will lead the effort to increase availability and use of compost and to push for a higher quality product. By 2035, the County plans to build and operate a facility to produce a high-quality, plastic free, biosolids-based compost and will support this by encouraging farmers to use the product, demonstrating efficient spreading practices, and supporting research on compost in agricultural settings.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD, WTD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
local compost producers; local farmers; KCD; CBOs; material manufacturers; Waste Management Service Providers; local jurisdictions; Ecology; WSDA; King County Agriculture Commission

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnerships; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Plan – King County; King County Local Food Initiative; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; Re+ Strategic Plan – King County; WA Organics Management Law; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

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

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

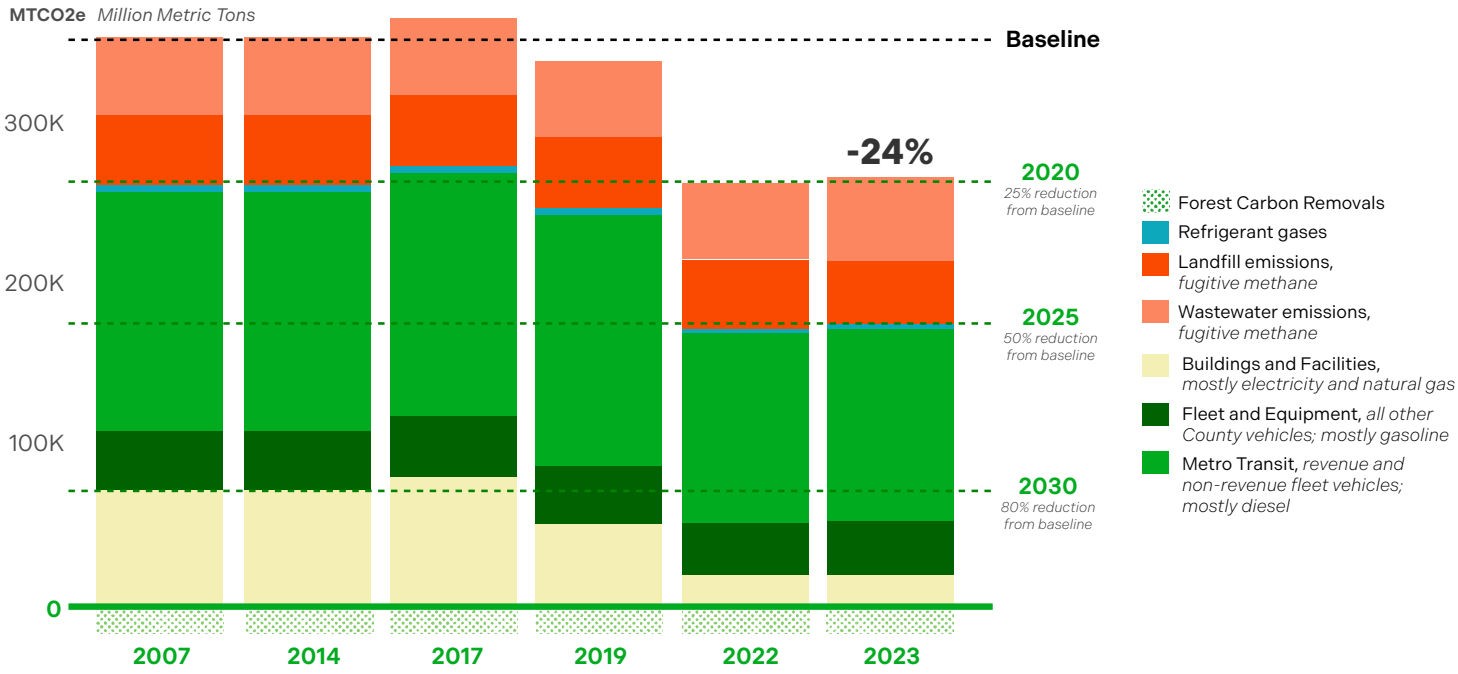
ENTERPRISE LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

To achieve deep reductions in climate pollution, all employees, leaders, policies, and plans must integrate climate action. Each department needs to have dedicated employees that coordinate implementation and leader sponsorship around climate action priorities. Employees do not need to have climate action in their job title because climate action is everyone's job. A parts specialist needs to understand the implication for indoor air quality of purchasing another natural gas water heater that will last 15 years, and a vehicle mechanic needs to understand that a refrigerant gas leak may emit more pollution than driving a car for a year. Leaders need to know and communicate to their teams how their work contributes to addressing climate change and encourage employees to identify their own solutions to reduce emissions.

This is not a new concept in King County. King County has been playing a leadership role in climate action for more than 20 years through its management of a wide range of services and programs for the benefit of over 2.3. million residents. The County has been recognized and successfully implemented many targeted climate action initiatives. Achieving the ambitious and aggressive targets in the 2025 SCAP will require additional resources and better use of the resources available.

Figure 12. King County Government Operations Emissions, by Sector

In 2023, GHG emissions from King County government operations decreased by 24 percent when compared to the 2007 baseline.



Source: Executive Climate Office, King County (2025)

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Everyone has a role in tackling climate change. Too often, purchasing or budget decisions impact GHG emissions or limit progress on climate priorities without County employees or leaders realizing it. With limited resources, not all projects and priorities can be funded. However, the County must improve identifying and evaluating climate impacts early in the decision-making process. Not considering climate impacts early makes it harder for the County to meet its goals. It also leads to inefficiencies, where late-stage issues cause missed opportunities for community benefits and add costs, delays, and changes to project plans.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County is committed to continuously improving equity, efficiency, and effectiveness in its operations. This includes ensuring all employees, leaders, plans, and policies confidently advance the County's climate goals. King County will chart a path to expand funding and resources to advance 2025 SCAP goals.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Reduced total governmental greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 24 percent from 2007 to 2023, as shown in Figure 12.
- Established the Executive Climate Office (ECO), Climate Team, and Executive Climate Cabinet to coordinate climate work across the enterprise.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

- **GHG 58.** Build capacity of King County employees to advance climate action
- **GHG 59.** Integrate climate action into King County planning, policies, and budgets
- **GHG 60.** Lead and champion climate action across the King County enterprise
- **GHG 61.** Develop and implement funding strategy for SCAP implementation
- **GHG 62.** Update the King County Investment Policy to restrict fossil fuel investments



GHG 57. BUILD CAPACITY OF KING COUNTY EMPLOYEES TO ADVANCE CLIMATE ACTION

Addressing climate change is a core priority for King County and is the responsibility of all employees. Achieving these goals requires all County employees to have the skills and capacity to act in their roles and feel empowered to identify opportunities for progress in their work. Nearly all staff contribute to SCAP goals through their work, from purchasing and maintenance, to communications. King County will continue fostering a culture where employees are empowered with the knowledge and capacity to integrate climate action into their roles.

Activities planned to build capacity of King County employees include development of a climate literacy training made available for departments to roll out as applicable to ensure common foundational skills and understanding. Training development and implementation will be coordinated with climate justice training. King County will ensure personnel policies reinforce the priority and importance of climate action in all positions, similar to the approach for Equity and Social Justice. King County will develop standard employment job posting language and annual performance evaluation criteria options for departments to roll out as applicable to their teams. To support empowering staff to be agents of change in their own workgroups and across departments, community of practice, where staff can learn and explore peer to peer how to advance climate in their work and County services, will be created.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; DHR–CCD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
All agencies

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
ICLEI

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; engagement; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Best Run Government

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other



King County Metro Transit employee repairs compressed air leak



GHG 59. INTEGRATE CLIMATE ACTION INTO KING COUNTY PLANNING, POLICIES, AND BUDGETS

County plans, policies, and budgets establish priorities for County staff and resources. Addressing climate change is integral to the work of King County, and this will be demonstrated by formally integrating climate action and advancement of 2025 SCAP goals into planning, policies, and budgets. Specifically, this will include ensuring that:

1. Climate change and climate commitments are integrated into King County Best Run Government guidelines and expectations, per Senior Leadership Team approval, and support cascading the strategy across the enterprise along with other priorities.

2. Department and agency strategic plans will include analyses of opportunity to advance 2025 SCAP goals from their operations, services, and programs, as applicable. County and department level policies will explicitly include climate and sustainability as a principle. All infrastructure and facility master plans will describe the intended climate action outcomes.

3. Budget decisions, rates, and allocation, including the base budget, will reflect the 2025 SCAP commitments. To do so, the office of Performance, Strategy and Budget (PSB), supported by ECO, will update budget instructions, including pre-submittal check-ins and capital dialogs, to integrate agency 2025 SCAP commitments into budget guidance. Agencies will designate a sustainability sponsor or climate lead to champion alignment of agency budgets to climate outcome measures and verify descriptions of alignment of decision packages and capital improvement programs submitted to PSB. Agency budget submittals will reflect the County's climate goals and priorities and make explicit where budget changes impact the ability of the County to achieve climate goals and priorities.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; PSB–Budget

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–GM, F&A, Mobility, Capital; DES–DO, Fleet, FMD; DCHS–DO; DLS–DO; DNRP–DO; PHSKC–DO; KCSO; DAJD; KCIT; PSB–RP

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
CECTF

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Best Run Government; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



GHG 60. LEAD AND CHAMPION CLIMATE ACTION ACROSS THE KING COUNTY ENTERPRISE

In 2023, King County established the Executive Climate Office to advance and accelerate climate action countywide and across the enterprise. King County will advance climate action through accountable leadership, performance tracking, and climate action sponsorship. King County will advance climate leadership through Executive Cabinet and Climate Cabinet, Departments, Divisions, and management.

All agencies with direct 2025 SCAP implementation responsibilities will advance four priorities:

1. Leadership Sponsor: Identify a member of their department/division management leadership team that is the designated sponsor of climate commitments.

2. Climate Department Lead: Have a dedicated climate lead, who has the authority to coordinate implementation across the agency and regular access to briefings with department/division directors.

3. Department 2025 SCAP Performance Tracking: Include 2025 SCAP-related performance goals in their departmental/division performance tracking, as applicable, per Senior Leadership Team approval.

4. ECO representative: All Executive Cabinet and enterprise-wide steering committees with authority to make recommendations to the Executive that intersect with SCAP priorities include a representative from the Executive Climate Office (e.g. Operations Cabinet, and Capital Project Management Working Group (CPMWG)).

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

KEY AGENCY:
DHR–CCD; PSB–Performance; Metro–GM; DES–DO; DCHS–DO; DLS–DO; DNRP–DO; PHSKC–DO; KCSO; DAJD; KCIT

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
USDN; ICLEI; C40

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



GHG 61. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT FUNDING STRATEGY FOR SCAP IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the SCAP will require securing additional funding to scale up climate initiatives and ensure long-term sustainability. King County will collaborate with local jurisdictions, tribal governments, regional agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private sector partners to pursue state and federal grant opportunities that align with SCAP priorities. This effort will include identifying new funding sources, leveraging existing revenue streams, and advocating for policy changes that enhance climate finance mechanisms. King County-led climate grants will prioritize the deployment of climate solutions in frontline communities that experience disproportionate environmental and climate-related burdens. This includes investments in community leadership, climate resilience infrastructure, green workforce development, energy efficiency programs, and nature-based solutions that provide both environmental and economic benefits. ECO will coordinate with the King County Council, state legislators, and other elected officials to develop a comprehensive funding strategy for climate action. This strategy will explore potential revenue mechanisms, such as green bonds, climate resilience funds, and public-private partnerships to ensure the County can meet its climate goals while fostering regional collaboration and accountability.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PSB–Grants; PSB–Budget; Metro–GM; DES–DO; DCHS–DO; DLS–DO; DNRP–DO; PHSKC–DO; KCSO; DAJD; KCIT

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
K4C

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Response to Motion 16463 – Climate Change Funding Report; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



GHG 62. UPDATE THE KING COUNTY INVESTMENT POLICY TO RESTRICT FOSSIL FUEL INVESTMENTS

Several cities and counties in the U.S. have adopted policies to divest and restrict investment in fossil fuel industries. The City of Seattle adopted a fossil fuel divestment policy in 2014. The King County Investment Pool invests cash reserves for all County agencies and approximately 110 special districts and other public entities such as fire, school, sewer, and water districts, and other public authorities. It is one of the largest investment pools in the state of Washington, with an average asset balance of more than $9 billion. On average, King County agencies comprise half of the pool and outside districts the other half. The Investment Policy restricts the allowable investments to certain types of highly rated securities, including certificates of deposit, U.S. treasury obligations, federal agency obligations, municipal obligations, repurchase agreements, and commercial paper. To date, this has prevented the purchase of investment securities from corporations and other ventures whose primary business is the production of fossil fuels. This action would update the Investment Policy to explicitly prohibit future fossil fuel investments.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; PSB–Budget

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County Executive Finance Committee

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Investment Policy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

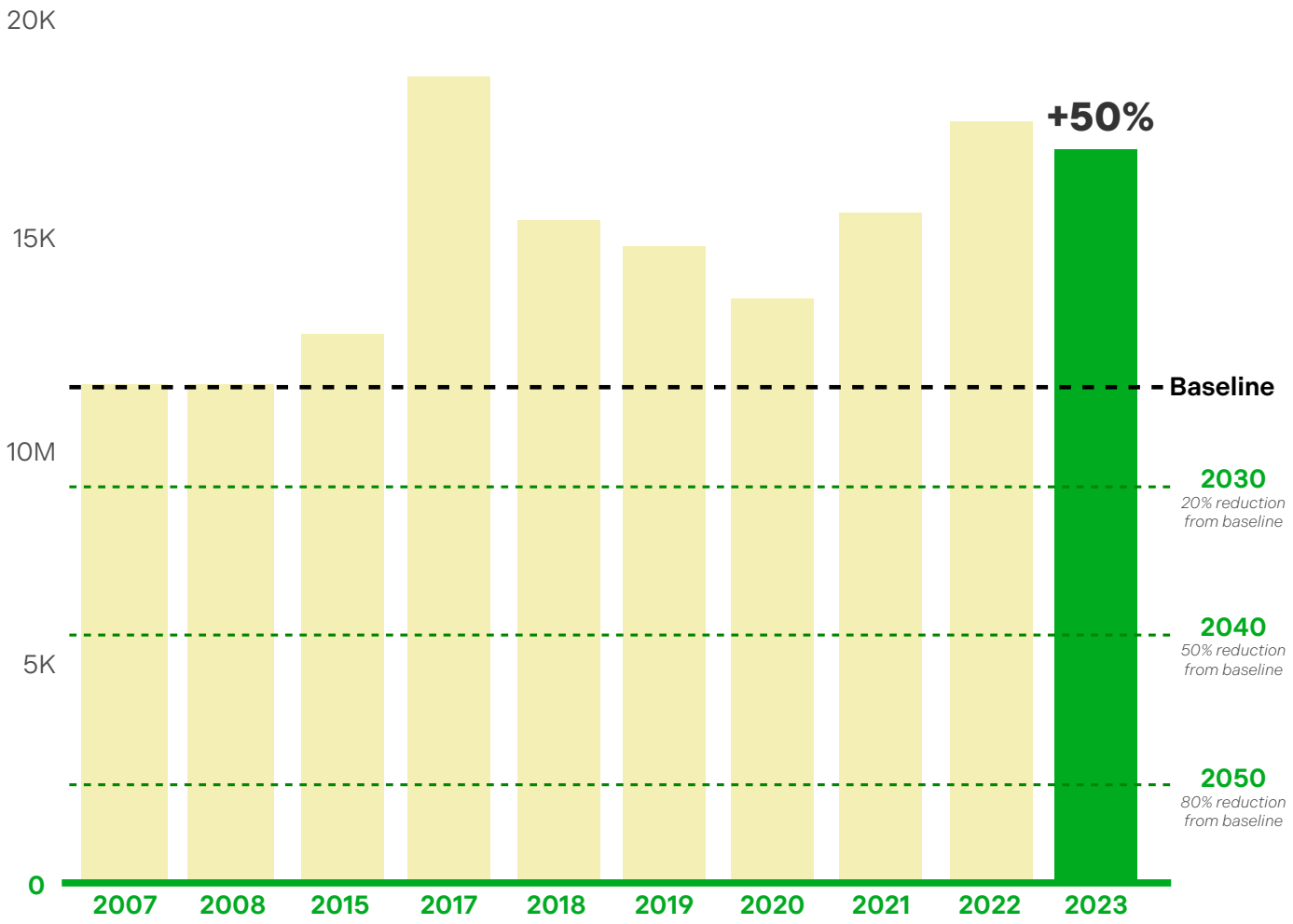
FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

SUSTAINABLE COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE

King County's government capital portfolio is valued at approximately $5 billion, with over 450 active projects, an amount expected to grow over the next five years. Meanwhile, building and facility energy use is one of the region's largest sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. By prioritizing green building and sustainable development practices in its operations, maintenance and construction, King County can significantly reduce its environmental impact while ensuring a clean, healthy, and resilient public infrastructure network for everyone. Through its capital investments and facility upgrades, King County can lead by example in advancing development practices, inspiring others to do the same, and benefitting communities regionally and beyond. As shown in Figure 13, however, more work is needed to reduce fossil fuel use in County buildings.

Figure 13. Fossil Fuel Use in Existing King County Government Buildings

In 2023, GHG emissions from existing King County government buildings increased by 50 percent when compared to the 2014 baseline.



Source: Executive Climate Office, King County (2025)

WHAT'S AT STAKE

The breadth of King County's operations results in the County being a significant consumer of energy and other utility resources. Services such as treating wastewater, operating a complex transit system, transporting and disposing of solid waste, and providing buildings and facilities to support a wide variety of public services requires utility resources to heat, cool, illuminate, power, and clean hundreds of facilities. While essential for supporting staff and operations to provide County services, the consumption of all resources has an environmental impact, and the County spends over $30 million per year to purchase energy resources from local utilities.

A BETTER OUTCOME

Efforts to change and reduce the energy and other resources used by King County government's buildings and facilities will have multiple benefits. The County seeks to lead by example for how the community can reduce energy use, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, become a supplier of its own energy, and catalyze economic growth and jobs in the clean energy sector.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Updated the Green Building Ordinance (GBO) in 2022 with new and improved requirements and clarifications to align with the 2020 SCAP and 2016Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Strategic Plan.
- Launched the first interactive e-Learning course on the GBO, the 2020 SCAP, and the King County Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard (KCSIS) with a focus on implementing ESJ actions in all King County-owned capital projects.
- Continued investments to convert fossil fueled heating systems to GHG-neutral electric heat pump technology are reducing or eliminating the consumption of GHG-producing equipment in facilities across County agencies.
- Expanded solar power installations to take advantage of state grants and federal Inflation Reduction Act incentive dollars to result in King County offsetting utility purchases of electricity while reducing operating costs.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

Integrate green building requirements into King County capital projects and facility operations:

- **GHG 63.** Formalize processes to integrate the GBO into capital program management
- **GHG 64.** Expand third-party certification to large County infrastructure projects
- **GHG 65.** Achieve net zero GHG emissions footprint for all King County owned new building and substantial renovation projects
- **GHG 66.** Reduce waste and develop reuse markets for construction and demolition (C&D) materials from King County capital projects
- **GHG 67.** Improve Equity and Social Justice outcomes for King County capital projects
- **GHG 68.** Reduce embodied carbon of materials used in King County capital projects
- **GHG 69.** Increase sustainability training and certifications for frontline and capital project managers
- **GHG 70.** Support King County operations to reduce, reuse, and effectively manage waste

Improve energy efficiency and reduce fossil fuel consumption in County facilities:

- **GHG 71.** Pursue energy efficiency and energy reduction investments in County facilities
- **GHG 72.** Plan for transition of County facilities away from fossil fuel consuming equipment
- **GHG 73.** Limit installation of new fossil fueled equipment in County facilities

Decrease fugitive methane emissions and optimize biogas utilization at King County landfills and wastewater facilities:

- **GHG 74.** Evaluate consuming County-produced biogas and RNG in County facilities as a bridge fuel
- **GHG 75.** Update and accelerate carbon reduction approaches for County solid waste and wastewater
- **GHG 76.** Reduce fugitive methane and increase landfill gas (LFG) collection at King County owned landfills
- **GHG 77.** Optimize biogas and reduce wastewater fugitive methane at wastewater facilities

Increase renewable energy production and use by County facilities and properties:

- **GHG 78.** Ensure all electricity purchased for King County facilities is GHG-neutral, and pursue cost-effective renewable power opportunities
- **GHG 79.** Accelerate installations of solar electricity systems at County facilities

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



1. King County green building team tours Roads project site.

2. Located in Seattle's Georgetown neighborhood, WTD's Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station achieved Washington State's first Envision Platinum designation from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure.

3. The Road Division's Coal Creek Bridge Replacement in Black Diamond achieved Platinum rating using the King County Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard.

4. Metro's completed RapidRide H Line project achieved Envision Platinum, supporting the development of a more mobile, equitable, and resilient community.

5. Solid Waste Division's Vashon Recycling and Transfer Station is a Zero Energy certified facility in 2024 through Living Future.

6. The Parks Central Maintenance Facility is pursuing the Living Building Challenge's Energy Petal Certification.

GHG 63.
FORMALIZE PROCESSES TO INTEGRATE THE GREEN BUILDING ORDINANCE INTO CAPITAL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

King County has had a Green Building policy in place since 2001, updated in 2005, 2008, 2013, and 2022, to establish green building standards to all its buildings, renovations and remodel projects. The County CIP supports identification of applicable green building opportunities and requirements from the very beginning of project initiation so that opportunities to improve outcomes for community, building occupants, and the natural environment are maximized and integrated into the design. Experience from King County's CIPs shows this has not always been the case, too often GBO requirements are not considered until baseline or even later when opportunities become costly changes that impact schedule and budget. King County will take steps to consistently consider applicable GBO requirements earlier and over the lifecycle of a capital project.

King County will develop processes to monitor performance of capital projects, and more effectively and efficiently integrate green building into the CIP and budget processes. Starting in 2025, as part of the 26–27 budget submittal process, through continuous improvement over the next five years each agency with a capital program will demonstrate that

1. Department/division leadership and Executive Climate Office (ECO) review the annual Green Building reporting.

2. Agency CIP programs utilize a Gate Review process that integrates green building and ESJ capital project requirements, with special attention to early planning and pre-design phases including CIP budget submittal, Gate 1 and Gate 2. Capital delivery boards must review GBO requirements and have a member with capacity and expertise review compliance with GBO.

3. Green building and ESJ requirements are accurately considered in scope and budget as part of project budget submittals. Project budget submittal information on GBO applicability and SCAP narratives is reviewed by agency Green Building representatives.

4. A quick reference guide has been developed to identify which GBO and scorecard elements are applicable to each project in a given capital program.

5. Capital Project Management Manuals exist and are updated to align with the GBO and 2025 SCAP.

An ECO and/or Green Building team staff will be a representative on the Capital Project Management Work Group (CPMWG) and the Climate Director will be a member of the CPMWG steering committee. The Green Building program will support capital project manager staff training, development of standard design specifications, and technical assistance with project cost estimation and project schedule.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PSB–Budget; DES–FMD, KCIA; Metro–Capital; DLS–Roads; KCIT; DNRP-WLRD, WTD, Parks

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; economic opportunity; workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Green Building Ordinance; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 64.
EXPAND THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATION TO LARGE COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

The GBO requires all King County capital projects achieve the highest green building standards. County buildings and infrastructure can be held to the same standard. Using a third-party certification adds significant strength and accountability, this results in more tangible, verifiable, and demonstrated benefits for the community and environment. Envision and Salmon-Safe are two examples of third-party certification frameworks designed for infrastructure and site related projects. Third-party certification allows the County to increase public confidence that capital projects are delivering benefits claimed. The GBO King County Code will be updated to require infrastructure projects, beginning in the 2026-27 budget cycle, including both new construction and major renovation, to demonstrate they are achieving the highest green building standards through third-party certification, specifically:

1. Envision Platinum certification required for:

a. Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD): Conveyance, Combined Sewer Overflow, and pump stations projects over $20 million

b. Metro: New RapidRide and bus base electrification charging infrastructure projects

c. Solid Waste Division (SWD): Heavy duty electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure projects with 10 or more direct current (DC) fast chargers

Road Services Division (RSD): Incorporate the Envision framework into the design, construction, and maintenance of bridge projects.

2. Salmon-Safe certification required for:

a. Parks (PKS): Maintain the Parks division's Salmon-Safe certification first earned in 2022, when the agency became the largest Salmon-Safe certified park system. All other infrastructure projects shall continue to be required to achieve Platinum using the King County Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard.

Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD): will assess the costs and benefits of a programmatic Salmon-Safe certification for projects introduced in the 28–29 budget cycle.

3. All other infrastructure projects shall continue to be required to achieve Platinum using the King County Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard.

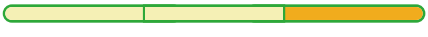
LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PSB–Budget; DES–FMD, KCIA; Metro–Capital; DNRP–Parks, WLRD, DNRP – WTD, SWD; DLS–Roads

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity

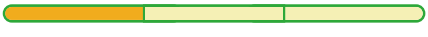
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; K.C.C. Title 18.17

KING COUNTY ROLE:



Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:



Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



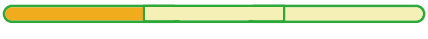
Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:



Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



County | Grant | Other

GHG 65.
ACHIEVE NET ZERO GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FOOTPRINT FOR ALL KING COUNTY OWNED NEW BUILDING

The 2020 SCAP established that by 2030, all King County new construction and whole building renovation projects achieve certifications that demonstrate a net zero GHG emissions footprint. King County will integrate this commitment into the GBO and clarify how projects must demonstrate a net zero GHG emissions footprint.

King County code (18.17.050) requires new construction of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-eligible buildings to achieve LEED platinum or Living Building Challenge (LBC) certification, and major remodels or renovations to achieve LEED gold or LBC certification.

King County capital projects first submitted and adopted in the 26–27 budget and onward, both new projects would be required to achieve U.S. Green Building Council LEED Platinum plus Zero Energy or Zero Carbon certifications; or International Living Future Institute (ILFI) LBC – Zero Energy, Energy Petal, or Zero Carbon. There would be no change to the code requirements for renovations.

These requirements must be included in initial project planning, budget submittal, and project charter. If a capital project or program is unable to achieve the targeted certification level the project must submit a waiver to ECO and/or the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget (PSB) at 30 percent, 60 percent or 90 percent design, as applicable. It is expected that if a project is unable to achieve the target level (e.g. Platinum), it will achieve the next rating level down (e.g. Gold). Projects will be required to document how the requirements were evaluated as part of alternatives analysis, and what operational, schedule, or budget requirements prevent compliance.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD; KCIA; Metro–Capital; DNRP–Parks, WLRD, WTD, SWD; DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
USGBC; ILFI Living Building Challenge

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; division comprehensive plans; K.C.C. Title 18.17; King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 66. REDUCE WASTE AND DEVELOP REUSE MARKETS FOR CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION MATERIALS FROM KING COUNTY CAPITAL PROJECTS

Construction and demolition (C&D) debris from King County capital projects can be reduced and reused through efforts to standardize C&D education, implement waste reduction practices, and support development of circular economies. King County will minimize disposal of C&D materials through a multi-pronged approach which includes design for disassembly, adaptive reuse, building salvage, building deconstruction, repair, and transitional storage options for reusable building materials, marketing of reusable building materials and more. County-owned projects will be required, via new code and/or policy adoption, to source-separate C&D materials, use recycled content, and deconstruct rather than demolish existing buildings and structures. The County will research and support circular economies for specific construction products and materials with reuse (over recycling and remanufacturing) as a priority. A key strategy will be to support well-designed Extended Producer Responsibility programs.

King County will also provide standardized outreach and education on C&D reuse and recycling with an emphasis on reducing contamination of recyclable materials and diverting the materials that truly have available markets. A major focus will be on standardizing jobsite signage. Include education on designing for disassembly. Include education as part of the integrative process for contractors, site managers, etc. (e.g., require C&D at pre-construction meetings).

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD, WTD; DES–FMD; Metro–Capital

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
SPU

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Green Building Ordinance (Ordinance 19402); King County Solid Waste Code – Construction; Demolition and Land-Clearing Waste (K.C.C. 10.30.030); Collection of Solid Waste and Recyclable Materials (WAC 173-345-040); King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Sustainable Purchasing Policy (KCC 18.20)

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

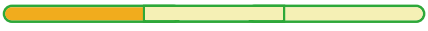
Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other

GHG 67. IMPROVE EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE OUTCOMES FOR KING COUNTY CAPITAL PROJECTS

King County has developed a menu of Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) strategies that can be integrated in capital projects to support the County's fair and just principle established in King County Code (K.C.C.) Chapter 2.10. In 2021, King County Executive Order CON-7-28-EO directed the County to remove barriers, implement innovative contracting methods, and other actions to make it easier for Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs) to contract with King County. In alignment with the King County ESJ Strategic Plan, the GBO was updated in 2022 requiring that the ESJ credits in the King County Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard be applicable to all capital projects, regardless of which green building rating system is used.

King County will continue to provide resources and trainings to Project Managers to support outreach to MWBEs and update project management manuals to include ESJ guidance in capital projects. King County Green Building team will lead an effort to improve ESJ efforts in King County CIPs. In particular, all projects shall prioritize development and implementation of an ESJ Project plan (ESJ credit 5) and advance economic justice (ESJ credit 6).

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; OERSJ; EIB Managers; DES–FMD, KCIA; Metro–Capital; DNRP–Parks, WLRD, WTD, SWD; DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local contractors

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; King County Pro-Equity Contracting Executive Order; King County Disparity Study (2023); King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016–2022; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 68.
REDUCE EMBODIED CARBON OF MATERIALS USED IN KING COUNTY CAPITAL PROJECTS

Embodied carbon represents the GHG emissions from the life cycle of materials used to created something. For buildings, this includes the extraction, manufacturing, transport, construction, and disposal of building materials. Many industrial manufacturers of building materials have fewer GHG reduction requirements in Washington under the Climate Commitment Act, as Energy-Intensive Trade Exposed industries. King County will support private industry in developing and publishing Environmental Product Declarations and setting Global Warming Potential limits in public and private construction projects. King County's $50 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) award from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funds an Embodied Carbon Program Manager to support reduction of embodied carbon from materials including cement, concrete, and steel, and possibly wood, gypsum board, and other products as identified through program research. This grant funded effort will help design and deploy an embodied carbon program for government capital projects. The program will include development of lower embodied carbon contract specifications for the highest impact materials.

All agencies with capital programs are required to evaluate which capital programs and projects in their CIP use the largest volumes of high-embodied carbon materials such as concrete, asphalt, carpet, steel, gypsum, rebar, and wood and to identify which capital projects and programs will use lower embodied carbon contract specifications for the highest impact materials. Agencies must demonstrate in writing that these requirements have been integrated into their Capital Project Manual, or other applicable project guidance, to ECO by 2026. Capital projects that begin in the 28–29 budget shall include these new requirements. Agencies will coordinate with the CPRG Embodied Carbon Manager to evaluate materials, ensure alignment, and gather data on avoided embodied carbon emissions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD, KCIA; Metro–Capital; DNRP–Parks, WLRD, WTD, SWD; DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Carbon Leadership Forum; Commerce; K4C; UW; WSDOT

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington State Energy Strategy – Commerce; Washington Buy Clean and Buy Fair Law (HB 1282, 2023–24); King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Sustainable Purchasing Policy (KCC Chapter 18.20)

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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

GHG 69.
INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS FOR FRONTLINE STAFF AND CAPITAL PROJECT MANAGERS

The County workforce is essential to achieving King County's climate goals. By offering training and credentials focused on energy conservation and green building, the County can align operations with its climate objectives. The 2023 Green Jobs Strategy established a green skills development fund to support employee certifications in energy conservation and sustainability. In 2025, King County will be offering Envision Sustainability Professional (SP) and LEED Accredited Professional (AP) certifications to employees in Metro, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP), Department of Local Services (DLS), and Department of Executive Services (DES). King County will explore these certification offerings along with expanding the LEED Green Janitor certification opportunities to expand capacity and skills for frontline janitorial staff. Other certifications to be considered include: Building Operator Certification (BOC), Living Future Accreditation (LFA), Sustainability Facility Professional (SFP), and BCxA Commissioning Provider Certificate Program. Each of these certifications are transferable accreditations that stay with the employee.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD, KCIA; Metro–Capital, TFD; DLS–Roads; KCIT; DNRP–Parks, WLRD, WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Certification training and accreditations

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; Climate and Workforce Strategic Plan; King County Green Jobs Strategy Report; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

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

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

GHG 70.
SUPPORT KING COUNTY OPERATIONS TO REDUCE, REUSE, AND EFFECTIVELY MANAGE WASTE

King County can reduce, reuse, and more effectively manage waste from County operations. The County will reduce and manage operational waste by maximizing repurposing, recycling, and composting of materials. The County will explore improving facility and operational waste management at its office buildings and other feasible facilities by shifting to standardized three-stream central waste stations, deploying recycling and composting outreach and education, baselining, and tracking waste diversion rates. The County will also seek to develop repair and deconstruction program with non-profit job training programs or similar organization to disassemble non-reuseable items into recyclable components or repair them. Finally, King County will establish a formal internal reallocation and reuse program to promote and mandate reuse of office furniture, equipment, and supplies and disincentives.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–FMD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD; DES–Fleet

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Nonprofits; workforce development organizations; salvage, reuse businesses

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Re+ Strategic Plan; Washington Solid Waste Management – Reduction and Recycling (Chapter 70A.205 RCW); Chapter 29.26 RCW; King County Comprehensive

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



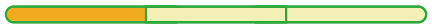
IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



GHG 71. PURSUE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND ENERGY REDUCTION INVESTMENTS IN COUNTY FACILITIES

Energy use in County facilities has significant environmental impacts by increasing the demand for energy production and infrastructure. It also leads to higher operating costs due to utility bills. King County will continue taking bold steps to reduce electricity use and meet future energy reduction goals.

Specifically, King County will require agencies to take four key actions. First, all capital projects with energy components will need to apply for utility rebates, as available. Second, all capital projects with energy components will need to conduct a life-cycle cost assessment of alternatives, include an all-electric alternative, and quantify the social cost of carbon. Third, agencies will need to actively pursue lifecycle cost effective projects that reduce energy, water use, and/or increase solar energy generation, and will need to incorporate this information in budget discussions and investment opportunities consistent with SCAP goals (e.g. fossil fuel reduction) that are not lifecycle cost effective.

Fourth, agencies that own and manage facilities will develop Energy Management Plans (EMPs) and complete facility resource audits. All mechanically heated or cooled County buildings over 10,000 sq. ft. shall complete resource audits and EMPs the meet the intent of state and city building energy and emissions performance standards by the end of 2030 and update such EMPs at least every five years. The resource audits are to be used to guide future energy and water investments and shall detail cost-effectiveness information for all identified behavioral and equipment retrofit efficiency actions in each impacted facility. Per King County Ordinance 16927, conduct a level II energy audit for facilities at which capital projects valued over $250,000 are planned that impact any portion of the mechanical or lighting system, if such an audit has not been completed within the previous seven years. Additionally, King County will continue to develop governance structures and measurement frameworks for emerging technologies, such as AI, to reduce the environmental impacts of County use of such tools.

King County capital projects and facilities management must continue to follow requirements and standards established before the 2025 SCAP. These more detailed enterprise requirements are outlined in the Appendix: 2025 SCAP Operational Guidelines.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–DO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PSB–Budget; DES–FMD, KCIA; DLS–Roads; DNRP–DO; Metro–GM, TFD, Capital

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Clean energy partners; workforce development organizations

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Ordinance 16927; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Sustainable Purchasing Policy (KCC Chapter 18.20)

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 72. PLAN FOR TRANSITION OF COUNTY FACILITIES AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUEL CONSUMING EQUIPMENT

Reducing fossil fuel use in County facilities has direct impacts to reduce GHG emissions and demonstrates for the community ways to transition to a decarbonized economy based on clean electricity sources. King County will actively pursue investments and actions that reduce the consumption of natural gas, propane, and heating oil at County facilities. By the end of 2030, and for facilities consuming 5,000 metric million British thermal units (MMBTUs) or more of fossil fuels, all agencies will create fossil fuel elimination action plans that detail the projected end-of-life date of each piece of fossil fuel-consuming equipment, and non-fossil fuel replacement and retrofit plans. The elimination plans are intended to be brief, actionable documentation of pathways and specific feasible technological solutions that include specific equipment types, timelines, notable barriers to be overcome, and resource need identification. This action impacts natural gas, propane, and heating oil-fueled equipment, with consideration given to GHG-reducing fuel and equipment replacement opportunities for fossil-derived diesel fueled electrical generators. Plans would include an exception of emergency backup systems and redundancies, like emergency generators. Emergency generator technology is not sufficiently advanced to move away from fossil fueled systems for most County facilities, although opportunities exist to fuel such generators with renewable diesel and other fuels as a bridge to capture some greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD, KCIA; DLS–Roads; DNRP–SWD, Parks, WTD; Metro–GM, Capital, TFD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
State grant programs; clean energy partners

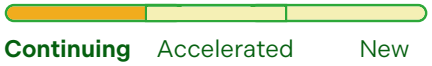
EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Sustainable Purchasing Policy (KCC 18.20)

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:





New industrial heat pumps at the South Wastewater Treatment Plant are significantly reducing natural gas usage.

GHG 73. LIMIT INSTALLATION OF NEW FOSSIL FUELED EQUIPMENT IN COUNTY FACILITIES

King County has many buildings with natural gas-powered equipment and heating systems. Too often capital projects or facilities maintenance replaces equipment with like for like natural gas-powered without evaluating options to transition to an all-electric option. King County will strive to significantly reduce the consumption of fossil fuels by completely, or if needed, partially, eliminating the installation of any new equipment that consumes fossil fuels, such as space heating and hot water heating needs, with the exception of emergency backup systems and redundancies, like emergency generators. Emergency generator technology is not yet advanced enough to fully replace fossil fueled systems in most County facilities.

King County will develop a policy for the elimination of fossil fuel use in new construction and substantial renovation as the primary space and hot water heating systems. The policy will allow for limited fossil fueled systems for redundancy and when exceptional logistical, space, or other conditions exist that would result in significant logistical or financial impacts.

Beyond stated exemptions, once the policy is in place, King County agencies will be required to apply for a waiver and get approval from the Executive Climate Office to purchase new fossil fuel using equipment.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD; DLS–Roads; DNRP–DO; Metro–GM; Metro-Capital; Metro-TFD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Clean energy partners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Sustainable Purchasing Policy (KCC Chapter 18.20)

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 74.
EVALUATE CONSUMING COUNTY-PRODUCED BIOGAS AND RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS IN COUNTY FACILITIES AS A BRIDGE FUEL

Biogas generated at King County's three regional wastewater treatment facilities and at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill can be used as a low GHG fuel source. To support strategic decision making, King County will evaluate the economics and environmental benefits of consuming County-produced biogas and RNG in County facilities until natural gas is eliminated at all County facilities. Such analysis will consider County-produced RNG as a bridge fuel to decarbonizing facility heating systems for when natural gas use cannot economically or feasibly be eliminated.

In addition to considering the benefits and costs to County operations, such analysis shall consider the benefits and potential for increased revenue to the SWD and WTD of the County's biogas resources sold to other sectors of the economy, as is currently the case with a significant volume of the available gas. The analysis will also assess how County-produced RNG could drive actions to eliminate fossil-fueled equipment, and the global GHG impacts of County use versus uses in other economic sectors.

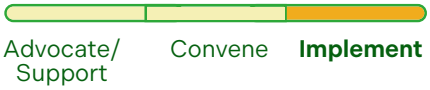
LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD, WTD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–DO; DES–FMD; Metro–GM

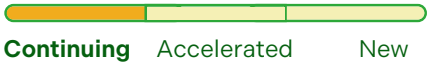
EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



GHG 75.
UPDATE AND ACCELERATE CARBON REDUCTION APPROACHES FOR COUNTY SOLID WASTE AND WASTEWATER

Evolving and improving GHG emissions accounting methods; experience from agency progress to reduce energy and emissions; and new best practices for climate responsibility and carbon neutrality have prompted recommended updates to King County agency carbon neutrality targets established in 2015. King County will refocus the work on decarbonization and by accelerating solid waste and wastewater agency projects that reduce direct sources of GHG emissions.

King County will update the carbon neutrality approaches for solid waste and wastewater as previously detailed in Council Ordinance 179171 (2015) and the 2020 SCAP to refocus on decarbonization and to accelerate agency projects that reduce direct sources of GHG emissions. To support the updated approach, the agencies will implement additional GHG reduction actions by 2030. These will include, but are not limited to, investments in solar, construction materials, vehicles and fuel, facilities, fugitive methane and biogas, and updates to codes, including but not limited to:

1. Solar installations: Implement 600 kilowatts (kW) of solar energy production by 2030 (DNRP – WTD) and 1.5 megawatts (MW) of solar by 2027 (SWD). For SWD, additionally research the feasibility of SWD generating the annual equivalent of all of agency electricity needs (about 6 MW) from solar power by 2030.

2. Embodied Carbon: Accelerate implementation of SCAP commitments to reduce embodied carbon in construction materials, including by integrating specifications for low emissions recycled steel rebar for all new construction projects in 2025 (SWD).

3. Electric Vehicles: Continue to transition to electric vehicles and use renewable diesel consistent with fleet commitments in 2025 SCAP.

4. Decarbonization: For DNRP – WTD, exceed the SCAP's 20 percent by 2030 fossil fuel reduction target by implementing fossil fuel reduction projects, including but not limited to condensing boiler and heat pump projects at the South Plant Treatment Plant and a heat pump project at the Brightwater Treatment Plant. For SWD, eliminate fossil fuel use at all SWD facilities for non-emergency generator purposes and use renewable diesel in all onsite generators by the end of 2026.

5. Fugitive methane and biogas: Implement fugitive methane emissions and optimize biogas utilization 2025 SCAP priority actions. These actions will be the primary drivers for accelerating the agencies' carbon reduction progress.

6. Code Updates: Recognizing that related actions and commitments have been included in Council Ordinance 179171 (2015), make updates to King County code to align with implementation of this and related updated 2025 SCAP commitments.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD, WTD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DNRP–Parks, WLRD; DES–Fleet, FMD

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
K.C.C. Title 18; DNRP Implementation Plan for a Carbon Neutral King County Government 2016; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 76.
LIMIT FUGITIVE METHANE AND INCREASE LANDFILL GAS COLLECTION AT KING COUNTY OWNED LANDFILLS

Emissions from the decay of materials disposed of at King County's Cedar Hills Regional Landfill are the single greatest operational point source of GHG emissions from King County government. Emissions from closed landfills are much smaller but still significant. King County's SWD will continue its comprehensive work to minimize LFG emissions at landfills; use captured LFG as a renewable energy source; improve landfill GHG emissions estimates; and deploy the best available technologies for LFG monitoring and reduction. Specific actions include to:

1. Improve LFG collection at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRL) by at least 5 percent per year (25 percent total) through 2030, compared to 2023. This will be accomplished through expanded vertical well installations and operational improvements. Related work at the CHRL includes completing an Investment Grade Audit (IGA) that provides a framework and vision for an optimal gas piping system that maximizes and optimizes gas and liquids collection and management while minimizing fugitive emissions. Additionally, pending the results and lessons learned from the phase one vertical gas well installations and the IGA, request funding for phase 2 well installations, with possible future budget requests if further GHG reductions are feasible from additional well installations. The SWD will also complete the Cedar Hills LFG collection "4 interior header" replacement project by 2025, which will increase LFG collection system reliability, reduce fugitive methane, and increase renewable biogas production.

2. Reduce LFG emissions from SWD's closed landfills by installing a new biofiltration cover pilot project in 2025 at the closed Duvall landfill to reduce LFG emissions and by including in future closed landfill environmental investigations scope to analyze potential productive uses of LFG collected at Hobart, Cedar Falls, and Vashon Island closed landfills.

3. Optimize the production and use of LFG as a renewable biogas by continuing to monitor and improve the quality and quantity of LFG available for renewable biogas production and by evaluating areas of lower producing, lower quality LFG (both older sections of the CHRL and closed landfills) for potential productive uses.

4. Continue testing and use of new technologies that improve the measurement and calculation of fugitive landfill emissions including by building on recent LFG drone monitoring efforts, which began in 2024, through use of a third-party contractor. Initial results from this effort have improved response times to LFG leaks and provided an improved understanding of LFG emissions locations. Building on this initial drone monitoring effort, the SWD will explore ownership and operation of a drone monitoring program.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; economic opportunity and workforce development; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 77.
OPTIMIZE BIOGAS AND REDUCE WASTEWATER FUGITIVE METHANE AT WASTEWATER FACILITIES

Improved methane capture and utilization of wastewater biogas resources is the greatest opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in King County wastewater facilities, with the opportunity to market revenue-generating commodities. The County will advance a comprehensive and transparent approach to GHG measurement techniques related to wastewater conveyance, distribution, nutrient removal, and treatment. Use GHG data as part of decision making about wastewater treatment systems and processes and to identify other opportunities to reduce GHG emissions from wastewater treatment.

King County will improve the operational performance of the existing biogas processing equipment at the three regional treatment plant such that a combined 75 percent or more of available biogas is sent to a productive use by 2030. Finalize and implement biogas optimization strategies for the Brightwater, South Plant, and West Point wastewater treatment plants. The strategies identify timelines and designate staff to facilitate implementation. By 2030, ensure that DNRP — WTD has capital projects in place that will provide for the capacity to capture 100 percent of the biogas created during the wastewater treatment process at its regional wastewater treatment plants for beneficial use by 2035. Near term actions include, but are not limited to:

West Point:

- Improve reliability and regular operation of the cogeneration system at West Point Treatment Plant, with focused efforts and actions beginning in 2024, with a target of improving annual uptime by 15 percent in 2025 (2023 baseline). Prepare for the replacement of the West Point Treatment Plant cogeneration system in 2033.

South Plant:

- Conduct comprehensive evaluation of the South Treatment Plant biogas scrubbing system to evaluate the system components' risk of failure and means of replacement or refurbishment by end of 2025.
- Implement biogas system improvements by end of 2027: Replace gas dryers, control valves, and scrubber water pump system to ensure mid-term reliability of South Treatment Plant biogas scrubbing system.
- Install flash tank and thermal oxidizer to reduce fugitive GHG (methane) emissions. Flash tank will reduce WTD's fugitive emissions by 14,500 MTCO2e/year, or approximately 28 percent (2023 baseline).
- Upgrade waste gas burners to meet projected 2040 capacity requirements.

Brightwater:

- Replace failing boiler at Brightwater Treatment Plant to foster more reliable use of the plant's biogas. Formulation project to be completed in 2026. Replaced boiler expected to increase Brightwater's use of biogas by approximately 35 percent (2023 baseline).
- Determine selected alternative to optimize use of biogas at Brightwater Treatment Plant and implement.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
PSE

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 78. PURCHASE GREENHOUSE GAS-NEUTRAL ELECTRICITY AND PURSUE COST-EFFECTIVE RENEWABLE POWER FOR KING COUNTY FACILITIES

King County has reduced GHGs from County operations by purchasing renewable electricity to supply County facilities. King County will lead by example in transitioning to consuming 100 percent clean and renewable electricity, before utilities are required per the state Clean Energy Transformation Act to provide all renewable electricity to customers. All electricity purchased by the County government will be GHG-neutral, either through direct power purchases or by offsetting with Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). King County will increase the consumption of renewable or GHG-neutral energy equal to 80 percent of government operation facility energy consumption by 2025 and 95 percent by 2030. The County will ensure its facilities use greenhouse gas neutral power, including purchases from Seattle City Light (SCL), Puget Sound Energy (PSE), and Snohomish Public Utility District (Sno PUD). RECs will be bought as needed to meet this goal. Additionally, the County will work with local utilities to pursue competitively priced 100 percent renewable wind and solar programs for its operations and other customers, such as PSE's Green Direct program.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FMD; DNRP–Parks, DNRP – SWD, DNRP – WTD; DLS–Roads; Metro–GM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
PSE; SCL; SnoPUD

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other

GHG 79. ACCELERATE INSTALLATIONS OF SOLAR ELECTRICITY SYSTEMS AT COUNTY FACILITIES

Cost-effective solar installations on County facilities result in supporting economic activity, reduced operating costs, control over energy resources, and less strain on local and regional electrical infrastructure as the building, transportation, and industrial sectors transition to electrification.

King County will complete solar installations to ensure King County government shall have 3.0 or more MW (3,000 kW alternating current (AC)) of solar energy installed at its facilities by the end of 2030. County agencies will complete assessments of feasibility of solar installations at all County facilities and increase implementation of projects. The assessments shall be compiled using previous analysis and additional information including basic identification of potential building and facility rooftop solar candidates based on roof orientation, roofing type and age, and obstructions.

For projects that meet initial screening criteria, additional initial feasibility should be provided that addresses electrical pathways, structural integrity of at least six pounds per sq ft, seismic zone consideration, and other considerations that target economic paybacks within the useful system life of a solar installation of 25 years or less. The intent is to use past and current data to drive cost effective and actionable solar feasibility frameworks that take advantage of recent Federal Inflation Reduction Act and available state incentives to drive multiple currently unplanned solar installations across County agencies by 2030. King County will support community solar projects in the community and at County closed landfills and other facilities that enable non-homeowners and income-eligible customers to participate in the clean energy economy.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–FMD; DNRP–DO; Metro–Capital; DLS–Roads

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–KCIA

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
PSE; SCL; SnoPUD; solar installers and consultants

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | Implement

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | **New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

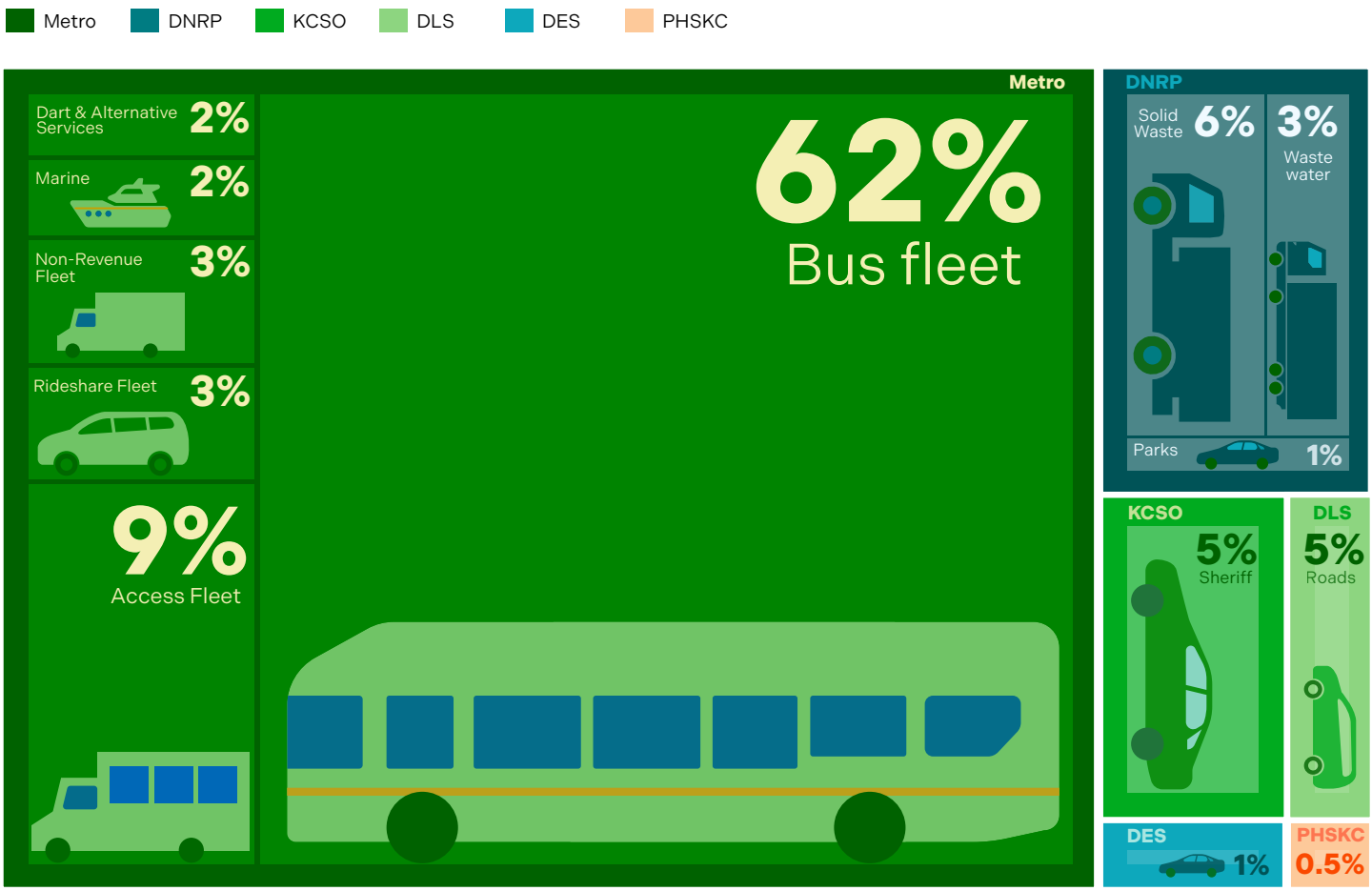
County | **Grant** | **Other**

ZERO-EMISSION COUNTY FLEETS

King County operates a large and diverse fleet of vehicles ranging from street sweepers and forklifts to passenger buses and deputy patrol units, each required to accomplish work or deliver services to the region. Vehicle technology is evolving rapidly, and the County is often on the cutting-edge when piloting new models or adopting more sustainable fuels. As a result, County staff must be creative, flexible, and data-driven in approaches to adapt more than 3,700 Metro vehicles and 2,500 other vehicles spread across operations.

Figure 14. King County Fleet GHG Emissions, by County Agency

80 percent of King County government fleet GHG emissions are attributed to Metro Transit fleets, followed by DNRP, KCSO, DLS, DES and PHSKC.



Source: Executive Climate Office, King County (2024)

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Transportation accounts for 44 percent of total emissions in King County and 57 percent of governmental emissions, and, as shown in Figure 14—the largest source of County fleet emissions are from Metro buses. The County must lead by example to promote cleaner vehicles and fuel uses for commuters and businesses. Historically, the County's vehicles were powered by internal combustion engines, burning gasoline, diesel and propane, meaning tailpipes sent pollutants straight into the air that communities breathe. While current vehicle engines are cleaner than those from just a decade ago, each vehicle not powered by zero-emission technology will continue to release greenhouse gases (GHGs) and air pollution into the atmosphere.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County expects a future where people residing along transit corridors encounter fewer pollutants and the County's fleet contributes far fewer emissions. The County will also continue as an innovator in the zero-emission transportation space. This will mean a fleet with more zero-emission vehicles, and when that is not feasible, operating with bridge fuels such as cleaner, renewable diesel.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE:

- Invested significant resources to support a transition to a zero-emission Metro bus fleet.
- Installed an initial round of 22 Level 2 electric vehicle (EV) chargers across seven Metro bases, with charging ports for 38 vehicles.
- Secured over $40 million of Federal Transit Administration funding to procure battery electric buses for Metro in South King County and put 40 battery electric buses into service with over 1.5 million miles traveled through the end of 2024.
- Initiated development of phased EV transition plans for County agencies.
- Piloted the testing of electric heavy-duty and off-road equipment for solid waste operations and at the airport.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

- **GHG 80.** Install infrastructure to support a transition to zero-emission fleets
- **GHG 81.** Transition King County bus fleets to zero-emission fleets
- **GHG 82.** Transition light, medium, and heavy-duty vehicles to zero-emission vehicles
- **GHG 83.** Prohibit the purchase of new light-duty internal combustion engine vehicles without waiver approval
- **GHG 84.** Increase the utilization of King County's electric trolley bus system
- **GHG 85.** Prioritize zero-emission options for Water Taxi service
- **GHG 86.** Use alternative fuels when zero-emission vehicles are unavailable

GHG 80. INSTALL INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT A TRANSITION TO ZERO-EMISSION FLEETS

To better understand EV charging opportunities, costs, and timelines for fleets, King County worked with a consultant to conduct an Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) feasibility study for light-duty fleets. The work included a prioritization tool to identify facilities to expand and deploy new and/or additional charging infrastructure in the short-, medium-, and long-term, for approximately 20 County facilities. The study will develop site EVCI conceptual plans and cost estimates, and the analysis will develop an enterprise EV charging plan, including strategies for opportunity and depot charging. King County will work to implement the recommendations of this study to expand EV charging infrastructure to serve County fleets.

King County Fleet Services implement recommendations including activities such as: collaborating with facility owners in developing comprehensive budget proposals for installing charging infrastructure; installing 450 charging ports in county-owned facilities; implementing a Charge Management System with established standards and policies; and expand the scope of the EVCI feasibility study to evaluate additional county-owned buildings and properties.

King County Metro will install chargers for non-revenue fleet vehicles at Metro's Component Supply Center, the South Campus Parking Garage, and Power Distribution Headquarters. Metro will continue analysis and site assessments to inform infrastructure planning and installations. For the contracted services fleet, Metro will complete a feasibility study for installing zero-emission fueling infrastructure at all facilities in contracted services—including Rideshare, Access/Paratransit, CAT, DART, and Metro Flex—and implement key recommendations.

Installing EV charging infrastructure at all applicable County facilities takes time and resources and many vehicles may need to charge while out in the field. The County will seek partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and utility providers to expand and leverage EV charging locations and expand opportunities for drop-in use by King County fleets. The County will also identify and reach out to potential partners to discuss potential collaboration in infrastructure development and sharing of infrastructure.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–FMD, Fleet; Metro–Capital, GM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–DO; DLS–Roads; DES–KCIA

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
SCL; PSE; K4C; Private charging companies

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 81.
TRANSITION KING COUNTY BUS FLEETS TO ZERO-EMISSION FLEETS

King County is one of the only large transit agencies in the country working toward a 100 percent zero-emission fleet as soon as 2035. Over the next decade, King County will buy zero-emission buses, continue to invest in electric trolleys, add charging infrastructure to existing bases, build new bases, and invest in new technology systems to manage an evolving fleet. A zero-emission fleet will drastically cut air and noise pollution, making King County cleaner and healthier. King County will continue efforts to plan, design, and install zero-emission fueling infrastructure across all on-road fleets.

King County will complete a plan to transition base facilities and operations to zero-emission. Over the next 5 years King County will open Tukwila base and plan for South Annex Base construction and Central Campus conversion. The County will continue procuring, testing and putting into service battery-electric buses.

Separately, King County will pilot zero-emission vehicles for use in the Metro Flex on-demand transit fleet, including the use of public charging infrastructure within Metro Flex's service areas.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Capital

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
PSE; SCL; Contracted Services providers

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Metro Connects; King County Comprehensive Plan; Washington Clean Fuel Standard (Chapter 70A.535 RCW)

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other

GHG 82. TRANSITION LIGHT, MEDIUM, AND HEAVY-DUTY VEHICLES TO ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES

King County is committed to aggressively reducing GHG emissions from County-owned fleets. A critical strategy is to electrify vehicles whenever feasible. King County Fleet Administration will continue efforts in prioritizing the transition of light-duty EVs by providing loaner models to employees for short term test drives, expanding current EV pilot programs using home, County-owned and/or public charging, and implementing early vehicle replacements (including the redeployment of internal combustion vehicles where EVs are not yet practical). King County Metro will continue efforts to transition fleets to zero-emission vehicles, and by 2026, will develop a long-range non-revenue vehicle zero-emission fleet plan that addresses procurement and associated fueling infrastructure. King County will continue developing relationships with zero-emission medium and heavy-duty vehicle manufacturers to inform designs, keep up to date on market and technology developments for potential pilots, and gather feedback from drivers and fleet coordinators.

To ensure a seamless transition to a zero-emission County fleet, it is essential to develop and adopt comprehensive internal policies including:

1. Update the County employee take-home vehicle policy to include EV related processes by Jan 2026 (DES/Metro).

2. Adopt an employee workplace charging policy by Jan 2026, in consultation with OLR, PAO, HR, FBOD, and departments. Evaluate reduced rate options through a pilot program (ECO).

3. Partner with facility owners to develop guidance on when public charging should or should not be prioritized as part of County capital projects (DES/Metro).

4. Modernize fee collection at County-owned public EV charging stations and switch from a fee per session to fee per kWh. Update King County Code to give authority to all agencies who own and manage charging (ECO/DES/Metro).

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–Fleet; Metro–VM, Capital, GM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
KCIT; KCSO; DNRP–WTD, Parks, SWD, WLRD; PHSKC–DO; DAJD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Contracted Services providers; WSDOT

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Comprehensive Plan; WA Zero Emission Vehicle Standards

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

GHG 83. PROHIBIT THE PURCHASE OF NEW LIGHT-DUTY INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE VEHICLES WITHOUT WAIVER APPROVAL

In 2022, a King County Executive Order prohibited the purchase of any light-duty internal combustion engine vehicles without waiver approval by the Executive Office. By January 2026, King County Fleet Administration and Metro will develop a standard operating procedure with written guidance to implement a process for consistently evaluating EV feasibility before submitting a waiver to request permission to purchase a light-duty internal combustion engine vehicle. The feasibility assessment should include analysis, such as:

1. Confirmation that the vehicle type requested is required for the operational need, based on business function.

2. Confirmation that the vehicle needs to be replaced and quantitative assessment of whether an EV can serve the operational need based on telematics utilization data from the vehicle being replaced.

3. Evaluation of charging availability and total cost of ownership.

4. Potential to delay purchasing replacement vehicles until an EV alternative is available.

5. Potential to shift fleet depot locations or swap fleet vehicles to site new fleet where EV charging is available.

6. Consideration of hybrid options when battery electric EVs are not feasible.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–Fleet; Metro–Capital, Mobility, GM; KCIT; KCSO; DNRP–WTD, Parks, SWD, WLRD; PHSKC–DO; DAJD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WSDOT; Western Washington Clean Cities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; Washington Clean Fuel Standard (Chapter 70A.535 RCW); WA Zero Emission Vehicle Standards

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

GHG 84. INCREASE THE UTILIZATION OF KING COUNTY'S ELECTRIC TROLLEY BUS SYSTEM

The "trackless trolleys," which are fueled by electricity, have been in operation for over 80 years and are a major component of King County's zero-emission fleet. King County will explore opportunities to increase the use of the electric trolley bus system in alignment with plans to transition to a 100 percent zero-emission bus fleet. King County will complete and implement priority recommendations from the Trolley Optimization Planning study, including increasing utilization of trolley buses on weekends, and upgrade the trolley fleet with new batteries for longer off-wire capability by 2027. Capital investments identified by the Trolley Optimization Planning study and installation of the new batteries will allow for King County to reduce instances of dieselization of trolley routes, which in turn decreases GHG emissions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Capital

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
SCL; SDOT; City of Seattle

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Connects; King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Comprehensive Plan; Washington Clean Fuel Standard (Chapter 70A.535 RCW)

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

GHG 85. PRIORITIZE ZERO-EMISSION OPTIONS FOR WATER TAXI SERVICE

Traditional marine fuels can contribute to oil spills, water pollution, and noise pollution, all of which harm public health and aquatic life. To support the County's efforts to transition to zero-emission transportation fuels, King County will complete design for two 150 passenger electric vessels and associated shoreside charging infrastructure for the West Seattle water taxi route. Charging infrastructure will likely include two additional moorage berths at Pier 50. King County will work to acquire state and federal funding for capital projects to purchase two electric vessels and complete associated infrastructure improvements. King County will also evaluate and prioritize the potential for zero-emission vessels in the assessment of any new water taxi routes and consider equity of potential ridership served. The County will continue to assess options, as technology becomes available, for operating an electric water taxi to Vashon-Maury Island.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Marine

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WSDOT; SCL; City of Seattle

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Comprehensive Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | **New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other

GHG 86. USE ALTERNATIVE FUELS WHEN ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES ARE UNAVAILABLE

Some operational needs may require vehicle capabilities that are not yet achievable with current zero-emission vehicle technology. To help reduce the County's GHG emissions in the near term, King County will expand the use of alternative, low-emission fuels when electric/zero-emission vehicles are unavailable or are not feasible. This includes a commitment to purchase renewable diesel as this fuel source is available. The County will work with fleet managers to identify renewable fuel sources and consistently track purchasing based on fluctuations in incremental price between diesel and renewable diesel. The WA Clean Fuel Standard is projected to facilitate the use of alternative fuels by increasing the availability, transparency, and confidence in emission reduction benefits, and reducing the incremental cost of biofuels. King County agencies have made the following commitments to expand the use of alternative fuels:

1. King County Metro will continue a renewable diesel pilot for the bus fleet with a goal to increase to 100 percent renewable diesel use by 2030.

2. King County Metro will pilot the use of renewable diesel in the primary water taxi fleet in 2025 with a goal to increase to 100 percent renewable diesel use in the primary vessel fleet by 2026.

3. King County Metro will use renewable fuels for Paratransit fleet pending vehicle and fueling infrastructure availability.

4. King County Solid Waste has converted to the use of renewable diesel and will continue to use renewable diesel for its operations ("class 8" semi-trucks and heavy-duty landfill equipment).

5. King County Wastewater Treatment will continue a renewable diesel pilot for Grit Truck and LOOP Trucks when fueling in western Washington and increase renewable fuel use as possible and as available when fueling east of the Cascades.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–Fleet; Metro–VM, Marine, Mobility; DNRP–SWD, WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Fuel suppliers; WSDOT

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021–2031; King County Comprehensive Plan; Washington Clean Fuel Standard (Chapter 70A.535 RCW)

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



Battery electric bus maintenance at the Metro South Bus Base.



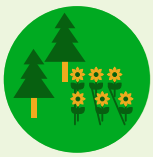
Battery Electric powered Cargo Truck in King County's Zero-Emission Fleet, utilized for daily Solid Waste Division operations.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Tracking **greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction performance measures** is essential to evaluating King County's progress toward its climate commitments and ensuring accountability across multiple sectors. The table below organizes performance measures by **Focus Areas**, with each measure detailing objectives, 2030 Target, and Current Status. The **2030 Target** and **Current Status** data allow for a quick gap analysis to show what the County has planned to achieve, and how much progress has been made. Together, these metrics help the County ensure that climate actions remain data-driven, equitable, and aligned with regional and state climate policies.

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 **Countywide GHG Policy & Leadership**	**GHG PM 1. Reduce Countywide GHG Emissions.** Reduce countywide sources of GHG emissions, compared to a 2007 baseline, 50 percent by 2030, 75 percent by 2040, and 95 percent by 2050, with net-zero emissions through carbon sequestration and other strategies by that year. Pursue additional goals and actions to sequester carbon and reduce emissions from consumption of goods and services.	***Current Status:*** *4 percent increase (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *50 percent reduction*
 **Countywide GHG Policy & Leadership**	**GHG PM 2. Focusing growth within the Urban Growth Area.** Consistent with VISION 2050 and the King County Countywide Planning Policies, ensure 98 percent of growth is focused within the Urban Growth Area.	***Current Status:*** *99.1 percent of growth (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *98 percent of growth*
 **Countywide GHG Policy & Leadership**	**GHG PM 3. Air quality.** Reduce the number of days when the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency health goal for fine particulates (25 micrograms per cubic meter) is exceeded.	***Current Status:*** *8 days (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *Not established*
 **Building Energy & Green Building**	**GHG PM 4. Fossil Fuel Use in Countywide Buildings.** Reduce fossil-based natural gas and other fossil fuel use in existing buildings in King County by at least 20 percent by 2030, 50 percent by 2040, and 80 percent by 2050, compared to a 2017 baseline.	***Current Status:*** *11 percent reduction (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *20 percent reduction*
 **Building Energy & Green Building**	**GHG PM 5. Existing Building Retrofits.** Facilitate retrofits of 550 buildings in King County including support of independent retrofit projects with external funding sources such as C-PACER.	***Current Status:*** *115 buildings (March 2025)* ***2030 Target:*** *550 buildings*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 Building Energy & Green Building	**GHG PM 6. Local Support for Building Retrofits.** Expand availability of building retrofit support to residential or commercial building owners to serve 90 percent of King County's population through local or regional programs, prioritizing communities with higher environmental health disparities.	***Current Status:*** *65 percent population (March 2025)* ***2030 Target:*** *90 percent population*
 Building Energy & Green Building	**GHG PM 7. Green Building Countywide.** Expand adoption of at least one, or more, of the of the Washington State Building and Residential Code appendices (or comparable) associated with Solar-readiness, Construction & Demolition Material Management, and Building Deconstruction to twelve jurisdictions within King County, including King County's own Permitting division, by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *4 jurisdictions (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *12 jurisdictions*
 Transportation	**GHG PM 8. Car Trips.** Reduce total vehicle miles traveled for passenger vehicle and light trucks by 20 percent by 2030 and 28 percent by 2050, compared to 2017 levels.	***Current Status:*** *2 percent increase (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *20 percent reduction*
 Transportation	**GHG PM 9. Transit Ridership.** Increase annual passenger boardings on transit services in King County, including Metro Transit and Sound Transit to: • 187 million annual passenger boardings by 2030 • 308 – 326 million annual passenger boardings by 2040 • 364 – 413 million annual passenger boardings by 2050	***Current Status:*** *129.6 million boardings (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *364 – 413 million boardings*
 Transportation	**GHG PM 10. Transit Oriented Communities.** Increase housing and job growth within growth centers located within a ½ mile of frequent transit service to 97 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2050.	***Current Status:*** *97.8 percent housing and 96.3 percent jobs in growth centers (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *97 percent housing and jobs in growth*
 Transportation	**GHG PM 11. Electric Vehicle Public Charging Infrastructure.** In alignment with WA State Transportation Electrification Strategy strong electrification policy scenario, by 2030, King County will have 2000 Level 2 and 1800 DC Fast Charger public charging ports and by 2035, 2844 Level 2 and 2509 DC Fast Charger public charging ports.	***Current Status:*** *2902 Level 2 and 411 DC Fast Chargers (March 2025)* ***2030 Target:*** *2000 Level 2 and 1800 DC Fast Chargers*
 Circular Economy	**GHG PM 12. Waste Reduction.** For King County (excluding the cities of Seattle and Milton), reduce per capita curbside waste disposed to landfill to be no more than 1 pound per day by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *1.04 lb. (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *1 lb.*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 Circular Economy	**GHG PM 13. Organics and Food Waste Collection.** Increase curbside food waste/organics collection services to 75 percent of unincorporated King County single-family residents by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *~50 percent residents (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *75 percent residents*
 Circular Economy	**GHG PM 14. Transfer Station Recycling.** Increase the greenhouse gas emissions avoided by recycling at King County owned transfer stations by at least 30 percent, compared to 2020 by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *6 percent increase (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *30 percent increase*
 Forest & Agriculture	**GHG PM 15. Protect natural lands and urban greenspaces.** Protect at least 1,500 acres annually of forestland, farmland, and other open space identified as priorities in Land Conservation Initiative, through acquisition of easements or fee title.	***Current Status:*** *1040 acres (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *7,500 acres*
 Forest & Agriculture	**GHG PM 16/PREP 9. Acres Restored.** Restore 2,000 acres of forests by 2030 on Parks-managed properties to improve climate change resiliency and enhance potential for carbon sequestration.	***Current Status:*** *1,333 acres (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *2,000 acres*
 Forest & Agriculture	**GHG PM 17. Five Million Trees.** Plant, Protect, and Prepare 5 Million Trees between 2020 and 2030. The 5 million trees will come from (1) Planting more trees countywide, mostly in communities that have few trees and where trees can improve salmon habitat; (2) Protecting forestland and trees from development; and (3) Preparing forests to be more resilient under a changing climate that has warmer, drier summers and increasing wildfire risk. Preparedness actions include removing noxious weeds and thinning forests in some areas to create room for trees to thrive.	***Current Status:*** *More than 2.1M trees (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *5 million trees*
 Forest & Agriculture	**GHG PM 18. Regenerative Farmland.** Double the acreage of farmland in King County that incorporates regenerative, climate-smart agricultural practices, and incorporate those practices on 100 percent of King County-owned farms by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *0 percent of King County-owned farms (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *100 percent of King County-owned farms*
 Enterprise Leadership & Accountability	**GHG PM 19. Government Operational GHG Emissions.** Reduce total GHG emissions from government operations, compared to 2007 baseline, by 50 percent by 2025 and 80 percent by 2030. Additionally, reduce these emissions by at least 95 percent by 2050, in support of the countywide GHG emissions reduction target.	***Current Status:*** *28 percent reduction (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *80 percent reduction*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 Sustainable County Infrastructure	**GHG PM 20. Green Building Ordinance.** Ensure 100 percent of County capital projects achieve the highest green building standard as specified in the Green Building Ordinance by 2025 and thereafter.	***Current Status:*** *95 percent of County capital projects (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *100 percent of County capital projects*
 Sustainable County Infrastructure	**GHG PM 21. Construction & Demolition Diversion.** Increase diversion of C&D materials from landfills from County capital projects to 85 percent in 2025 and 100 percent diversion of resources with economic value by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *91 percent diversion rate (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *100 percent diversion rate*
 Sustainable County Infrastructure	**GHG PM 22. ESJ in King County Capital Projects.** Increase equity outcomes of capital projects by demonstrating that 100 percent of King County capital projects initiated in the 2026/27 budget cycle or later will achieve ESJ Credit 5 (Realize Priority Elements of Project's ESJ Plan) in the King County Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard.	***Current Status:*** *33 percent of County capital projects (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *100 percent of County capital projects*
 Sustainable County Infrastructure	**GHG PM 23. Reduce energy use in County-owned buildings and facilities.** Reduce normalized[1] energy use in County-owned facilities by at least 17.5 percent by 2030 and 20 percent by 2035, compared to 2014 baseline.	***Current Status:*** *10.4 percent reduction (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *17.5 percent reduction*
 Sustainable County Infrastructure	**GHG PM 24. Reduce Fossil Fuel Use in County-owned facilities.** Reduce normalized[1] fossil fuel use in County owned facilities by 20 percent by 2030; 50 percent by 2040; and 80 percent by 2050, compared to a baseline 2014.	***Current Status:*** *46.6 percent increase (2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *20 percent reduction*
 Sustainable County Infrastructure	**GHG PM 25. Biogas utilization.** Improve biogas collection at King County regional wastewater treatment plants such that a combined 75 percent or more of available biogas is sent to a productive use by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *56 percent productive use (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *75 percent productive use*

1 Normalized energy use is measured on an energy use per square foot basis using an Energy Use Index (EUI) of BTUs per square foot per degree day. The Wastewater Treatment Division normalizes energy use based on outside air temperatures and wastewater flows.

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 Zero-Emission Fleets	**GHG PM 26. Increase County fleet zero-emission charging infrastructure.** Increase installation of EV charging ports at King County facilities to 450 by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *108 fleet charging ports (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *450 fleet charging ports*
 Zero-Emission Fleets	**GHG PM 27. Reduce GHG Emissions from County Fleets.** King County government will reduce GHG emissions from all fleet vehicle operations by 70 percent by 2030, compared to a 2017 baseline.	***Current Status:*** *15 percent reduction (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *70 percent reduction*
 Zero-Emission Fleets	**GHG PM 28. Increase County zero-emission fleets.** Increase County zero-emission fleets, achieving • 100 percent zero-emission revenue bus fleet by 2035[2] • 67 percent zero-emission ADA paratransit fleet by 2040 • 40 percent zero-emission rideshare fleet by 2030 and 100 percent by 2040 • 50 percent electric light-duty vehicles by 2030 and 100 percent by 2035 • 50 percent zero-emission medium-duty vehicles by 2035 and 100 percent by 2040 • 50 percent zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles by 2040 and 100 percent by 2045	***Current Status:*** *16 percent zero-emission revenue bus fleet* *0 percent zero-emission ADA paratransit fleet* *2 percent zero-emission rideshare fleet* *4 percent EV light-duty vehicles* *2 percent zero-emission medium-duty vehicles* *2 percent zero-emission heavy duty vehicles (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *100 percent zero-emission revenue bus fleet by 2035* *67 percent zero-emission ADA paratransit fleet by 2040* *40 percent zero-emission rideshare fleet by 2030* *50 percent electric light-duty vehicles by 2030* *50 percent zero-emission medium-duty vehicles by 2035* *50 zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles by 2040*
 Zero-Emission Fleets	**GHG PM 29. Renewable fuels.** All applicable County fleets will fuel at least 50 percent of diesel powered medium- and heavy-duty vehicles with renewable fuel by 2030	***Current Status:*** *8 percent renewable diesel (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *50 percent renewable diesel*

2 Metro is working on an updated zero emission transition implementation plan at the time of the SCAP transmittal. This plan will reflect how Metro will deliver reliable service, reduce GHG emissions, and meet our climate goals while being responsive to the speed of zero-emissions technology advancements and financial constraints. The plan will provide an updated timeline and approach to fully transition to a zero-emissions bus fleet as quickly as possible while delivering safe, clean, reliable service to our customers. The updated plan will be incorporated in the Maximizing Climate Benefits in Transit Proviso that is due to County Council in August 2025.

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King County Forest Carbon Program supports land conservation, new parks, and greenspaces.

Celebration of Community Vision at Skyway Park



SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

The impacts of climate change are already being felt, and not all communities have the same ability to adapt and recover.[1] Long-standing social, economic, and environmental disparities mean that some groups are at higher risk, facing greater exposure to climate hazards and more barriers to resilience. In King County, frontline communities—including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant and refugee populations, people with low incomes, individuals with pre-existing health conditions, unsheltered populations, and outdoor workers—experience the earliest and most severe climate impacts. These communities often have the fewest resources to recover and are underrepresented in decision-making.

Despite these challenges, frontline communities are key leaders in climate resilience and adaptation.[2] Their lived experiences provide essential insights into how climate change intersects with housing insecurity, public health disparities, economic instability, and environmental risks. While these communities have historically contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions,[3] they bear the greatest burden of climate impacts. Centering their voices in policy and planning is not just a matter of equity—it is essential for developing more effective, community-driven climate solutions that reflect the realities and priorities of those most affected.

BACKGROUND

King County is home to over 2.3 million residents as of 2023, making it one of the largest and most diverse counties in Washington State.[4] The majority of the population—approximately 89 percent—resides within the County's cities and towns, while around 250,000 people live in unincorporated King County. Within these unincorporated areas, more than 119,000 residents live in urbanized communities, while over 127,000 reside in rural settings.[5] The County's population continues to grow and diversify, bringing both opportunities and challenges for sustainable and resilient community development. Since 2010, the percentage of BIPOC populations has increased over the decade from 39 percent to 46 percent of the total population.[6] As of 2023, 26 percent of people living in King County were born outside the U.S.[7]

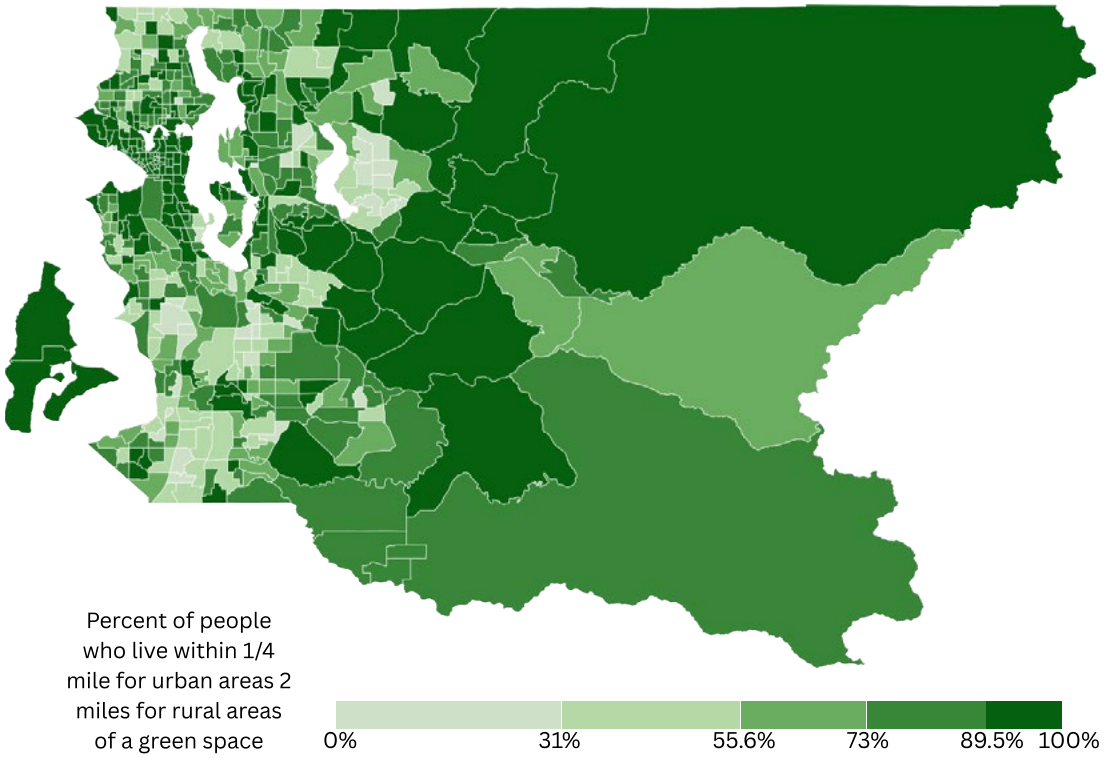
While climate hazards such as extreme heat, flooding, and wildfire smoke affect all communities, the burden is not shared equally. Decades of discriminatory policies and disinvestment have contributed to disparities in housing, economic opportunity, healthcare access, and environmental quality, all of which intensify climate vulnerability.

Racial segregation and neighborhood disinvestment: Historical practices such as redlining and exclusionary zoning have concentrated poverty and environmental hazards in certain neighborhoods, limiting wealth-building opportunities for BIPOC households. Today, these same communities often experience higher exposure to extreme heat, air pollution, and flood risks due to a lack of green space, aging infrastructure, and proximity to industrial pollution sources.

Economic inequality and workforce disparities: While King County workers earn higher incomes than the state and national averages, economic gaps persist along racial and geographic lines. BIPOC households—particularly Black, African American, American Indian, and Alaska Native residents—earn significantly less than White households. Incomes for Black and African American households are about half of those of White households, underscoring systemic inequities.[8] Many outdoor workers, who are disproportionately from frontline communities, face increased exposure to extreme heat, air pollution, and other climate-related hazards that threaten both their health and financial stability.

Figure 15. Equitable Access to Green Space

This map shows percent of people that live within one quarter mile (in urban areas) or within 2 miles (rural areas) in a straight line of any kind of open space by Census Tract for 2020.



Sources: King County Parks (2024), Puget Sound Regional Council (2020), US Census (2020)

Health disparities and climate risks: Health outcomes vary significantly by race and place, with frontline communities experiencing higher rates of chronic conditions such as asthma, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes—conditions that are exacerbated by climate change. Black, African American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and American Indian and Alaska Native residents have lower life expectancies than their White counterparts. Communities in South King County—where many frontline populations reside—experience shorter life spans compared to those in northern and eastern areas. Individuals with pre-existing health conditions face greater risks from extreme weather events, while older adults and people with disabilities may have difficulty evacuating or accessing emergency services during climate disasters. Nearly ten percent of King County residents live with a disability.[9] Unsheltered populations, who lack stable housing and healthcare, are at even greater risk. As of a 2021 count, King County had 40,800 people experiencing homelessness.[10]

Linguistic and cultural barriers to adaptation: Over 120 languages are spoken across King County,[11] and as of 2023, 31 percent of residents spoke a language other than English at home.[12] These linguistic and cultural factors can create barriers to accessing emergency services, healthcare, and climate adaptation resources. Climate communications that rely on technical language or fail to incorporate culturally relevant outreach strategies can exclude the very communities most affected by climate change.



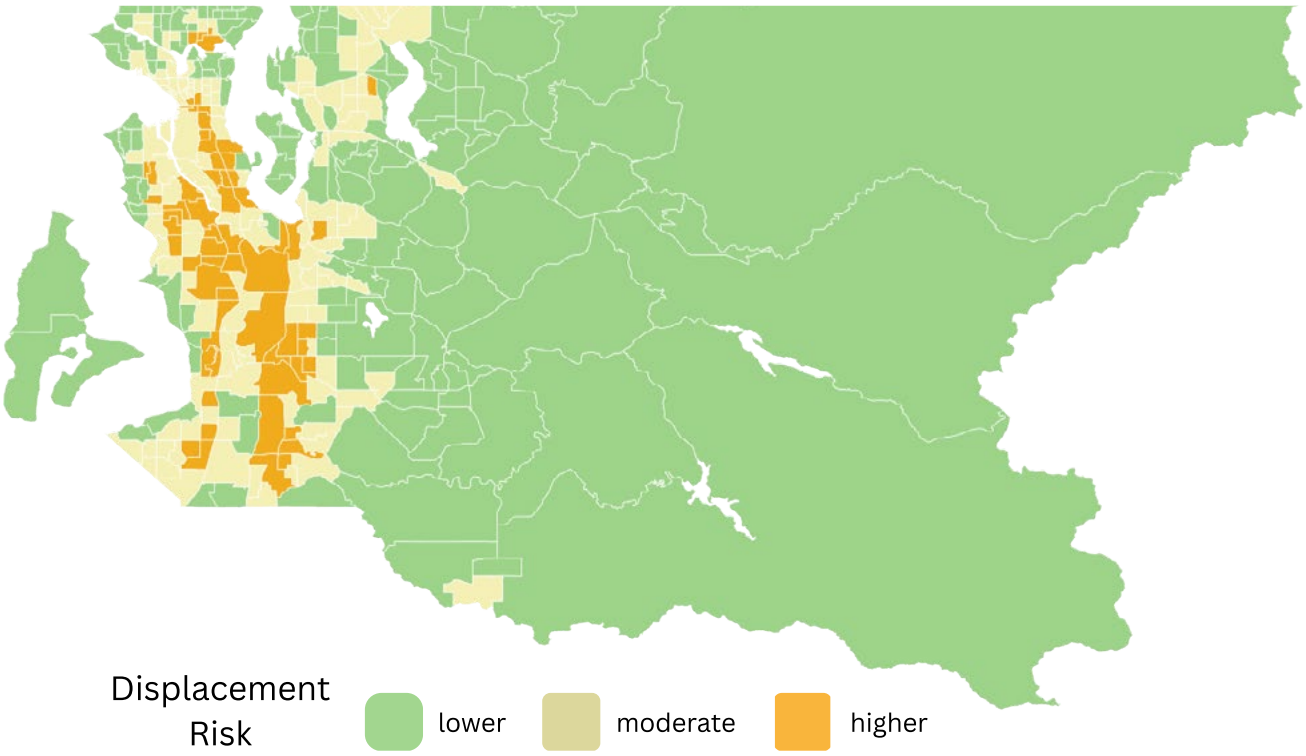
Educating our communities about climate impacts and resources is critical.

Housing affordability and displacement: King County faces an escalating housing affordability crisis, particularly in unincorporated areas where new development has largely consisted of single-family homes rather than a range of housing options accessible to lower-income residents. Between 2016 and 2022, median home prices increased by nearly $300,000,[13] while rents rose by over 40 percent between 2015 and 2021.[14] Displacement pressures are particularly severe for Black and African American households, low-income renters, and residents in historically marginalized neighborhoods such as Skyway-West Hill and North Highline. Many immigrant and refugee communities—already facing barriers to housing stability—are at increasing risk of being pushed out of their neighborhoods due to rising costs.

Without addressing these systemic factors, climate policies risk reinforcing the very disparities they aim to reduce. Strengthening climate resilience requires a holistic approach—one that not only mitigates climate hazards but also expands access to housing, economic opportunity, transportation, healthcare, and community resources.

Figure 16. Displacement Risk Across King County

This map defines areas with lower, moderate, or higher risk of displacement based on current neighborhood conditions.



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council (2021)

KEY ISSUES

The systemic inequities outlined in the previous section—shaped by historical policies, economic exclusion, and social marginalization—have led to deep disparities in climate vulnerability. Addressing these root causes requires a focused approach on the specific barriers that frontline communities face in accessing resources, participating in decision-making, and building resilience. In King County, key issue areas such as lack of access, community health and emergency preparedness, housing security and anti-displacement, economic opportunity and workforce development, and transportation equity are central to shaping an effective climate response. These challenges are interconnected, influencing how communities experience and recover from climate-related risks. By prioritizing action in these areas, King County aims to build more equitable, sustainable communities that are prepared for the growing impacts of climate change.



Community Leadership and Community-Driven Policymaking and Building Capacity with Frontline Communities and Youth

- Frontline communities hold experiences and perspectives that can support the creation of effective, holistic climate solutions. Existing and historic racial, social, environmental, and economic inequities can limit access to resources and create barriers to participation in decision-making processes.
- Language barriers are an important consideration. Even among frontline community members who can read and speak English, frequent use of jargon and technical language in climate-related materials can make it difficult to understand and communicate climate risks to others.



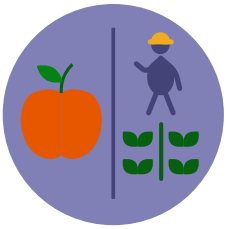
Climate and Economic Opportunity

- The clean energy sector is growing, but barriers such as skills gaps and limited access to training exclude frontline communities.
- Without equitable workforce development, the clean energy transition may deepen economic disparities.
- Existing inequities in job access must be addressed to ensure all communities benefit from emerging green industries.



Community Health and Emergency Preparedness

- Climate change is intensifying extreme weather events and disproportionately affecting frontline communities.
- Rising temperatures, wildfire smoke, and flooding pose severe health risks, especially for communities with existing health disparities.
- Lack of equitable access to emergency preparedness information and resources increases risks for groups that have been marginalized.



Food Systems and Food Security

- Climate change is affecting food security and putting pressures on global and local food systems.[15]
- In South King County, nearly twice as many people already face food insecurity compared to the state average; this percentage is even higher in frontline communities.[16]
- Climate change impacts will only worsen disparities unless there are equitable, innovative solutions that balance the needs of farming with goals to restore and protect healthy ecosystems.



Housing Security and Anti-Displacement

- Climate change and gentrification-driven displacement are forcing residents with low incomes further from economic opportunities and transit.
- ˝Bluelining,"[17] is an emerging practice where financial institutions raise costs in areas at high environmental risk. These areas often overlap with the same patterns of disinvestment established by redlining and further threaten housing affordability for frontline communities living in these areas.
- A growing affordability crisis is making climate-adaptive housing solutions inaccessible to frontline communities.



Energy Justice and Utilities Affordability

- A 2024 King County utility renter affordability survey found renters are already making difficult trade-offs to pay their energy bills.[18]
- Climate impacts can increase utility cost burdens for all County residents, worsening a growing affordability crisis.[19]
- Frontline communities require reduced utility costs and affordable and accessible options for participating in an energy transition.



Transportation Access and Equity

- Reliable and affordable transit is critical to reducing climate vulnerability.
- Housing costs are pushing frontline communities further from transit hubs, increasing transportation costs.
- Public transit remains inaccessible for many, limiting economic mobility and contributing to greater emissions where driving is the most accessible form of transportation.

STRATEGIES & TOOLS

Recognizing frontline communities' leadership and expertise is not just about addressing inequities, it is also about harnessing the power of community-driven solutions. Historically, government-led climate responses have not fully accounted for the lived experiences and priorities of these communities, leading to solutions that do not effectively address their needs. Many frontline communities have deep-rooted traditions of environmental stewardship, sustainable living, and mutual aid networks. Despite holding invaluable knowledge about climate resilience, frontline communities have not historically been granted the resources and platforms necessary to take bold action or shape policy decisions.

Foundations of the SRFC Framework for Action:

To address this, 22 frontline community leaders partnered with King County to develop the first community-driven climate justice framework for the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP). The Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities (SRFC) framework, originally introduced in the 2020 SCAP, has evolved through deep partnerships with the Climate Equity Community Task Force (CECTF) and the Climate Equity Work Group. These working groups have helped refine the County's approach to climate resilience by identifying priority areas: community leadership, capacity building, economic opportunity, climate health equity, food access and security, housing and anti-displacement, energy justice and utilities, and transportation access and equity.

Key Strategies of the SRFC Framework:

The SRFC framework uses the following six cross-cutting strategies across eight Focus Areas to advance climate and equity in frontline communities:

1. **Build equitable practices:** Build King County and community capacity to prioritize climate equity.

2. **Language access:** Prioritize collaborative language access in partnership with trusted community partners.

3. **Community leadership:** Advance frontline community leadership by investing in long-term community and tribal partnerships, community capacity development, and improved infrastructure for community-driven policy and decision-making.

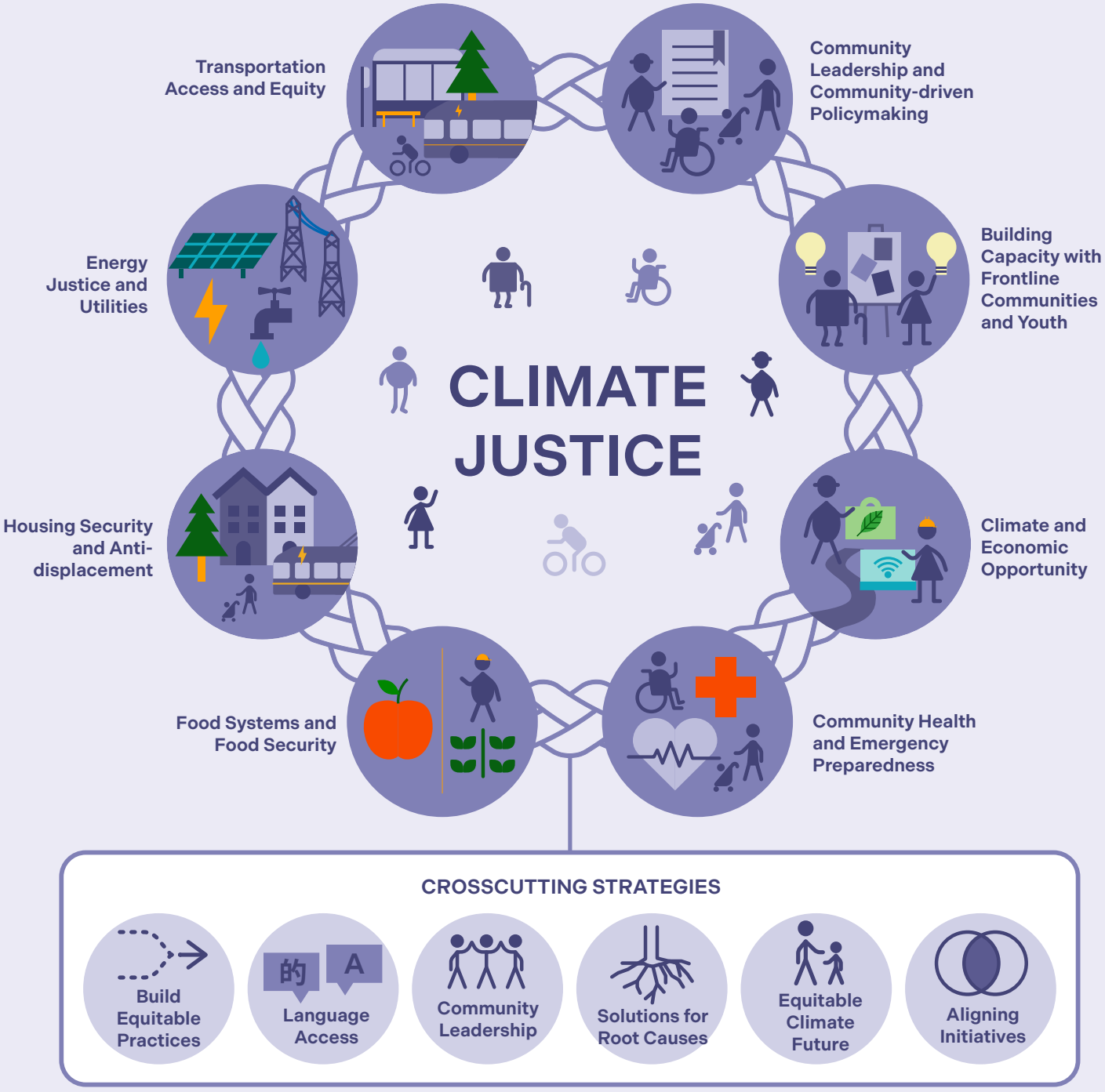
4. **Solutions for root causes:** Address root causes of climate vulnerability by prioritizing comprehensive solutions co-developed with frontline communities that reduce systemic inequities and have co-benefits.

5. **Equitable climate future:** Advance an equitable climate future by investing in climate solutions and opportunities with and for frontline communities.

6. **Align initiatives:** Align with and elevate actions in related County programs that support frontline communities and climate resilience.

The actions in the following section integrates input from the CECTF and the Climate Equity Work Group, ensuring that frontline communities' priorities remain embedded in County climate policies and programs.

Figure 17. Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities Framework



County Policies and Strategic Plans

As a regional government, King County has a unique role in shaping climate resilience through land use planning, transportation investments, public health initiatives, and funding allocations. By embedding climate equity into its policies and programs, the County can address systemic inequities, reduce climate risks, and expand opportunities for frontline communities. Through its regulatory authority and partnerships, King County is committed to ensuring that climate solutions are inclusive and community-driven. The following policies and strategic plans provide a framework for integrating climate resilience and equity across different sectors:

- **Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Strategic Plan (2016).** Embeds equity in climate policies and funding.
- **King County Comprehensive Plan (2024).** Integrates climate resilience and equity into countywide planning.
- **Metro Strategic Plan (2021).** Enhances transit access in underserved areas.
- **Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Strategic Plan (2024).** Addresses climate-related health disparities.

Programs and Initiatives

In addition to policy and planning efforts, King County invests in programs and initiatives that directly support frontline communities in building climate resilience. These efforts focus on increasing community leadership, expanding economic opportunities, improving public health outcomes, and ensuring equitable access to climate solutions. Through partnerships, funding opportunities, and workforce development, the County is working to remove systemic barriers and create pathways for frontline communities to thrive in the face of climate change. The following programs and initiatives play a critical role in advancing these goals:

- **Climate and Health Dashboard** – Tracks climate-related health disparities.
- **Climate Equity Community Task Force (CECTF)** – Ensures frontline communities have a voice in County climate planning.
- **Community Climate Resilience Grant Program** – Funds community-led climate initiatives.
- **Energize Heat Pump Program** – Expands access to energy-efficient technology for low-income households.
- **King County JumpStart** – Provides clean energy workforce training for frontline communities.
- **NextGen Internship Program** – Creates career pathways in climate policy and planning.
- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Metrics** – Ensures new transit investments prioritize frontline communities.

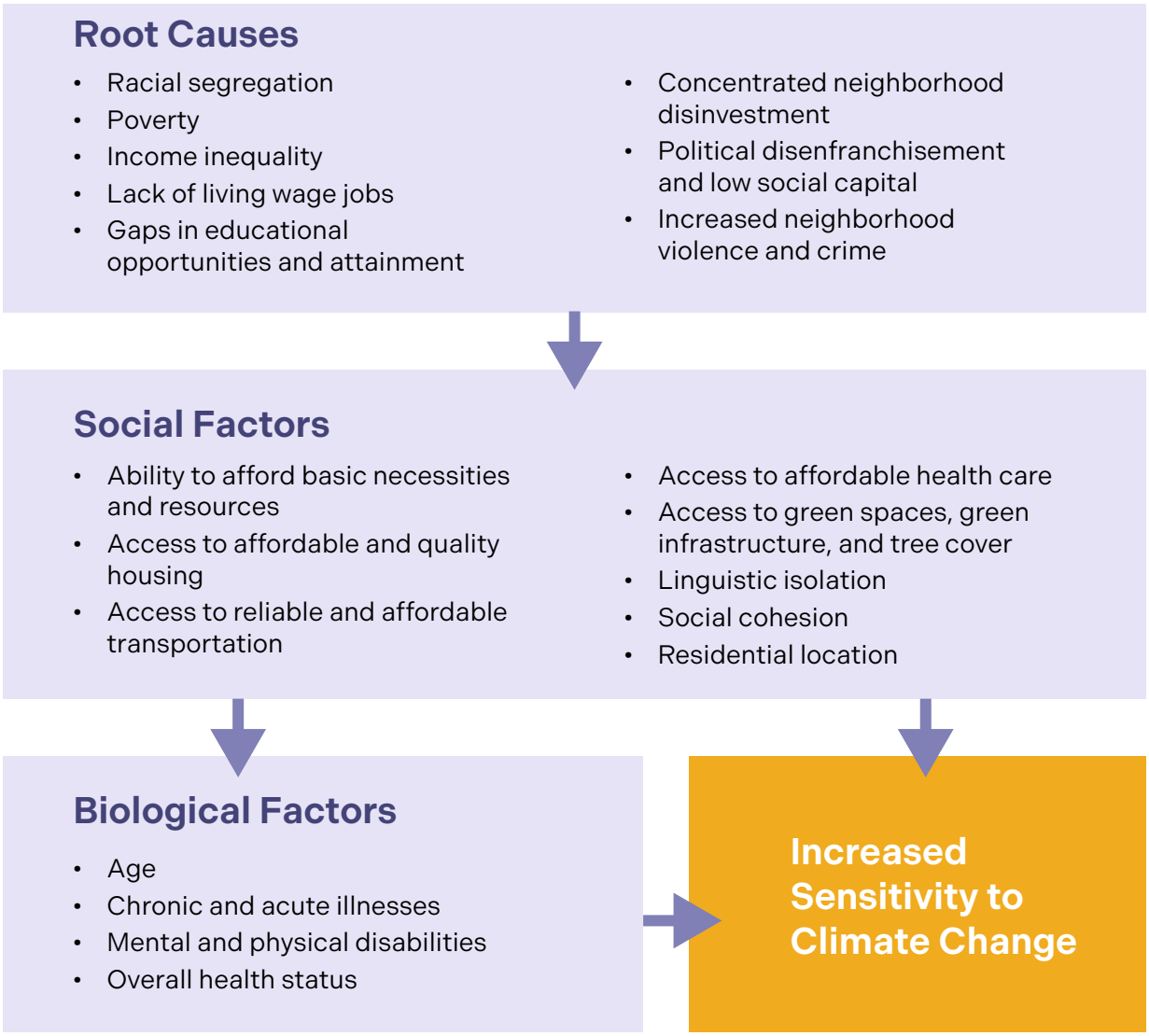
SUMMARY

King County is committed to integrating frontline community leadership into climate action, ensuring policies are driven by those most affected. Supporting and investing in these communities ensures that climate action is both just and effective, fostering resilience that benefits the entire region. The following pages will describe how the County plans to work with frontline communities over the next five years to:

- **Deepen community partnerships** through expanded leadership pathways and policy development;
- **Enhance climate resilience** with improved housing protections, emergency preparedness, and climate health monitoring;
- **Scale up investments** in clean energy workforce development and green job training; and
- **Expand transit accessibility** to ensure displaced communities remain connected to economic opportunities.

Figure 18. Sensitivity to Climate Change

This diagram illustrates root causes and factors affecting sensitivity to climate change.



Source: Adapted from "Root Causes and Factors Affecting Sensitivity to Climate Change" in Urban Sustainability Directors Network Guide to Equitable, Community-Driven Climate Preparedness Planning (2017)



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY-DRIVEN POLICYMAKING

The burdens and benefits of climate change will affect King County's current and future residents, communities, and businesses in different ways. Frontline communities are often hit first and worst by climate change impacts. This unique position generates critical expertise around the challenges posed to their communities and enables innovative solutions to manage daily impacts.[20]

Figure 19 shows the "Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership,"[21] a tool developed by Rosa Gonzalez to help elected officials, government staff, and community-based organizations work together. It describes the different stages of working together, as well as some of the common costs and benefits that might be applied to policy development. Traditionally, many local government approaches to community engagement have taken the forms of "inform" or "consult" (columns two and three) on the Spectrum of Community Engagement. The limitations of these approaches can uphold a wide variety of barriers, from financial to institutional, that limit both community access to decision-making tables and the implementation of bold solutions that address the root causes affecting sensitivity to climate change.

By investing in climate solutions and opportunities in partnership with and for frontline communities, King County can advance a more equitable and just climate future for all.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Climate impacts to the region can have adverse impacts to human health, weather, flooding, and to economic stability for the region.[22] At an individual level, this can translate to the disruption of pathways to gainful employment, poor health outcomes, and to barriers to food access, housing affordability, energy justice and utilities, and accessible transportation. For frontline communities, these impacts are intersectional and deepen overlapping disparities.

Effective action addresses climate change and social inequities simultaneously by understanding it is a threat multiplier to a host of social issues.

A BETTER OUTCOME

By investing in community-driven planning processes and partnerships, King County can take innovative and equitable action aligned with the priorities and expertise frontline communities offer. Recent initiatives related to climate have started the complex and rewarding work of centering the communities bearing the brunt of a changing planet.

Figure 19. The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

STANCE TOWARDS COMMUNITY	Ignore	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Defer to
	1	2	3	4	5	6
IMPACT	*Marginalization*	*Placation*	*Tokenization*	*Voice*	*Delegated Power*	*Community Ownership*
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS	Deny access to decision-making processes	Provide the community with relevant information	Gather input from the community	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process & inform planning	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions	Foster democratic participation and equity through community-driven decision-making; Bridge divide between community & governance
MESSAGE TO COMMUNITY	*"Your voice, needs & interests do not matter"*	*"We will keep you informed"*	*"We care what you think"*	*"We can't do this well without you"*	*"Your leadership and expertise are critical"*	*"We want this to work so we support equitable processes led by community"*
ACTIVITIES	Closed door meetings Misinformation	Fact sheets Open Houses Presentations Billboards Videos	Public Comment Focus Groups Community Forums Surveys	Community organizing & advocacy Interactive workshops Polling House meetings Community forums	MOU's with Community-based Organizations Consensus building Citizen advisory committees Participatory Action Research	Community-driven planning Community Organizing Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling Participatory budgeting
RESOURCE ALLOCATION RATIOS	**100%** Systems Admin	**70-90%** Systems Admin **10-30%** Promotions and Publicity	**60-80%** Systems Admin **20-40%** Consultation Activities	**50-60%** Systems Admin **40-50%** Community Involvement	**20-50%** Systems Admin **50-70%** Community Partners	**80-100%** Community partners and community-driven processes ideally generate new value and resources that can be invested in solutions

Source: Adapted from "The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership" developed by Facilitating Power and Movement Strategy Center (2019)

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Funded an ongoing Climate Equity Community Task Force, a community working group of frontline community leaders collaborating with the County on climate initiatives, funding decisions, and policymaking.
- Piloted an annual Community Climate Resilience Grant program designed to support community-driven climate action advancing local priorities.
- Established community working groups advising on open space, equitable development, the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, and the 2025 SCAP.
- Launched and expanded a NextGen Internship program focused on creating career pathways to climate policy, planning, and program development.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

King County will partner with frontline community leaders, cultivate pathways for emerging leaders, and resource community-led climate initiatives through the following actions:

- **SRFC 1.** Partner with the Climate Equity Community Task Force
- **SRFC 2.** Develop leadership pathways for frontline communities
- **SRFC 3.** Standardize community compensation
- **SRFC 4.** Support community-led initiatives through Community Climate Resilience grants

Land Conservation: Tour of Green-Duwamish watershed



SRFC 1. PARTNER WITH THE CLIMATE EQUITY COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

Local government recognizes the leadership, knowledge, and experience of frontline community members and their ability to strengthen the effectiveness of climate solutions. To this end, King County will maintain a funded partnership with the Climate Equity Community Task Force (CECTF) as a community working group partnering on and guiding equitable decision-making on climate change. The CECTF will continue to provide guidance for ongoing community-driven policy development processes and actions, support connection to frontline communities, and maintain the institutional knowledge of the development of King County's Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities—the County's first climate justice framework.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–DO; Metro–GM; Metro–GM; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community-based organizations and climate justice leaders, i.e., Chinese Information Service Center; Mother Africa; Living Well Kent; UTOPIA WA; Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association; etc.

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



SRFC 2. DEVELOP LEADERSHIP PATHWAYS FOR FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

Frontline communities most impacted by climate change are also significantly underrepresented in formal planning and decision-making roles related to climate. To counter this "green ceiling"[23] King County will establish partnerships with existing leadership pathways programs for CBOs and community leaders to provide viable pathways to co-design municipal, county, and state climate policies, plans, communications, and data collection and survey methods. Programs would center community-driven and cultural knowledge that informs alternative models of leadership and planning. Graduates would be connected to boards, commissions, regulatory tables, cabinets, and job opportunities focused on environmental and climate solutions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–DO; Communities of Opportunity

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community-based organizations serving King County frontline communities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 3. STANDARDIZE COMMUNITY COMPENSATION

Traditional boards, commissions, and community working groups established by local government often carry structural barriers to participation for frontline community members where time, material resources, and access to accurate and culturally relevant climate education may be limited. King County will develop a standardized community compensation process that is equitable and timely for engagement on King County community working groups, advisory groups, etc., where climate action is a focus area. Compensation recognizes the disparate impacts of historical and current inequities in frontline community members' ability to engage with local government proactively and to influence decision-making across long-term planning, policymaking, and programmatic processes. This action ensures County initiatives are racially just, equitable, and informed by the perspectives of the communities carrying a high and disparate risk of climate impacts.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; OERSJ

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–DO; DNRP–DO; Metro–GM; PHSKC–DO; PSB–Budget

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Climate Equity Community Task Force

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Capacity building; engagement; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County ESJ Strategic Plan; OESJ Community Compensation Project

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



SRFC 4. SUPPORT COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES THROUGH COMMUNITY CLIMATE RESILIENCE GRANTS

Supporting and investing in frontline community organizations to build their capacity to address climate impacts is necessary to implement holistic, community-centered approaches. King County will establish a community co-created and sustainable community climate resilience grant program awarding multi-year grants. The program will lower barriers to access through equitable grantmaking, providing technical support, providing funding pathways for small minority-owned businesses, contractors, and community-based nonprofit organizations. Applicants and grantees will receive appropriate levels of support to complete applications, and if awarded, receive support to successfully execute activities and fulfill reporting requirements. This will support frontline community's ability to lead and organize effective action on climate change.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–DO; Communities of Opportunity

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Climate Equity Community Task Force; Open Space Equity Cabinet; Metro Mobility Equity Cabinet

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



Celeste White Wolf teaches ivy weaving at a community event hosted by yəhaw' Indigenous Creatives Collective with the support of the King County Community Climate Resilience Grant.
Image source: yəhaw' Indigenous Creatives Collective



BUILDING CAPACITY WITH FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES AND YOUTH

Combatting climate change requires an integrated, regional response that expands the shared vision and leadership of the region's public, private, and civic sectors, and the participation of all King County community members. Building on work in the 2020 SCAP, King County has continued growing effective partnerships for joint action on climate change.

As communities continue to feel the impacts at an accelerated pace, local government must continue to deepen engagement and capacity building with governmental staff and with frontline community members and youth. Increasing understanding of how historical and current inequities can result in patterns of unfair outcomes, how climate change worsens these conditions, and what government and the public can do to increase community resilience requires focused effort.

By continuing to drive climate and equity education and engagement, King County can create connections across departments and communities for broader, integrated support and engagement on climate action.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

County staff cannot anticipate all the barriers frontline communities face in community engagement processes. These communities disproportionately bear the burdens of redlining, historical marginalization, environmental injustice, and institutional racism. Adults and youth in these communities who see and feel the impacts of climate change most acutely are often unable to access the foundational knowledge of climate change, the impacts they should expect, and how they can engage.

At this moment in the region's readiness for action, access to accurate, science-based, and in-language climate education that also provides historical context for current conditions is critical to cross-sector collaborations that do not leave any communities behind.

A BETTER OUTCOME

Improving access to climate change education creates public support and builds political and social capital for equitable and comprehensive solutions. It also grows the number of government and community champions and future leaders who can continue to advance a cleaner future.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Developed award-winning climate and health messaging with and for community through multi-language comics, fliers, web materials, and other public health programs.
- Grew leadership capacity in frontline communities by developing an annual Climate Justice Learning Series for the public, featuring local climate justice champions.
- Launched monthly Climate Action Talks for County staff highlighting climate work across a wide array of topics, including preparedness, vehicle electrification, green careers, and community-led action.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

King County will continue building internal County staff capacity to embed climate equity and build frontline community capacity to drive just climate solutions through the following actions:

- **SRFC 5.** Provide Climate Justice training for King County employees and volunteers
- **SRFC 6.** Establish an interdepartmental Climate Equity Working Group
- **SRFC 7.** Partner with youth-serving organizations to build climate change literacy and civic engagement
- **SRFC 8.** Advance climate resilience in K–12 schools
- **SRFC 9.** Create relevant climate change communications and education outreach

King County farmland sprouts



SRFC 5. PROVIDE CLIMATE JUSTICE TRAINING FOR KING COUNTY EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

County staff cannot anticipate all the barriers frontline communities face in community engagement processes and benefit from learning what communities need to mitigate these barriers. King County will develop climate impacts and environmental and climate justice training for County employees, boards, and commissions connected to climate, environment, sustainability, land use, and transportation topics. This training will provide staff and community advisory bodies with an understanding of disparate climate impacts, frontline community priorities, and examples of how to embed cross-cutting climate equity strategies into County initiatives. The goal is to prepare King County staff and community working groups with a shared framework for addressing and accounting for the disparate impacts of climate change.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; DHR

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS-DO; DNRP-DO; DLS-DO; Metro-ES, GM; OEM; PHSKC-DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Climate Equity Community Task Force

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



SRFC 6. ESTABLISH AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL CLIMATE EQUITY WORKING GROUP

Comprehensive and equitable climate solutions require integrated approaches and collaboration across County departments. King County will establish a County staff Climate Equity Working Group to focus on cross-cutting climate equity issues. This interdepartmental (IDT) working group will address issues related to climate and environmental justice and governance. IDT goals include collecting more specific data categories, coordinating on translation and interpretation guidelines, elevating community priorities and funding resources, advancing opportunities for energy and utility affordability, and other related topics. This group will identify needs across departments, develop goals and priorities, and strengthen alignment for addressing climate impacts on frontline communities.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–DO; DLS–DO; DNRP–DO; KCIA; Metro–GM; OEM; OERSJ; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Climate Equity Community Task Force; regional climate and environmental justice advocacy organizations

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy; PHSKC 2024–2029 Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



SRFC 7. PARTNER WITH YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS TO BUILD CLIMATE JUSTICE LITERACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Young people are inheriting the future shaped by the decisions currently being made in local government. King County will partner with youth-serving organizations within frontline communities to build youth's climate change and climate justice literacy and civic education. Young people are likely to experience climate change more intensely and for a larger proportion of their adult lives than older generations. They are also likely to be more marginalized in spaces where decision-making on climate policy, investments, and action occurs. These partnerships will identify and grow pathways for youth to serve in leadership positions within government working and advisory groups.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility; PHSKC–DO; DNRP–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
School districts; youth-serving organizations

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Metro Youth Equity Mobility Internship Program; ECO NextGen Internship Program; DNRP Youth Conservation Corps; DNRP Green Schools Program; ECO Climate Justice Learning Series; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



King County partners with Salmon Bay Elementary to plant native trees and shrubs at Big Finn Hill



SRFC 8. ADVANCE CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN K-12 SCHOOLS

Public health evidence shows that the school environment can influence the physical health, cognitive function, mental well-being, and academic performance of students. These harmful impacts are often unfairly distributed across racial/ethnic groups and socio-economic status, with non-White students and those from low-income families bearing the burden. To improve the climate resilience of K–12 schools, King County will explore developing a local grant fund to assist overburdened schools with climate-related facility improvements. The County will research and prepare a fund development plan based on other models. If funding is secured, King County will administer the grants along with technical assistance. Additionally, the County will explore avenues and partnerships to increase climate health literacy among school educators, staff, and students, and student learning opportunities about green jobs. This action expands upon the current King County's Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy's Cool Schools Initiative.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–EHS

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County schools; Puget Sound Education Service District; public and private funders

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy; Washington Clean Buildings Performance Standards; Environmental Justice Assessment of Washington School Environmental Health and Safety Rule

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | **New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | **Other**



SRFC 9. CREATE RELEVANT CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION OUTREACH

Improving access to climate change information and focusing on climate change education drives broad support for climate action and builds pathways for community-supported decision-making. King County will partner with frontline community-based and youth-serving organizations, cultural groups, collectives, and faith-based organizations to co-design and implement culturally relevant communications and education outreach strategies. Strategies will be designed to inform the public about climate change and intersecting climate justice issue areas, including co-creating tailored materials with frontline communities that are culturally relevant and in accessible languages.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–DO; Language Access Program; DNRP–DO, Metro–GM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Climate Equity Community Task Force; Public Health Community Navigators; Community Health Ambassadors

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; engagement; capacity building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

According to the 2024 United States Energy and Employment Report,[24] the clean energy sector created 149,000 new jobs in the U.S. in 2023, reflecting a three percent increase compared to a two percent growth for the overall economy. Job growth in Washington State is projected to rise by 12.8 percent through 2032,[25] indicating a promising future for the clean energy sector and the potential for significant economic growth.

In preparing for economic growth, King County recognizes the unique opportunity to collaborate with growing local industries over the next five years. King County's goal centers on ensuring that residents from frontline communities impacted by climate change have access to economic opportunities through living-wage careers.

Specifically, King County has the opportunity and responsibility to leverage its platform and initiatives to accelerate clean energy deployment. This includes advancing skills training opportunities, business technical assistance, and workforce partnerships to help close the skills gap and prepare the local workforce for the clean energy transition as it unfolds.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Many local communities are missing out on the economic opportunities the clean energy transition presents. According to a Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council report, 28 percent of working-age households in Washington live below the self-sufficiency standard,[26] a measure of income adequacy based on the real cost of all basic needs, including taxes and savings for working families. If King County does not take action, low-income communities risk missing out on the economic benefits of the clean energy transition, similar to how many residents were left behind[27] during the tech boom in Seattle.

It is crucial to connect County residents to good-paying career opportunities. Failing to do so may reinforce the harmful notion that one must choose between advancing the clean energy transition and maintaining a strong economy. Missing this opportunity will make achieving the County's climate goals much harder.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County can be a region where the link between climate action and economic opportunity is clear and undeniable. In this vision, local businesses recognize the financial benefits of climate solutions, thanks to the incentives and resources that King County has made available to them. Additionally, this can be a community where cross-sector partnerships, programs, and outreach in frontline communities showcase a variety of career pathways for residents and young people interested in pursuing careers in the clean energy sector.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Designed and launched a clean-energy-focused workforce development and business engagement program, King County Jumpstart to connect youth 18–24 with skills training and paid work-based learning with local clean energy contractors. 86 percent of youth served by JumpStart identify as Black or Latino, and 83 percent of participants successfully complete paid work-based learning with an employer.
- Developed the first countywide Green Jobs Strategy highlighted by third parties as a high-quality community, informed plan.[28]
- Completed an industry sector analysis through 2031 of local high-growth sectors such as construction, manufacturing, transportation, and professional services/tech.
- Led the creation of the Coalition for Climate Careers, a public-private partnership and regional collaboration focused on promoting green job growth and quality skills training.
- Collaborated with County project managers and local contractors to require paid work-based learning for youth for County programs like Energize and Equitable Wastewater Futures, developing a model for other capital projects across the County.
- Revised King County's green building scorecard to allow for more opportunities for project managers to advance economic opportunity through workforce development.
- Facilitated dozens of community events and job fairs, engaging hundreds in career exposure related to the green economy, including the Green Jobs Green Futures Summit .

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

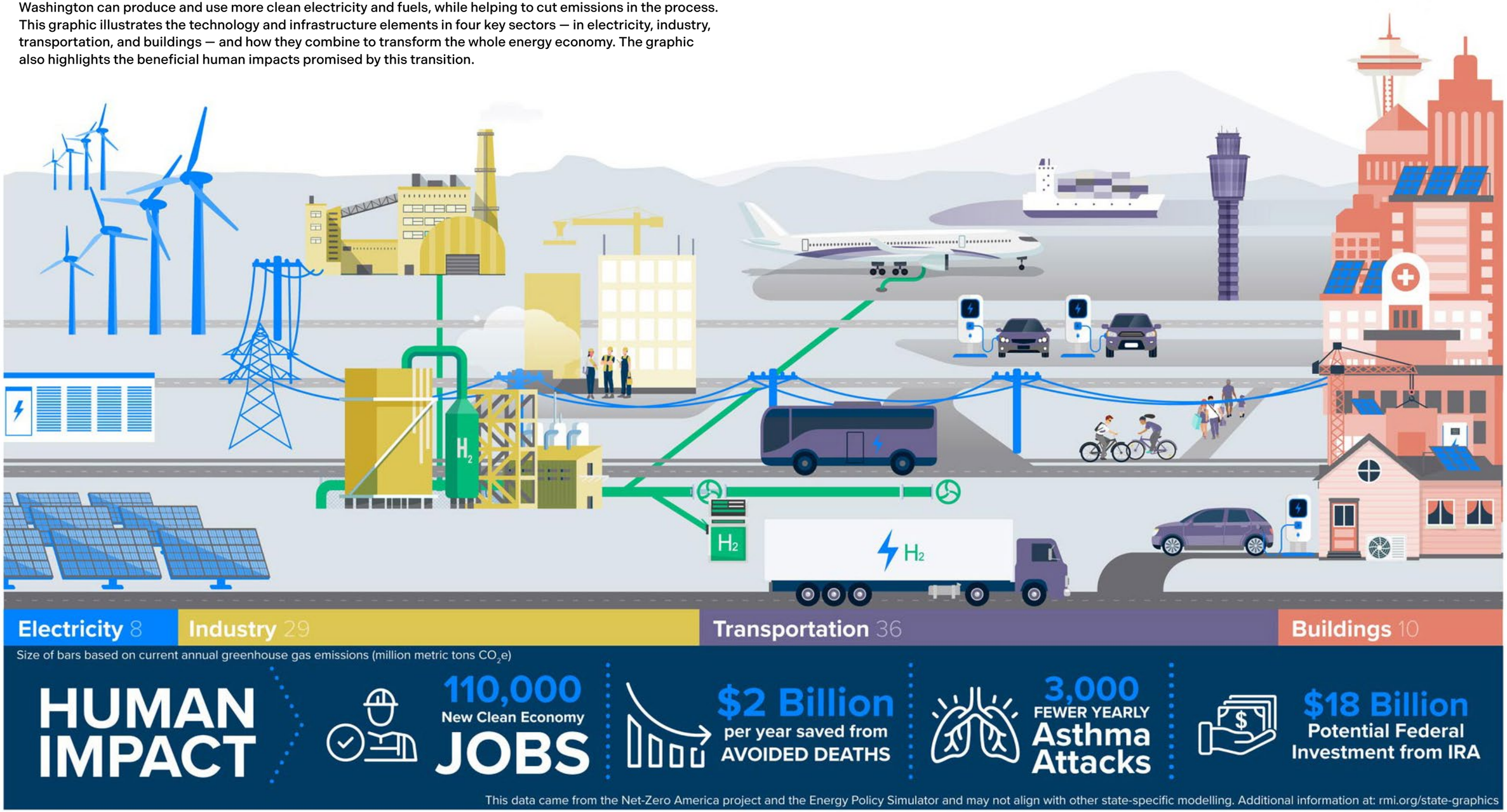
We will integrate climate-informed workforce development into capital projects, focus outreach campaigns and engagement, strengthen cross-sector and regional partnerships, and advance climate and workforce policies and programs through the following actions:

- **SRFC 10.** Integrate equitable, climate-informed workforce development into capital projects
- **SRFC 11.** Implement the King County Climate and Workforce Strategy
- **SRFC 12.** Communicate the economic benefit of the clean energy transition for local businesses and commercial property owners
- **SRFC 13.** Expand and scale youth and middle-worker campaigns
- **SRFC 14.** Establish cross-sector partnerships to expand climate-informed career pathways
- **SRFC 15.** Advance workforce and economic development in the clean energy economy through regional collaboration

King County's award-winning Operator-in-Training Program has produced a new generation of wastewater professionals.

Figure 20. Clean Energy Economy

Washington can produce and use more clean electricity and fuels, while helping to cut emissions in the process. This graphic illustrates the technology and infrastructure elements in four key sectors — in electricity, industry, transportation, and buildings — and how they combine to transform the whole energy economy. The graphic also highlights the beneficial human impacts promised by this transition.



Source: Rocky Mountain Institute (2023)



SRFC 10. INTEGRATE EQUITABLE, CLIMATE-INFORMED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INTO CAPITAL PROJECTS

King County can leverage its multi-billion-dollar capital project budget to create career and workforce development opportunities within frontline communities affected by climate change. County capital project managers have reported wanting more resources to connect workforce development to their capital projects. King County will create a resource guide and sample contract language library for Capital project managers. This guide will help project managers access and use available tools, including small contractor and suppliers utilization, job training, internships, and employment opportunities for people from disadvantaged areas in their projects. The goal is to ensure that County projects benefit a diverse range of people and businesses.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FBOD, WTD–Capital Project Training Team, SWD–Green Building Team; OEOCE; FMD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Tabor 100; Workforce Development Council of Seattle King County; Coalition for Climate Careers (C3)

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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



SRFC 11. IMPLEMENT THE KING COUNTY CLIMATE AND WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Comprehensive strategies are essential for advancing workforce development related to climate action. The King County Climate and Workforce Strategy provides a framework to engage key partners to create climate-connected, living-wage employment opportunities and build a skilled, diverse workforce. King County will collaborate across departments with local education and training providers, labor partners, employers, business owners, community-based organizations, and residents from frontline communities to implement the Climate and Workforce Strategy.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–GM, ES, Capital, F&A; DNRP–DO; DLS–DO; DES–DO; DHR; OEOCE

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Coalition for Climate Careers (C3); Workforce Development Council – Seattle & King County; Greater Seattle Partners; Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; engagement; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 12. COMMUNICATE THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OWNERS

Learning about resources related to the clean energy transition can be confusing and time-consuming for small business owners, which may lead to delays in their engagement. To address this, King County will develop a single platform to showcase County programs aimed at supporting local businesses and sharing positive updates about decarbonization. This will include creating a central webpage. King County will also collaborate with local business outreach organizations to enhance education and provide information on incentives for clean energy deployment. This initiative aims to help local businesses accelerate their progress in decarbonization and electrification.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–FBOD; DLS–DO; OEOCE

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Emerald Cities E-Contractor Training Network; Breaking Barriers Collaborative; Tabor 100; Seattle Metro Chamber of Commerce; Greater Seattle Partners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County DES 2024 Disparity Study Recommendations; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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



SRFC 13. EXPAND AND SCALE YOUTH AND MIDDLE-SKILLS WORKER CAMPAIGNS

King County has various programs and campaigns aimed at introducing youth to the green economy; however, there is a need for better coordination and promotion across these programs to increase and measure their impact. King County will collaborate with community partners to enhance and showcase specific ongoing initiatives within County departments, such as the Youth Conservation Corps, the Metro Youth Mobility Program, and the King County Green Schools Program. Through targeted community campaigns and events, the County aims to increase young people's participation in career exposure opportunities in the clean energy sector, ensuring that the local workforce is prepared to meet future industry needs.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility; DCHS–DO; DES–DO; DLS–DO; DNRP–DO; OEOCE; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Coalition for Climate Careers (C3); other local community partners invested in career and technical education and engagement

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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



SRFC 14. ESTABLISH CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND CLIMATE-INFORMED GREEN CAREER PATHWAYS

With over 16,000 employees across the region, King County is a large employer of choice that can design and promote high-quality green career pathways for recruitment and outreach. King County will create a dedicated "Green Jobs" category on its public-facing job board to highlight and promote already established green career pathway positions. This will include a user-friendly digital interface for easy access and navigation and job alerts to attract qualified candidates. Additionally, the County will expand its "application clinic" model to connect skilled job seekers with department recruiters, particularly those from local training and pre-apprenticeship programs. These actions will support and reinforce a climate informed lens to ongoing workforce development efforts across the County while reenforcing community-based connections between job seekers from frontline communities and King County departments seeking talent.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; DHR

PARTNER AGENCIES:
Metro–ES; DES–DO; DNRP–DO; DLS–DO; OEOCE

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Education and training providers across King County; Local Labor partners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility, alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Metro Green Jobs Pathways Implementation Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 15. ADVANCE WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY THROUGH REGIONAL COLLABORATION

King County recognizes that achieving its ambitious goals requires collaboration with the region and the private sector. To advance workforce development initiatives related to climate action, the County, as a founding member of the Coalition for Climate Careers (C3), will work with C3 to connect County departments interested in forming public-private partnerships for workforce development. This collaboration will assist County departments in identifying potential private and public sector partners, as well as funding sources for initiatives through C3 and its partner resource networks.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–DO; DES–DO; DNRP–DO; Metro–ES; OEOCE; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Coalition for Climate Careers (C3); Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce; Greater Seattle Partners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; economic opportunity and workforce development; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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

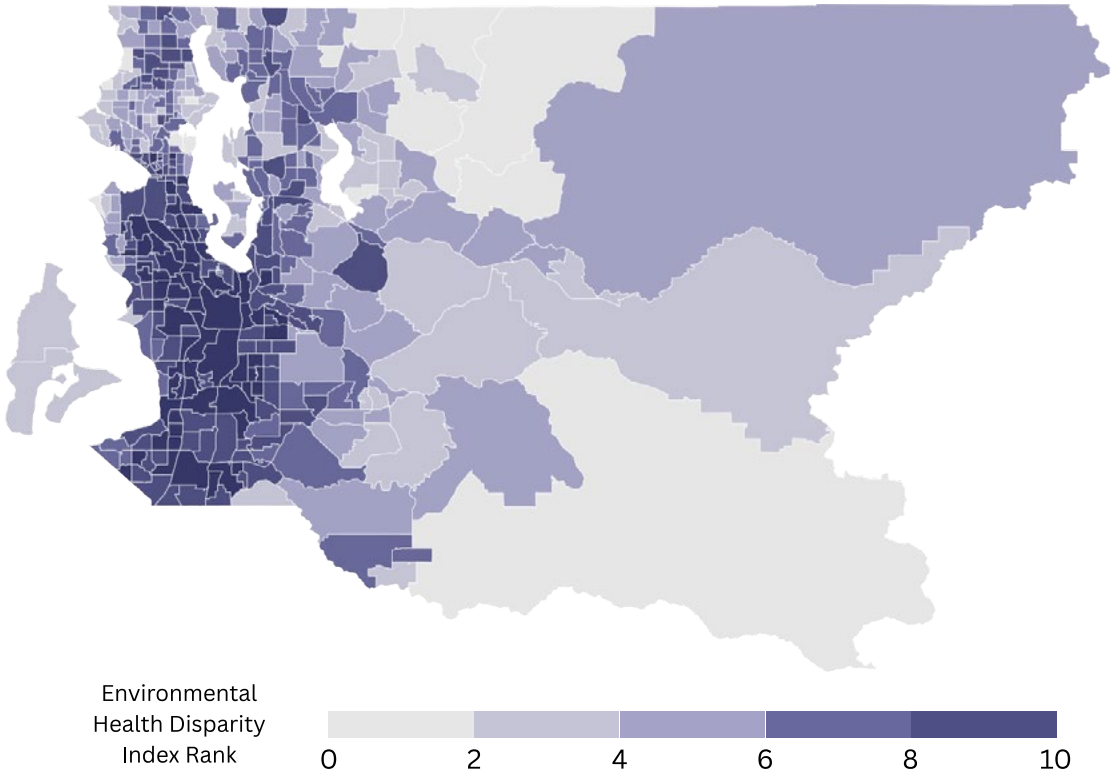
COMMUNITY HEALTH AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

King County is home to approximately 2.3 million people, representing a diversity of communities who reside in urban, rural, shoreline, foothill, and mountain environments; and each with their own unique public health needs. As the County collectively transitions out of an intense, multi-year response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, challenges with racial inequities and environmental health disparities remain. Without dedicated action, climate change will worsen these disparities, with frontline communities facing the greatest impacts.

King County is dedicated to minimizing its impact on climate change by cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Although it cannot stop the effects of climate change that are already occurring, it can address the community health disparities that place some communities at greater risk than others, and work to prevent climate-related health impacts by promoting community health and emergency preparedness.

Figure 21. Environmental Health Disparities Map

This map shows environmental health disparities across 19 different indicators. The higher the ranking, the more likely the communities living in the census tracts are vulnerable populations who are exposed to pollution and other toxics.



Source: WA DOH Environmental Health Disparities Map (2023)

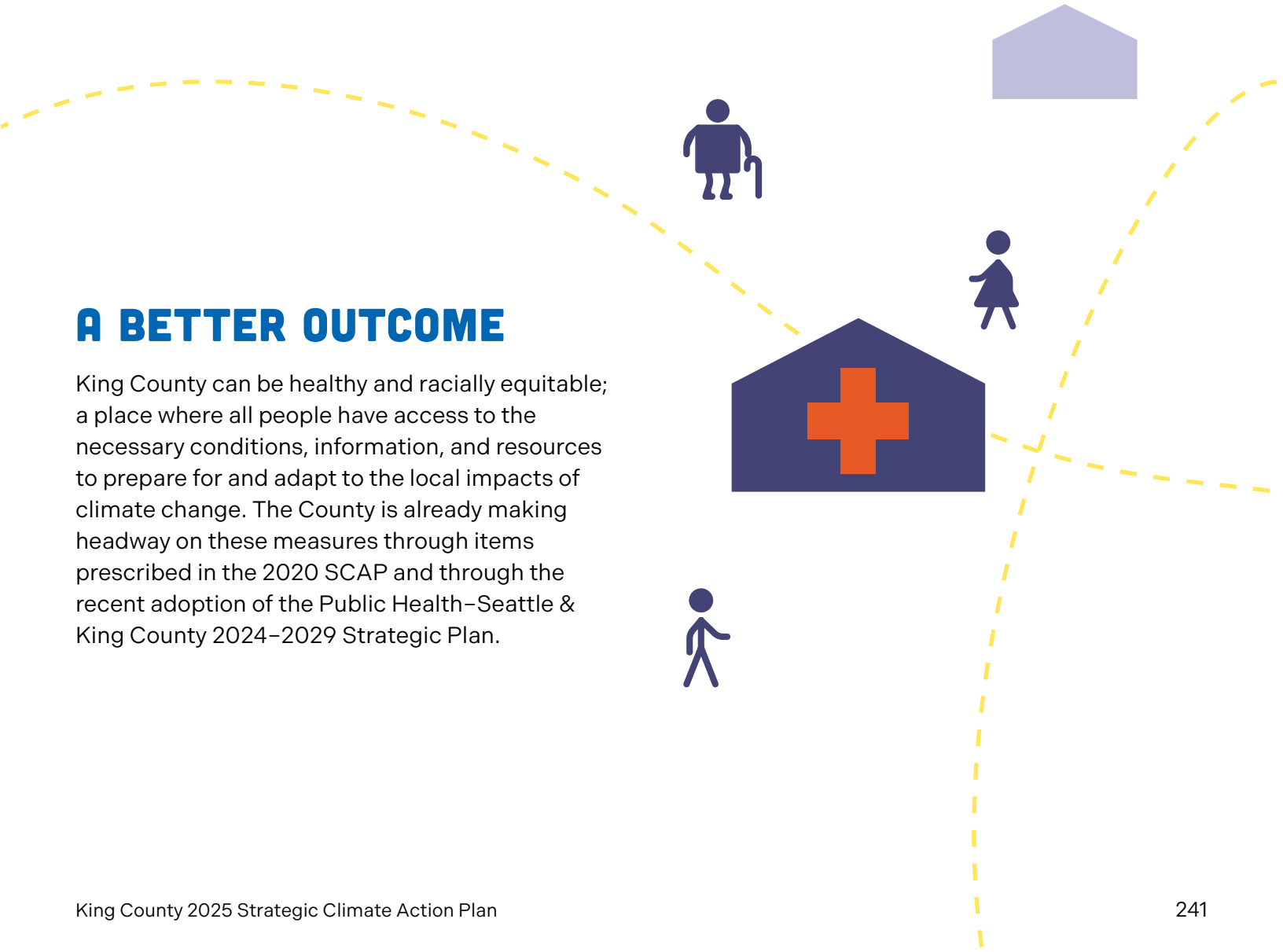
WHAT'S AT STAKE

Climate change is already increasing the frequency, duration, and intensity of extreme heat and wildfire smoke events.[29] Extreme heat is already the deadliest weather event in the United States, and in June 2021 King County witnessed the impacts of extreme heat firsthand with record breaking temperatures. Since 2021, global temperatures have continued to increase with each subsequent year being recorded as the hottest year on record.[30]

As temperatures continue to increase,[31] so does the risk of wildfires that can significantly impact air quality across hundreds of miles. In 2022, the Bolt Creak Fire in northeast King County burned 15,000 acres. It affected air quality throughout the County and caused Seattle to have some of the worst air quality in the world with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency urging residents to shelter indoors.

Additionally, at the end of 2022 the effects of king tides coinciding with atmospheric low-pressure systems and heavy rainfall caused lowland flooding throughout areas of the County, submersing the South Park neighborhood in flood waters that displaced residents from their homes. These events provide a preview of the effects climate change is anticipated to have on low lying areas with more frequent and intense rainfall and sea-level inundation.

Without committed action to address existing community health disparities, these climate impacts will continue to disproportionately impact communities who have been historically marginalized and deepen existing health disparities.



A BETTER OUTCOME

King County can be healthy and racially equitable; a place where all people have access to the necessary conditions, information, and resources to prepare for and adapt to the local impacts of climate change. The County is already making headway on these measures through items prescribed in the 2020 SCAP and through the recent adoption of the Public Health–Seattle & King County 2024–2029 Strategic Plan.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Engaged in the co-creation of community educational resources regarding climate change and health hazards, increased access to emergency resources and warnings, and collaborated with community service providers to provide training to prepare communities for emergency events, such as wildfire smoke.
- Launched a climate and health dashboard[32] to provide real-time access to community health indicators to monitor and evaluate community health impacts resulting from climate change.
- Distributed thousands of do it yourself box fan filter kits and high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration units to King County residents, schools, childcare service providers, homeless service providers, and other small businesses.
- Developed emergency guidance and public health recommendations, including action thresholds, for responding during extreme heat and wildfire smoke events.
- Translated and disseminated key messaging to ethnic media outlets to increase the reach and distribution of climate preparedness messaging.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

King County will advance frontline community emergency preparedness, improve climate health equity data access, and address the unique needs of unsheltered communities related to climate hazards through the following actions:

- **SRFC 16.** Find gaps, identify goals, and implement strategies that build frontline community resilience to climate hazards
- **SRFC 17.** Explore King County capacity to provide disaster assistance and recovery support to frontline communities
- **SRFC 18.** Co-create climate hazards and resilience training delivered by trusted messengers
- **SRFC 19.** Deliver accessible data and evaluation resources
- **SRFC 20.** Address climate-related mental health impacts and related community needs
- **SRFC 21.** Assess and address where the greatest risks of climate impacts and toxics exposure intersect
- **SRFC 22.** Coordinate with communities during severe weather events to support people experiencing homelessness
- **SRFC 23.** Provide technical assistance and capacity building for community partners supporting people experiencing homelessness
- **SRFC 24.** Convene system partners in response to climate emergencies to support people experiencing homelessness

Native vegetation at Chinook Wind in the City of Tukwila, a habitat restoration project



SRFC 16. FIND GAPS, IDENTIFY GOALS, AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES THAT BUILD FRONTLINE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE HAZARDS

Across agencies, plans, and programs, King County is working to strengthen a regional response to climate hazards. Yet there are ongoing gaps that create barriers for frontline communities to necessary information and resources in real time. The County will partner with agency and community partners to identify persistent gaps and develop goals and implement strategies to address them. Actions may include developing social network mapping to show how groups across geographies are or are not interacting and where additional investments are needed for maximum impact. Investments could look like focused distribution of culturally relevant and in-language communications (see SRFC 9), training on how to respond to extreme weather events (see PREP 20 and PREP 21), emergency response coordination (see SRFC 18), and developing a better understanding of how and where resource hubs could benefit frontline communities.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–OEM; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Climate Equity Community Task Force; City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and the Environment; King County Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C); Support the Trusted Partners Network

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy; King County Flood Control District Hazard Mitigation Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 17. EXPLORE KING COUNTY CAPACITY TO PROVIDE DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND RECOVERY SUPPORT TO FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

Frontline communities often experience disparate impacts from climate-driven hazards. Thresholds for authorized emergency response are high and hard to meet for smaller, localized shocks that can still harm and displace frontline communities. King County will explore models for integrating frontline communities into County-led emergency response operations and funding opportunities. These bodies of work would enable the County to deliver essential services and provide resource support to impacted communities that extend beyond the provision of routine County services. This work also includes assessing options to increase the County's ability to offer recovery support through the provision of individual assistance to frontline communities disproportionately impacted by climate driven hazards for incidents that do not reach thresholds for traditional disaster declarations that enable state or federal reimbursement.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–DO; DES–OEM, DNRP–DO; Language Access; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Municipal emergency management agencies; municipal fire departments; community-based organizations serving frontline communities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; capacity building; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Emergency; King County Management Plan and applicable ESF annexes; King County Flood Management Plan; King County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 18. CO-CREATE CLIMATE HAZARDS AND RESILIENCE TRAINING DELIVERED BY TRUSTED MESSENGERS

Residents in communities who face health disparities benefit greatly from culturally relevant access to information about health risks related to climate change. They also benefit from knowing how to take action to protect the health of their families and their communities. To equip communities to proactively prepare for climate change impacts, King County will partner with community navigators and other community partners to co-create culturally relevant, accessible, and actionable community educational materials with trusted community messengers. They will also develop a community-oriented train-the-trainer curriculum to be offered to community service providers and interested members of the public on climate hazards and how to reduce health risks, prevent adverse impacts, and raise public awareness regarding available public and private sector support services. Climate impacts included in these trainings will include wildfire smoke, extreme heat, severe winter weather, windstorms, extreme precipitation, and flooding. (See Prep 20)

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; PHSKC–EHS

EXTERNAL AGENCIES:
DCHS–HCD; DES–OEM; DNRP–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCRHA; PHSKC Community Health Navigators; PHSKC Preparedness Community Advisory Board; Climate Equity Community Task Force

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
PHSKC 2024–2029 Strategic Plan; King County; Extreme Heat Mitigation Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Flood Control District Hazard Mitigation Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

SRFC 19. DELIVER ACCESSIBLE HEALTH DATA AND EVALUATION RESOURCES

Climate and health data are essential for educating the community about the risks of climate change to health and what communities can do to protect their wellbeing. This information will support local health equity and environmental justice work. Data platforms through PHSKC's Community Health Indicators and Communities Count will provide supports such as hosting data, indicators, interpretative narrative, conducting local data resource roadshows and presentations, and data storytelling. This work builds on efforts to decolonize climate data by empowering communities to engage in the process of informing, identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing climate and health indicators. Connecting communities to access and use of data that are useful for examining populations of interest and understanding existing inequities and how they will be impacted by climate events.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–EHS, HSci

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
PHSKC Community Health Navigators; Climate Equity Community Task Force

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
PHSKC 2024–2029 Strategic Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other

SRFC 20. ADDRESS CLIMATE-RELATED MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS AND RELATED COMMUNITY NEEDS

Climate change can have immediate and long-term impacts on mental health that can vary in severity across populations, levels of exposure, and demographics. King County and its partners will embed youth and community voices about climate change impacts on mental/behavioral health into existing and emerging interventions, programs, and policies. Through engagement, King County will align with community priorities to inform practice, policies, research, and training. King County will develop a youth-centered policy and program plan, convene partnerships on diverse workforce expansion, increase access to culturally responsive supports for youth and families, advance a communications plan, and support schools and other youth serving organizations in achieving these goals. These results can inform additional actions across agencies and community organizations.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–DO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–DO; DNRP–DO; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Youth; mental health professionals; community-based organizations; King County Library and Seattle Public Libraries; hospitals; community health centers; schools; community and youth centers; park organizations (city and County); youth serving organizations; local universities and colleges; childcare facilities; local businesses

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; engagement; relationship building; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
PHSKC Strategic Plan (Youth Behavioral Health and Community Wellbeing Strategy; Climate Change Strategy); Youth Family and Prevention Strategic Plan; Best Starts for Kids, Youth action plan; Crisis Care Centers levy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

SRFC 21.
ASSESS AND ADDRESS WHERE THE GREATEST RISKS OF CLIMATE IMPACTS AND TOXICS EXPOSURE INTERSECT

Climate impacts often intersect with exposure to toxics, such as chemical contaminants or particulate matter in the air during wildfire smoke events' unintended chemical releases into home or waterways during flood events and leaching of contaminants into food or water stored in containers or bottles exposed to extreme heat. King County will assess these risks and develop interventions and policies to address the cumulative impacts worsened by combined exposure to climate and toxics. The results will uplift areas of focus and define gaps in funding, data, interventions, and policies. The County will highlight where climate impacts and toxics intersect and aim to make this information available to its communities to improve their resilience, starting with the communities with the greatest health and climate disparities. Outcomes will include improved trends and disparity mapping, improved prioritization, local approaches to address cumulative impacts, toolkits, communication materials, and interventions (before, during or after a climate event).

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–EHS

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD Hazardous Waste Management Program; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community Based Organizations; PHSKC Community Navigators

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Contaminants of Emerging Concern strategy (across KC agencies); PFAS strategy; 6PPD strategy; Clean Water Healthy Habitats Plan; State legislation (e.g., Safer Products for WA, HEAL Act, SEPA); State coordination (e.g. wildfire coordination group, heat mitigation group)

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 22. COORDINATE WITH COMMUNITIES DURING SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS TO SUPPORT PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Community-based organizations are often the first responders during emergencies. Improved coordination with local government can greatly improve community preparedness overall. King County will work across agencies and with residents to develop and expand community engagement efforts to lead and inform emergency preparedness and severe weather response. This includes exploring strategies and/or opportunities for partnership to:

- Involve homeless service providers more directly in preparedness planning and coordination of emergency service delivery;
- Establish a regular forum that includes people with lived experience to provide feedback on climate preparedness and response, lead strategies to mitigate climate injustice, and ensure equitable distribution of severe weather supplies; and
- Create a communication infrastructure for information sharing between service providers, which can also be used during climate events to get real-time data on what agencies are operational, what resources are available or needed, and coordinate efforts to support people experiencing homelessness.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–CHS

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–OEM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCRHA; HCHN Governance Council and Community Advisory Group; Community based service providers, including outreach/ field teams serving PEH, housing providers, etc.; Local jurisdictions; Washington State Health Care Authority; Department of Health; Harborview Northwest Regional Burn Model System; NWHCRN

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Public Health Strategic Plan; Public Health Extreme Weather Response Annex; King County Environmental Health – resources for homeless service providers; KCRHA 5-Year Plan; KCRHA Severe Weather: Emergency Response Policy 2024; National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) – published resources and briefs on disaster preparedness initiatives in other jurisdictions

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 23. PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS SUPPORTING PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Community partners have firsthand knowledge of the unique and multi-faceted needs facing the populations they serve. King County will leverage community feedback and partnerships with key stakeholders to build knowledge and capacity in emergency preparedness and severe weather response. This includes exploring how to:

- Define emergency response thresholds during climate emergencies that are aligned to the needs of people experiencing homelessness and homeless service providers;
- Establish best practices for frequently occurring climate events such as heat, smoke, fire, cold, severe winter weather, as well as less common events such as tornadoes, cyclones/high wind events, flooding, and climate-related civil unrest that incorporates feedback from people with lived experience of homelessness;
- Develop additional considerations and best practices for special populations, such as asylum seekers, people with language barriers, accessibility needs, older adults, behavioral health, disabilities, substance use disorder, etc.; and
- Lead regular homelessness specific training for service providers and volunteers based on established best practices.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–CHS

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–DO; DES–OEM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCRHA; HCHN Governance Council and Community Advisory Group; Community based service providers, including outreach/ field teams serving PEH, housing providers, etc.; Advocacy organizations (ex. Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness – SKCCH, VOCAL-WA); Local jurisdictions; Washington State Health Care Authority; Department of Health; Harborview Northwest Regional Burn Model System; NWHCRN, National Weather Service (NWS)

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Public Health Strategic Plan; Public Health Extreme Weather Response Annex; King County Environmental Health – resources for homeless service providers; KCRHA 5-Year Plan; KCRHA Severe Weather: Emergency Response Policy 2024; National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) – published resources and briefs on disaster preparedness initiatives in other jurisdictions

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 24. CONVENE SYSTEM PARTNERS IN RESPONSE TO CLIMATE EMERGENCIES TO SUPPORT PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Agencies and community-based partners serving unsheltered populations carry specific roles, responsibilities, and knowledge that inform their approach to emergency preparedness and response. Identifying gaps in these approaches is critical to strengthening support for those most impacted. King County will serve as advisors to King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) and community partners to enhance knowledge of system limitations and explore opportunities to fill gaps in relation to emergency preparedness and severe weather response. This includes:

- Identifying strategies to strengthen safety net systems for people experiencing homelessness, including transportation systems, basic survival needs, shelter options, etc., so systems are more resilient against disruption during severe weather incidents and other climate events;
- Exploring resources and opportunities to develop an interdisciplinary team providing environmental health and disease prevention consultation to homeless service sites and encampments; and
- Supporting development of supply distribution infrastructure and shelter options that meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness during severe weather events.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–CHS

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–DO; DES–OEM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCRHA; HCHN Governance Council and Community Advisory Group; Community based service providers, including outreach/ field teams serving PEH, housing providers, etc.; Advocacy organizations (ex. Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness – SKCCH, VOCAL-WA); Local jurisdictions; Washington State Health Care Authority; Department of Health; Harborview Northwest Regional Burn Model System

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; engagement; relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Public Health Strategic Plan; Public Health Extreme Weather Response Annex; King County Environmental Health – resources for homeless service providers; KCRHA 5-Year Plan; KCRHA Severe Weather: Emergency Response Policy 2024; National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) – published resources and briefs on disaster preparedness initiatives in other jurisdictions

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

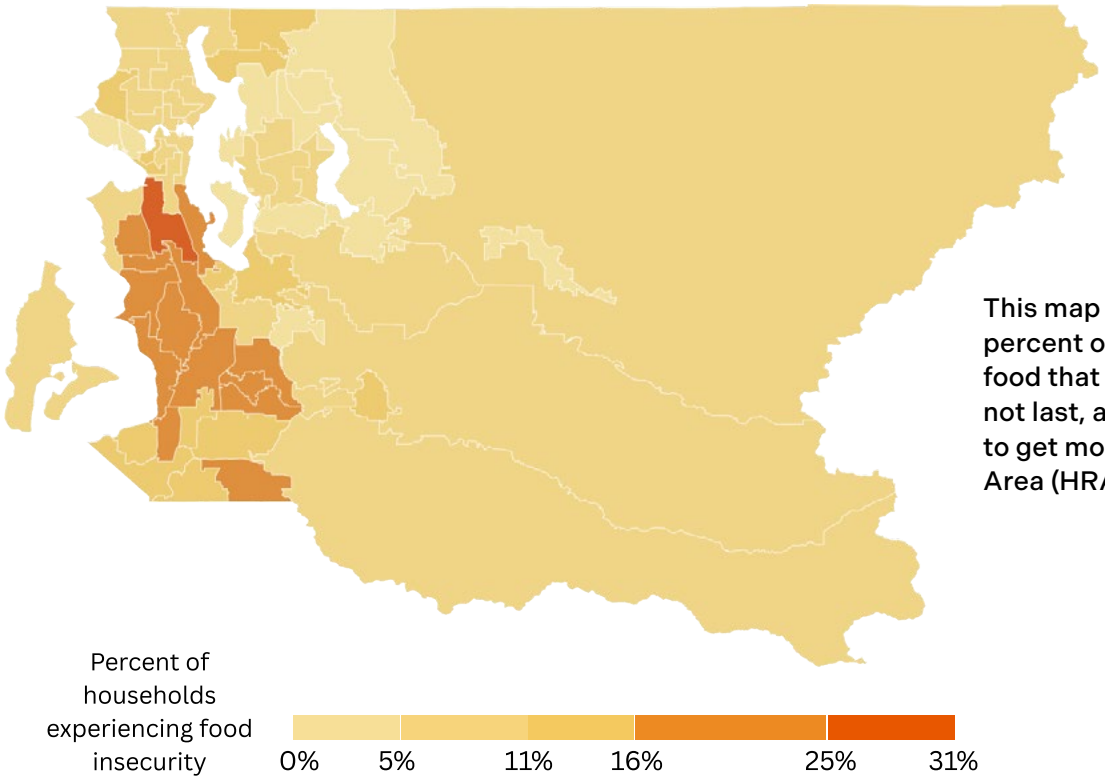
FOOD SYSTEMS AND FOOD SECURITY

Globally, it is projected that climate change will impact agricultural systems with heavier rain, flooding, wildfires, and extreme temperatures becoming commonplace.[33] Those observed climate patterns are already affecting food security and putting additional pressures on the food system (production, transport, processing, packaging, storage, retail, consumption, loss, and waste[34]). Most of the food consumed in King County is grown and processed outside the region—making the region vulnerable to climate impacts and other disruptions across the globe.

Healthy ecosystems are the foundation of a climate-resilient food system in King County. Higher temperatures during the peak growing season will increase demand for already scarce irrigation water and intensify competing priorities between balancing the needs of farming with goals to restore salmon, orca, and other species of concern. Salmon is a vulnerable species that is integral to ecosystems, economies, and to tribes. At the same time, multiple reports indicate that the number of people experiencing food insecurity is increasing.[35]

Innovative, local solutions can chart a path for bigger change by showcasing successes and lessons learned. King County is leading by example and can do more to protect the region's food system by focusing its efforts on ensuring food security for frontline communities, strengthening the regional food system, and supporting a just food economy that can address local impacts.

Figure 22. Food Security by Health Reporting Area (HRA)



This map shows the estimated percent of adults who bought food that sometimes or often did not last, and did not have money to get more by Health Reporting Area (HRA) for 2018-2021.

Source: Public Health – Seattle & King County (2023)

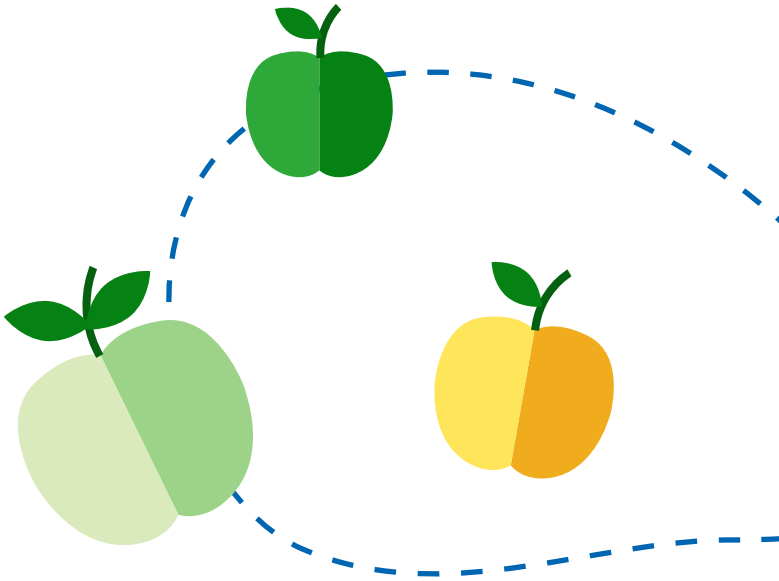
WHAT'S AT STAKE

Approximately one out of nine households in Washington experience food insecurity. In South King County, nearly twice as many people face food insecurity compared to the state average. These disparities are seen even more among certain groups. People with lower incomes and less formal education experience food insecurity at twice the countywide rate. It is 50 percent to three times higher among communities of color and twice as high among individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, as well as those with fair to poor health.[36, 37] These disparities will grow as climate change worsens and threatens the region's food supply and security.

Climate change impacts will affect crop yields, available crop varieties, prices, and the nutritional value of food, putting already under-resourced populations at further risk of food insecurity and increased adverse health impacts. King County must make significant efforts to address these compounding issues.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County can take equitable steps to strengthen food systems and food security. These steps include investing in small farmers, increasing food rescue and food access, and integrating food system policy and goals as robust points of anchor.





A farmers market vendor helps a local shopper buy locally grown and harvested rainier cherries at the farmers market.



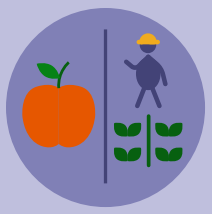
WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Established and are currently implementing the King County Local Food Initiative (LFI) —the policy and strategy roadmap to grow the local food economy and make locally grown food accessible to all.
- Supported underrepresented and BIPOC farmers through the Farmland Access Program and by raising millions in grant funds to support farmland access, infrastructure development, technical assistance and market access.
- Partnered to support the opening of the South Seattle Community Food Hub.
- Provided technical support to partners and community for grant proposals to increase hunger relief organization capacity, train new and beginning farmers, support infrastructure development, and fund farm to food bank programming.
- Published a Food Insecurity in King County Report 2023 on the status of food insecurity and providing recommendations for hunger relief and supported enrollment in basic food benefits for food insecure residents.
- Reduced food waste equitably using programmatic and policy approaches.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

King County will invest in farmer economic viability, strengthen food rescue coordination, increase food access, and integrate food system and policy goals through the following actions:

- **SRFC 25.** Scale up Farm to Food Bank Program
- **SRFC 26.** Support farm to food system infrastructure
- **SRFC 27.** Increase food rescue and recovery efforts
- **SRFC 28.** Expand and strengthen access to farmers markets in underserved areas and seek funding to bolster partner efforts that increase access to locally grown food
- **SRFC 29.** Subsidize nutritious foods from local farmers through 'Food is Medicine' program
- **SRFC 30.** Increase access to farmland by underserved communities and expand the availably of culturally relevant, locally grown food
- **SRFC 31.** Advance values-based food purchasing standards across the region



SRFC 25. SCALE UP FARM TO FOOD BANK PROGRAM

Many food banks rely on processed foods for cost and shelf-stability, but local farmers often have surplus produce that don't meet retail standards of size or appearance. King County will connect small to mid-sized local farmers with food banks, senior centers, and other hunger relief organizations. This will increase access to healthy, local food and support local farmers. King County will advocate for and support partners in implementing and expanding the Farm to Food Bank Program by securing sustainable funding to increase farmer payments and provide necessary staff support. Backed by strong community, political, and organizational support, the program integrates food security with climate action, promoting a stable local food economy that is less vulnerable to global supply chain disruptions caused by climate change while ensuring equitable access to healthy food.

LEAD AGENCIES:
LFI

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–HSci

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Harvest Against Hunger; farmers; hunger relief organizations

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; capacity building; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Local Food Initiative

EARLY ACTION

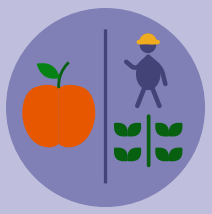
KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

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

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

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

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



SRFC 26. SUPPORT FARM TO FOOD SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE

Institutional markets require large, consistent quantities of food delivered on a regular schedule, which require access to processing, cold storage, and distribution infrastructure to store and deliver products in bulk quantities. King County will continue to partner with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, regional food distributors, and other public agencies to develop and grow local food system infrastructure. One example of a partnership project is the South Seattle Community Food Hub. Partnerships such as this one will enhance the viability and productivity of the local food system. Opportunities for partnership include models such as food hubs, processing and distribution sites, refrigerated trucks, commercial kitchens, and storage facilities, all of which are essential to helping farmers access local markets, reduce costs, and increase profitability in a competitive agricultural landscape. This infrastructure is needed to support farmers in reaching markets, particularly institutional markets such as schools, health care facilities, and hunger relief organizations. Improving food system infrastructure supports local farmers and hunger relief organizations, reduces wasted food and GHG emissions, builds climate resiliency, and helps community members achieve food security with culturally relevant, sustainably grown food.

LEAD AGENCIES:
LFI

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD, WLRD; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WSDA; Ecology; regional food distributors (Farmstand Local Foods, Puget Sound Food Hub); local hunger relief organizations (Food Lifeline, Hopelink, South King County Food Coalition, etc.); local farm organizations (VIVA, VIGA, IRC, etc.)

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility alignment and partnership; capacity building; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Local Food Initiative; King County Re+ Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

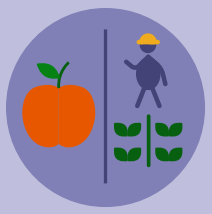
Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | **New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other



SRFC 27. INCREASE FOOD RESCUE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

Up to 30–40 percent[38] of food supply is currently wasted, with a significant portion of waste occurring at the production and retail levels. King County will increase food rescue from food producers and retailers by addressing the logistical difficulties, food safety concerns, and proper coordination between retailers, non-profits, and volunteers. King County will collaborate with local organizations by providing grants and supporting pilot projects that fund innovative solutions to enhance coordination between retailers, non-profits, and volunteers. Through these pilot initiatives, the County will test and refine strategies, collect data, and scale successful approaches to maximize food rescue efforts throughout the community.

LEAD AGENCIES:
LFI

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD, WLRD; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; local grocery retailers (Safeway, QFC, etc.); local hunger relief organizations (Food Lifeline, Hopelink, South King County Food Coalition, etc.)

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Washington Organics Management Law; King County Local Food Initiative; King County Re+ Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

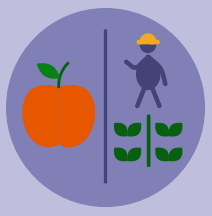
KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



SRFC 28. EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN ACCESS TO FARMERS MARKETS IN UNDERSERVED AREAS AND SEEK FUNDING TO BOLSTER PARTNER EFFORTS THAT INCREASE ACCESS TO LOCALLY GROWN FOOD

Farmers markets bring fresh food directly to communities with limited access, provide a direct-to-consumer channel for local farmers and food entrepreneurs, and serve as community hubs. King County will invest in community-based organizations to strengthen and expand farmers markets, increasing food access in underserved areas, including south and unincorporated King County. This includes prioritizing initiatives that enhance economic opportunities for socially disadvantaged local farmers and improve access to food assistance programs like WIC and SNAP at farmers markets, support cold storage infrastructure, commercial kitchens, and places to get food ready for market. Investing in these markets will reduce food insecurity in low-income communities, increase access to healthy foods in King County food deserts, and be a vehicle for providing stable marketing outlets for growing number of immigrant, refugee, and BIPOC-owned farms.

King County will also seek funding for community-based organizations to enhance food access for communities disproportionately affected by climate change and food insecurity, ensuring equitable access to nutritious, local, and sustainably grown foods. This will support the local food economy, improve public health, and increase access to culturally relevant food.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–HSci

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD; LFI

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community-Based Organizations; WDOH; WA Department of Social and Health Services; Washington State Farmers Market Association; Cities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; alignment and partnership; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Local Food Initiative; City of Seattle Food Action Plan; PHSKC 2024–2029 Strategic Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

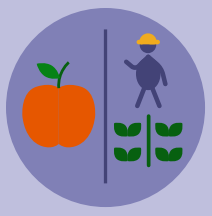
KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | Implement

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

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

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

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



SRFC 29. SUBSIDIZE NUTRITIOUS FOODS FROM LOCAL FARMERS THROUGH 'FOOD IS MEDICINE' PROGRAM

Lack of access to healthy, nutritious, and locally grown food is often determined by having a lower income level, by living in food deserts, and by race.[39] King County will seek funding for 'Food is Medicine' programs that subsidize the purchase of nutritious foods from local farmers. This will improve access to nutritious, locally produced food and support the local food economy. By partnering with federally qualified health centers, this initiative will connect low-income individuals experiencing poor health with locally grown foods, thereby improving health and community resilience against climate-related challenges.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–HSci

PARTNER AGENCIES:
LFI

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
City of Seattle; Federally Qualified Health Centers; WA Department of Health; Local Farmers

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Local Food Initiative; City of Seattle Food Action Plan; PHSKC 2024–2029 Strategic Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

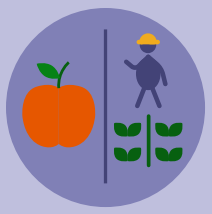
KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | Implement

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

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

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

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



SRFC 30. INCREASE ACCESS TO FARMLAND BY UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES AND EXPAND THE AVAILABLY OF CULTURALLY RELEVANT, LOCALLY GROWN FOOD

King County has a rich diversity of BIPOC, immigrant, and refugee communities carrying a working and specialized knowledge of agricultural practices. Yet, access to farmland is a significant barrier for these farmers regardless of experience. King County will work with NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) to enhance its farmland leasing program. This initiative aims to support development of community-based farmland ownership and leasing models to better support farmers and organizations who have been historically underserved. This will provide opportunities to establish and build farm businesses while increasing availability of culturally relevant foods for local communities.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
LFI

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community Based Organizations; King Conservation District; WA Department of Agriculture; Washington Farmland Trust; USDA (NRCS, FSA)

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan; King County Local Food Initiative

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | Implement

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

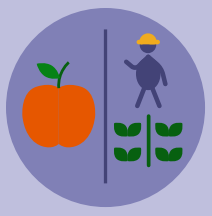
Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | **Other**



SRFC 31. ADVANCE VALUES-BASED FOOD PURCHASING STANDARDS ACROSS THE REGION

Purchasing standards can determine the sustainability of the region's food systems and consumption patterns, ensuring that waste and carbon emissions are minimized, and that local and small businesses are supported. King County will partner with local farmers, community advocates, and the City of Seattle, to develop and support adoption of values-based food purchasing standards that, if adopted by government and institutional buyers across the region, would advance equity, climate, and sustainability goals. Large institutional purchasers such as hospitals and universities are found throughout the area. A coordinated approach to adopt and utilize these standards would maximize the meaningful impact.

LEAD AGENCIES:
LFI

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–HSci; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
City of Seattle; Universities and colleges; Health care institutions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Local Food Initiative; City of Seattle Food Action Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | Implement

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | **Other**



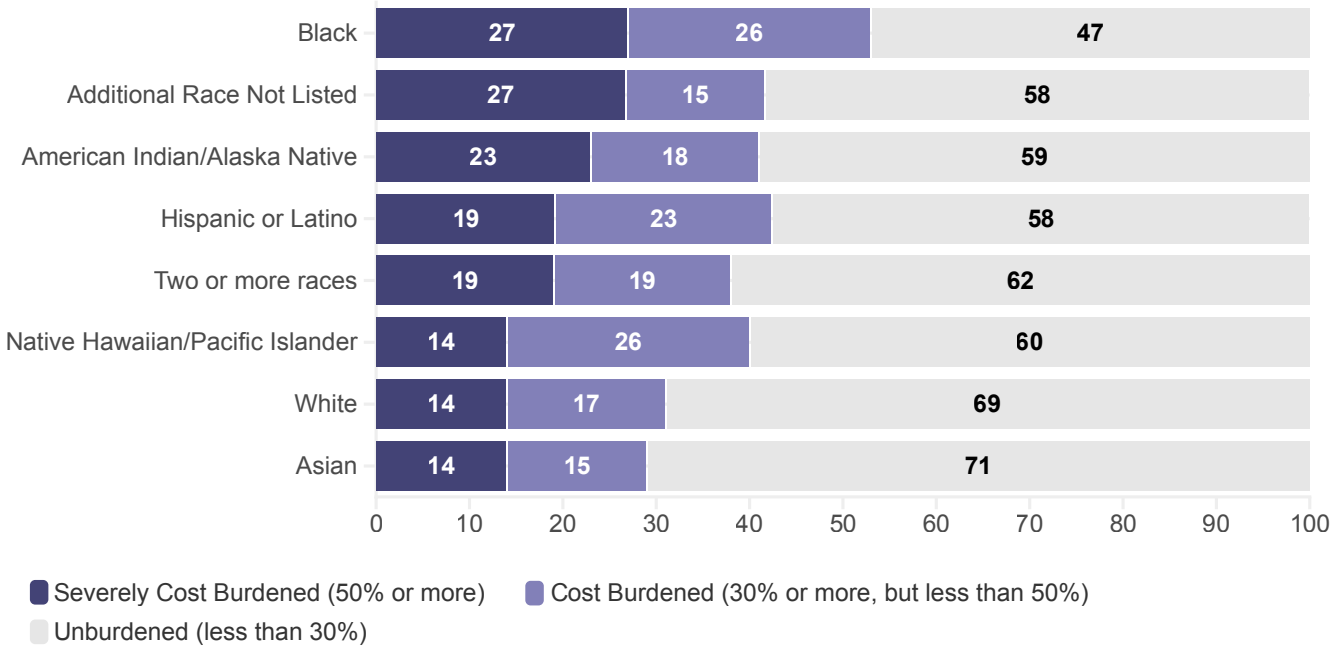
HOUSING SECURITY AND ANTI-DISPLACEMENT

Affordable housing is a top concern for many communities, and most acutely, for frontline communities. In 2023, 70 percent of low-income households in King County spent more than 30 percent of their income on housing.[40] Complicating matters, climate change is increasingly recognized for its significant impacts on communities beyond extreme weather events. Some climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, such as investing in green infrastructure, may unintentionally contribute to higher costs for renters and property owners. An additional threat to housing security includes "bluelining" —an emerging practice in which financial institutions increase prices of or withdraw services altogether from regions they perceive to be at high environmental risk,[41] i.e., flooding and wildfire risk.

Yet, population growth has been steadily increasing in cities across the County,[42] forcing frontline communities, especially low-income communities, to move further from their places of work, their roots, and their community to areas that are underserved by public transit. As climate impacts are felt, households with fewer resources and rising cost burdens, including utilities, continue to increase. Over the next decade, it will be critical for King County to include affordable housing and anti-displacement policies in conjunction with other climate adaptation efforts accessible to communities.

Figure 23. Housing Cost Burden by Race/Ethnicity

This graph shows the severity of cost burden and its correlation with demographics in King County. When households spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing, they are struggling to afford other necessities. Households are severely cost-burdened when they pay more than 50 percent of their income on housing.



Source: 5-Year PUMS (2017-2022), compiled on King County Regional Affordable Housing Dashboard (2025)

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Historically, structural racism—including practices like racially restrictive covenants, redlining, blockbusting, and other public and private practices—has shaped where frontline communities live in King County.[43] These forces have contributed to cascading disparities for BIPOC communities, restricting equal access to economic opportunities, health, wealth, and education. Many of these communities have the region's lowest incomes, the greatest health needs, and have historically lacked public infrastructure investments—making them more vulnerable to climate change impacts.[44]

These households will find it more challenging to afford to keep their homes resilient in the face of increasing heat waves, extreme weather events, wildfire smoke, and other climate impacts. Low-income households will also become more vulnerable to displacement away from urban centers. This displacement increases their vulnerability to climate hazards and emergencies if they lose their social networks with shared language, local community gathering spaces, and access to public transit.[45]

King County can lead the way toward mitigating the housing impacts of climate change by centering frontline communities in actions that bridge housing affordability, climate preparedness, anti-displacement strategies, and by partnering on community-driven initiatives.

A BETTER OUTCOME

Expanding capacity around climate and housing can help King County communities, especially frontline communities and decision-makers, understand the connections and identify strategies to address barriers to safe, affordable, climate-resilient housing.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Developed the 2021 King County Skyway-West Hill and North Highline Anti-Displacement Report in partnership with residents and community leaders, provided recommendations for new affordable housing projects, inclusionary housing, and relocation assistance.
- Completed the King County Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) planning and implementation report—a community-driven framework for coordinating anti-displacement, climate resilience, and economic opportunity.
- Secured $13 million to launch the King County EDI Implementation Plan recommendations and increase capital investments in community-driven housing related projects.
- Issued a $20 million Climate Equity Capital Projects bond fund to implement seven projects located in areas and sites with high displacement risk that supported greenhouse emissions reduction, energy efficiency, green career pathways, and farmland infrastructure improvements.
- Integrated land use and community characteristics into Metro's rapid bus transit planning projects.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

King County will deepen County and community partnerships to support community-driven equitable development through the following actions:

- **SRFC 32**. Invest in Equitable Development
- **SRFC 33.** Expand access to open space through partnering with frontline communities
- **SRFC 34.** Provide climate and housing community resources and training

A local tour of newly built affordable housing that features energy-saving and more sustainable building design and features.



SRFC 32. INVEST IN EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

Access to affordable housing and displacement are top concerns for many frontline communities. Historical racial zoning laws, restrictive covenants, redlining, decades of disinvestment, and increasing housing demand and rising costs have created conditions for gentrification and displacement of low-income residents, small businesses, and cultural spaces. Residential displacement makes households less resilient to climate impacts. Invest in King County's Equitable Development Initiative by allocating at least $10 million–$25 million per year in new revenue to invest in community-driven and community-owned housing and resilience projects.[46] This action prevents housing, economic, and cultural displacement. It also promotes equity by investing in frontline communities disproportionately impacted by climate change due to existing and historic racial, social, environmental, and economic, inequities, and who have limited resources and capacity to adapt.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DCHS–HCD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–DO; DNRP–DO, Parks; ECO; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County EDI Advisory Board;[47] community-based organizations and leaders representing priority communities in King County on equitable development and related policies such as anti-displacement, racial and economic justice, generational wealth building, climate resilience, and environmental justice; City of Seattle EDI; other public funders

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Equitable Development Initiative Implementation Plan Phase 1 & Phase 2; King County Comprehensive Plan; Best Starts for Kids Implementation Plan; Skyway West Hill and North Highline Anti-Displacement Strategies Report; King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Five-Year Action Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



SRFC 33. EXPAND ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE THROUGH PARTNERING WITH FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

Integrating open space acquisitions with community-driven planning is essential to delivering multi-benefit climate action in partnership with frontline communities. King County will develop a replicable model for community-driven open space planning in urban areas to fill gaps in access and to align park acquisitions with transit, schools, environmental health, and other County plans and strategies. There is potential to align with affordable housing initiatives if new funding or tools become available for implementing anti-displacement measures in coordination with open space acquisition and development. Supporting community-driven planning strengthens community resilience and amplifies opportunities for co-benefits.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County EDI Advisory Board;[48] King County Open Space Equity Cabinet; Climate Equity Community Task Force

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Equitable Development Initiative Implementation Plan Phase 2 (August 2024); King County Equitable Development Initiative Implementation Plan Phase 1 (January 2023); King County Conservation Futures; King County Open Space Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



SRFC 34. PROVIDE CLIMATE AND HOUSING COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND TRAINING

King County's capacity for advancing climate-ready affordable housing is strengthened when frontline communities understand climate change, planning, land use, and development, and have access to decision-making in local government. The County will partner to expand in-language resources for frontline communities that highlight connections between housing and climate change and provide information on equitable development. This will include multi-media information, partnerships, and accessible annual training.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–DO; Language Access

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County EDI Advisory Board; King County EDI Community Planning Workgroup

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; engagement; capacity-building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Five-Year Action Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; DCHS Equitable Development Initiative

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



ENERGY JUSTICE AND UTILITIES AFFORDABILITY

The utility burdens facing low-income households are part of a larger housing affordability crisis in the United States. Millions of Americans struggle to pay energy utility bills, and use a range of coping strategies such as engaging in risky temperature behavior (e.g. using a stove, dryer vent, or burning trash for heat), forgoing other expenditures (e.g. medical, food, etc.), seeking payment assistance from formal or informal networks, or using bill strategies (carrying debt, partial payments, or skipped payments) to avoid utility disconnection.[49]

Some climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, such as transitioning the energy sector to clean and renewable energy sources, can increase utility cost burdens on frontline communities. In addition, home energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades could help reduce utility costs for households, but frontline community members can face barriers around cost, access to resources, and a lack of accessible information around energy options in their community and on the benefits of transitioning to more renewable energy sources.[50]

Most King County communities are served by Seattle City Light (SCL) or Puget Sound Energy (PSE). These companies have low-income energy assistance programs, but many low-income households are not actually receiving that assistance. A 2024 survey of County renters conducted by King County in partnership with the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) showed that more than two thirds of renters who made less than $50,000 in 2023 reported struggling to pay utility bills over the previous twelve months,[51] suggesting there are opportunities to expand and increase enrollment in utility assistance programs.

As additional climate impacts are experienced, the cost burden of other basic needs will increase, so it is even more critical that this energy assistance reaches all communities that need it. An equitable transition to more renewable energy requires that these frontline households thrive and not just survive.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

The major climate-related hazards that threaten utility and housing costs are heat, wildfires, flooding, and sea-level rise. Heat events will cause increased energy demand in summer, leading to spikes in energy prices, and reduced snowpack that can decrease hydropower generation. The more frequent and extreme weather events that come with climate change, like wildfires and drought, could also mean increased costs for electricity users. These climate events can also cause damage to energy distribution infrastructure and homes, causing electrical power outages during extreme weather events that can be life threatening for frontline populations.[52]

Many of King County's frontline communities are supportive of and interested in transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources but face barriers in making these changes in their own homes or communities. The County must find ways to support expanding renewable energy and energy efficiency in frontline communities to ensure that these communities are not further cost burdened or face higher climate vulnerability.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County can advance energy justice and utilities affordability through supporting coordination and expansion of regional programs that incentivize weatherization, deploy equitable clean energy retrofits, and through expanding access to affordability programs. Integrating frontline community expertise in energy policy and decision-making will also be critical to ensuring there is not a disproportionate burden on frontline communities as energy companies transition to producing more renewable energy.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Launched and expanded the Energize Heat Pump Program to install heat pumps and other clean technology in low- and moderate-income homes and small businesses in King County.
- Received approximately $50 million from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant to reduce building emissions in King, Pierce, Kitsap, and Snohomish counties—funding will support improvements in multifamily, small commercial, and community buildings across the region.
- Conducted a 2024 Utility Renter Affordability Survey to better understand and address utility and housing affordability challenges for families who rent their home.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

Reduce energy burden on frontline communities and strengthen community leadership through the following actions:

- **SRFC 35.** Establish a "one stop shop" for utilities affordability programs
- **SRFC 36.** Advance the deployment of community-owned renewable energy
- **SRFC 37.** Encourage participation of frontline communities into utility decision-making



SRFC 35. ESTABLISH A "ONE STOP SHOP" FOR UTILITIES AFFORDABILITY PROGRAMS

Access to energy and utilities assistance is essential, especially to those who already qualify for or are already enrolled in utility affordability programs, to support reducing the energy burden on frontline communities. King County, working closely with local jurisdictions and utility partners, will explore the development of a "one stop shop" for residents countywide to learn about and apply for a wide range of affordability programs focused on energy, utilities, and home efficiency resources. King County will coordinate with regional public and private utilities providers to explore establishing or enhancing a utility "one stop shop" website, auto-enrollment agreements, proactive relief for customers with past due or disconnect orders, and the implementation of language access and technical support. This County-led effort has the potential to reduce administrative burdens on program staff and households by developing a single application and eligibility process that could be integrated and aligned with existing County affordability programs such as ORCA Lift, Assessor low-income discount programs, or Washington Apple Health enrollment. King County will increase enrollment in affordability programs by expanding language services and support for the application process, with the goal of eliminating barriers to energy cost-savings programs to all County residents who may be eligible for these programs.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
PHSKC–CHS; DCHS–HCD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local energy, water, wastewater, and solid waste utilities and municipalities; City of Seattle Assistance and Discounts program (Affordable Seattle); Community Action Agencies (Byrd Barr, MSC, Hopelink)

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | **New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other



SRFC 36. ADVANCE THE DEPLOYMENT OF COMMUNITY-OWNED RENEWABLE ENERGY

An equitable transition to more renewable energy requires that all households thrive and not just survive. This can be made possible through focusing access to renewable resources where they are most needed and creating opportunities for co-benefits that may include economic relief, economic opportunity, environmental benefits, and increased resilience. To this end, King County will advance deployment of community-owned renewable energy through the implementation of three key strategies: 1) coordinating with local electric utilities to expand community solar programs in the region, 2) using existing County funding to pilot a community solar program to reduce utility costs for frontline community organizations and households, and by 3) pursuing additional funding opportunities to further expand community solar or other community-owned energy generating resources.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
SCL; PSE; WSU Community Solar Expansion Program

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other



SRFC 37. ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION OF FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES INTO UTILITY DECISION-MAKING

As the County transitions to using more renewable energy sources, involving frontline communities will be critical to avoiding unintended consequences for ecosystem health and cultural loss. King County will advocate for frontline community to participate in energy policy, decision-making, and regulatory tables (including outside of King County's jurisdiction) while modeling frontline community participation within King County's own energy programs and policies. This can include requiring policy equity assessments, partnering with energy advocacy organizations, and advocating for community testimony and comment on regulatory proposals or participation in local and state policy and regulatory bodies such as the Utilities and Transportation Commission, State Legislature, federal policymaking bodies, etc.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
City of Seattle; PSE; Puget Sound Sage

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; accountability; capacity building; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; State Legislature: HEAL Act

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



A recently built affordable housing project in King County features sustainable building design and energy-saving features.



TRANSPORTATION ACCESS AND EQUITY

Population growth and rising housing prices are forcing low-income communities and communities of color to move to places further from their places of work, their roots, and to areas that are more affordable but potentially less transit integrated and accessible. Frontline communities, especially low-income communities, rely heavily on public transit and, as they are forced to move further away from urban areas due to rising housing prices, their transportation costs increase because they have less access to frequent and reliable public transit.

An outcome of these patterns is that communities who rely heavily on public transit often are not able to access it close to their homes, especially as they move further from urban centers. The map of transit access in King County from the Metro Mobility Framework indicates that the geographic areas with the greatest need for accessible transit are concentrated in South King County.[53] Community members who are displaced because of higher housing prices will need to rely more heavily on transportation, both personal and public, to get to where they live, work, and play.

By partnering with the communities most impacted by displacement, King County is pivoting investments and expanding services to ensure all communities have access to all the quality-of-life benefits, including cleaner air, that a strong public transit system can enable.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

The combination of increased transportation cost burden caused by displacement away from urban centers and inequitable access to public transportation creates negative impacts for frontline communities, especially low-income communities and communities of color that live in South King County. These constraints will be made worse as climate impacts, including emergency weather events, are experienced countywide.

Expanding transit accessibility creates opportunities for frontline community members to conveniently use public transit. Enabling people to move around King County regardless of what neighborhood they live in will be integral to advancing climate resilience in frontline communities.

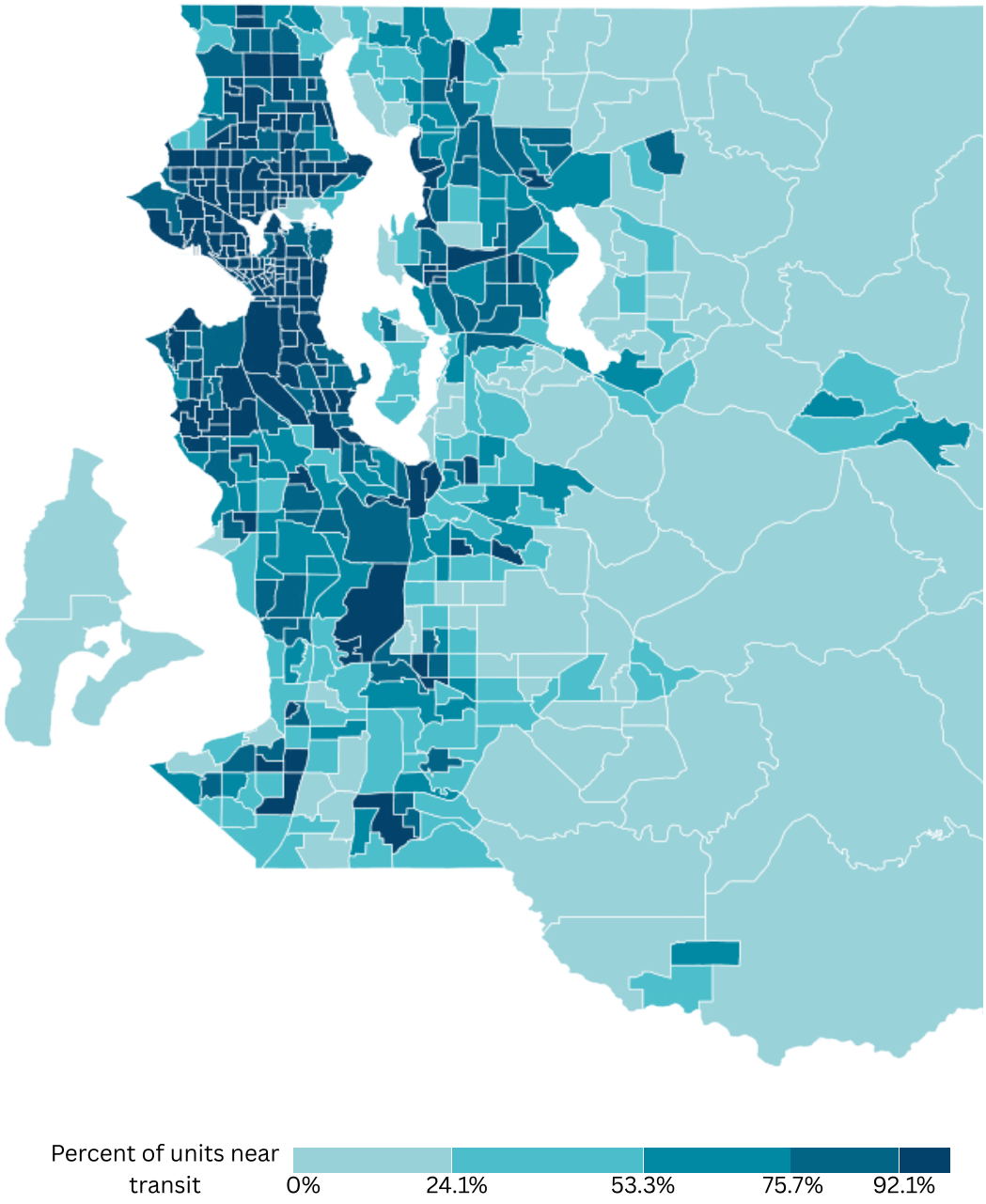
A BETTER OUTCOME

In 2019, King County Metro convened a Mobility Equity Cabinet[54] to develop the King County Metro Mobility Framework, which envisions an integrated, innovative, equitable, and sustainable future. In continuing this work, the County can elevate actions to significantly reduce GHG emissions while advancing equitable outcomes by providing mobility where needs are greatest, improving access to public transit to encourage individuals to use transit over single-occupancy vehicles, and ensuring equitable and affordable fares.

Figure 24. Affordable Housing within 1/4 Mile Of Transit

This map shows the percentage of housing units within 1/4 mile of bus service by Census Tract for 2020.

Note: only residential parcels are included in this analysis. Group quarters, like dorms, are not on residential parcels, so were not included.



Source: ACS population estimates (2020), Puget Sound Regional General Transit Feed Specifications (2024), and King County Metro Parcel Data (2024) and compiled by King County Metro



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Convened a Metro Fares Cabinet made up of community members to co-plan improved reduced fare programs in 2024.
- Integrated the community-co-created Metro Mobility Framework into the 2021–2031 Metro Strategic Plan and implemented Service Guidelines to focus on equitable investments for priority populations.
- Applied a climate justice lens in Metro's capital planning and design process, and in emergency planning, to address climate resilience.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

King County will plan for and provide equitable transit services in partnership with frontline communities through the following actions:

- **SRFC 38.** Plan collaboratively with frontline communities to increase transit mobility
- **SRFC 39.** Continue to explore an equitable cashless fare transition plan
- **SRFC 40.** Improve access to ORCA cards and reduced fare transit cards and programs



SRFC 38. PLAN COLLABORATIVELY WITH FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES TO INCREASE TRANSIT MOBILITY

In 2019, King County Metro co-created the Mobility Framework with the Metro Mobility Equity Cabinet, a group of leaders representing priority populations across King County including Black and Indigenous people, communities of color, immigrants and refugees, people speaking English as a second language, people with low incomes, and people with disabilities. The Mobility Framework is a set of guiding principles and recommendations for centering equity and sustainability. In 2021, Metro updated their Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, Metro Connects—their long-range plan, and the Service Guidelines that guide evaluation, design, and modification of service to integrate the mobility framework across these three primary policies. King County will continue to engage frontline communities and build upon Metro's Mobility Framework foundation in updating their Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, Service Guidelines, and Metro Connects by July 2028.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–GM, Metro–Mobility

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Metro Mobility Equity Cabinet; Metro Community Liaisons; Climate Equity Community Task Force

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; engagement; reduce disproportionate negative impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ESJ Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



SRFC 39. CONTINUE TO EXPLORE AN EQUITABLE CASHLESS FARE TRANSITION PLAN

The Metro Connects Long Range Plan and Metro's Strategic Plan for Public Transportation call upon the County to phase out on-board cash fare payment to support operational efficiency and service reliability. Eliminating cash fare payment has equity implications and Metro has conducted studies, surveys, and engagement to understand customer perspectives and experiences. Recognizing the complexity of this transition, in 2024 Metro convened a Fares Cabinet to meet regularly to help identify the potential impacts of the transition, key barriers preventing cash payers from using other fare media, and key milestones and strategies to support these riders during the transition. The Fares Cabinet is comprised of 17 members who have lived experience as riders, cash payers, and users of a variety of reduced fare programs and products. They were recruited throughout King County and are paid for their participation.

King County will work with the Fares Cabinet to explore the phase out of on-board cash fare payment and identify key barriers, milestones, and recommended strategies. As this work continues, Metro will share progress towards milestones and recommendations, engage with riders, including seniors, and adjust implementation approaches as needed.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Fares Cabinet; Climate Equity Community Task Force

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement, share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Metro Connects; Metro Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



SRFC 40. IMPROVE ACCESS TO ORCA CARDS AND REDUCED FARE TRANSIT CARDS AND PROGRAMS

Improving access to ORCA cards and reduced fare transit cards and programs has been identified as a critical strategy by the County's community member-based Fares Cabinet. To deliver on this recommendation, King County will enhance access to fare products and programs by partnering with community-based organizations to provide ORCA card distribution and fare education, and by expanding in-person opportunities for riders to access fare-related customer service support throughout the county. This work ensures County residents with barriers to general channels of information (web-based, language access, disability, etc.) have increased opportunities to learn about and obtain public transportation resources through trusted sources in their own communities.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS–HCD; PHSKC–EHS

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community-based organizations; regional ORCA partners (Sound Transit, Pierce Transit; Community Transit; Pierce Transit, Everett Transit; Kitsap Transit; City of Seattle; and Washington State Ferries); labor

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Metro Connects; Human Services Bus Ticket Program

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

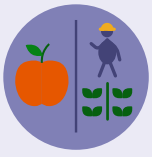
FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Tracking climate preparedness performance measures is essential to evaluating King County's progress toward its climate commitments and ensuring accountability across multiple sectors. The table below organizes performance measures by **Focus Areas**, with each measure detailing objectives, **2030 Target,** and **Current Status**. The 2030 Target and Current Status data allow for a quick gap analysis to show what the County has planned to achieve, and how much progress has been made. Together, these metrics help the County ensure that climate actions remain data-driven, equitable, and aligned with regional and state climate policies.

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 **Community leadership & community-driven policy making**	**SRFC PM 1. Frontline communities leading on King County climate action.** Increase the number of frontline community members leading on climate action by establishing viable, sustainable pathways through: • Opportunities to consult on community-driven climate action • Access to climate internships in local government • Access to entry-level climate, environment, and community partnership careers in local government.	***Current Status:*** *50* ***2030 Target:*** *100*
 **Community leadership & community-driven policy making**	**SRFC PM 2. Community-driven climate projects.** Increase the number of community-driven projects King County will fund, partner on, or otherwise advance that address the inequitable, intersecting, and cumulative impacts of climate change on frontline communities.	***Current Status:*** *14* ***2030 Target:*** *40*
 **Building capacity with frontline communities & youth**	**SRFC PM 3. King County staff advancing climate equity and enabling climate justice countywide.** Provide training to at least 500 staff across seven or more departments on the intersections of climate change, climate justice, root causes, and strategies to embed climate equity across diverse initiatives in King County.	***Current Status:*** *25* ***2030 Target:*** *500*
 **Building capacity with frontline communities & youth**	**SRFC PM 4. Strengthen community capacity to address climate justice intersections.** Expand the number of frontline community members and youth informed on and skilled at identifying and addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change through culturally relevant trainings, workshops, media, and events.	***Current Status:*** *400* ***2030 Target:*** *2,000*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 Climate and economic opportunity	**SRFC PM 5. Advance economic justice.** Increase usage of ESJ credit 6 for advancing economic justice in the King County Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard by 50 percent. Currently, it is at 30 percent, this would increase usage to 45 percent overall. This increase will demonstrate how economic opportunity is integrated into capital projects to deliver significant co-benefits to County residents, including skills training, workforce development, and living wage employment.	***Current Status:*** *30%* ***2030 Target:*** *45%*
 Climate and economic opportunity	**SRFC PM 6. Living wage jobs within frontline communities.** Directly connect a minimum of 500 members of frontline communities to living-wage climate connected jobs through King County programs, campaigns, and projects. As a result, over $100 million in wages will be generated for frontline communities.	***Current Status:*** *N/A* ***2030 Target:*** *500*
 Community health and emergency preparedness	**SRFC PM 7. Growing community knowledge on climate hazards.** Provide frontline communities with culturally relevant information and resources enabling them to respond to accelerating climate hazards through: • Providing community trainings on local climate hazards (i.e., flooding, heat, severe winter weather, wildfire, and vector-borne disease) to at least 500 frontline community members. • Reporting a 70 percent increase in knowledge and preparedness regarding climate hazards for participants in County trainings and workshops.	***Current Status:*** *0 (assuming no trainings held)* ***2030 Target:*** *500 frontline community members trained;* *70% increase in knowledge and preparedness reported*
 Community health and emergency preparedness	**SRFC PM 8. Communities partnering on emergency preparedness.** Every five years increase the number of county-community partnerships supporting emergency preparedness for communities representing Census tracts identified as eight, nine, and 10 on the Washington State Environmental Health Disparities mapping tool.	***Current Status:*** *0 (assuming no trainings held)* ***2030 Target:*** *20*
 Community health and emergency preparedness	**SRFC PM 9. Increasing farm acreage supporting underserved farmers.** Increase the number of acres supporting underserved farmers through King County programs and grants. • By 2030, 275 acres of farm acreage in King County is supporting underserved farmers. • By 2040, 400 acres of farm acreage in King County is supporting underserved farmers.	***Current Status:*** *200* ***2030 Target:*** *275*
 Food justice & food security	**SRFC PM 10. Increasing funding for local food access.** Increase King County investments in community-based projects for local food access programs such as the Farm to Food Bank program and Harvest Against Hunger. Currently the funding is $360,000 annually and the goal is $460,000 annually to advance food justice and food security for frontline communities. This would be an increase of 28 percent maintained annually.	***Current Status:*** *0* ***2030 Target:*** *28%*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 Housing security & anti-displacement	**SRFC PM 11. Increasing completed and awarded equitable development projects.** Complete CBO-led projects receiving awards that advance equitable development. If funding becomes available, King County would increase the dollars invested to close identified funding gaps to complete already funded CBO-led projects and make new awards to projects that meet the funding eligibility criteria set forth by the EDI advisory board.	***Current Status:*** *0 (5 projects awarded)* ***2030 Target:*** *5 (or more completed)*
 Housing security & anti-displacement	**SRFC PM 12. Community-identified climate resilience.** Factor community-identified climate resilience goals into the planning and design of at least two equitable community-driven housing or community development projects that meet the funding eligibility criteria set forth by the EDI advisory board.	***Current Status:*** *1* ***2030 Target:*** *2*
 Housing security & anti-displacement	**SRFC PM 13. Community-driven affordable housing projects.** King County supported equitable community-driven affordable housing projects will provide over 300 units and 450 bedrooms of stable income-restricted housing, reducing the risk of displacement for the households who live in them.	***Current Status:*** *0* ***2030 Target:*** *300 units; 450 bedrooms*
 Energy justice & utilities	**SRFC PM 14. Lowering utility costs by connecting people to affordability resources.** Increase direct enrollments in utility affordability programs by 400 customers through establishing a "one-stop-shop" that connects residents with utility assistance and incentive programs.	***Current Status:*** *0* ***2030 Target:*** *400*
 Energy justice & utilities	**SRFC PM 15. Making energy efficiency available to frontline communities.** Increase the number of households with moderate to low incomes (below 80% AMI to 150% AMI) that receive home retrofits (i.e., heat pumps, weatherization, etc.) through King County programs and services.	***Current Status:*** *100* ***2030 Target:*** *800*
 Transportation access & equity	**SRFC PM 16. Community Engagement with Metro.** 80 percent (on average) of medium and large transportation projects within Metro involve co-creation or shared decision-making with community.	***Current Status:*** *79%* ***2030 Target:*** *80%*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 Transportation access & equity	**SRFC PM 17. Transit Access.** 80 percent of King County priority populations have convenient access to the transit network.	***Current Status:*** *81%* ***2030 Target:*** *80%*
 Transportation access & equity	**SRFC PM 18. Affordable Housing Near Transit.** 50 percent of new, and 25 percent of existing, rental units within a ½ mile walk of frequent or high-capacity transit are available at or below 80 percent of the area median income (AMI).	***Current Status:*** *27% new; 61% existing housing* ***2030 Target:*** *50% new; 25% existing housing*



A community member shows their ORCA card next to a King County Metro Trailhead Direct bus.

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45 Gregg et al, "Climate Change and Displacement in the U.S. Communities: How Communities, Professionals, and Experts Are Responding to Climate Change Displacement," EcoAdapt, 2020. [LINK].

46 This recommendation can be scaled and is dependent on the availability of new revenue. The King County EDI Phase 2 Implementation Plan includes four implementation stages that are dependent on the scale of available funding (see Chart 1, pg. 37). The amount of funding needed to sustain a full-scale EDI is $100 million annually, plus the cost of administration.

47 The King County EDI Advisory Board is being created and will start as an interim board. When sustained funding is accomplished, the board will transition to a permanent board structure.

48 The King County EDI Advisory Board is being created and will start as an interim board. When sustained funding is accomplished, the board will transition to a permanent board structure.

49 Carley et al, "Behavioral and Financial Coping Strategies Among Energy Insecure Households," Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2022. [LINK].

50 Center for Social Inclusion, "Energy Democracy: Co-op Power – A Profile in Cooperative Ownership," 2016. [LINK]

51 ACEEE, "Renters Struggling with Energy Insecurity Often Face Wider Hardships," King County, 2025. [LINK].

52 Got Green and Puget Sound Sage, "Powering the Transition: Community Priorities for a Renewable and Equitable Future," 2020. [LINK].

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54 King County Mobility Equity Cabinet, "Mobility Framework," 2019. [LINK].



CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS

INTRODUCTION

Climate change is occurring and the pace of that change is accelerating. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and other scientific organizations, 2024 was the hottest year on record globally since 1850.[1] The planet's 10 hottest years since 1850 have all occurred since 2015.

Communities near and far are increasingly feeling the impacts—and the costs—of climate change. In 2024, the United States experienced the second highest number of climate and weather-related disasters with losses exceeding $1 billion each (27 events), second only to 2023 (28 events).[2] Property damage alone from the January 2025 wildfires in the greater Los Angeles area is currently estimated at $28 to $53 billion. Preliminary research shows that climate change increased the likelihood of the Los Angeles wildfire event by 35 percent.[3]

King County must prepare for and adapt to the impacts of climate change, many of which are becoming increasingly unavoidable. Climate preparedness helps ensure that King County can deliver on its long-standing commitment to protect public health and safety, provide critical infrastructure, support economic prosperity, and safeguard natural and tribal treaty trust resources. Preparing for climate change also makes economic sense. According to the National Institute of Building Sciences, one dollar invested in natural hazards risk reduction (e.g., river flooding, winds, earthquake, and wildfire) can save approximately $13 in losses.[4] In that sense, preparing for climate change is inherently part of good government and responsible stewardship of public resources.



The Fall City Floodplain Restoration Project simultaneously improved habitat and strengthened flood protections for nearby farms, homes, and roads in the Snoqualmie Valley. The project is King County's largest-ever floodplain project.

BACKGROUND

Climate change is a growing concern within King County communities and agencies. Since 1900, average annual air temperature in the Puget Sound region has increased 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit (°F).[5] Heavy rain events are getting heavier,[6] summers are getting hotter,[7] snow and ice in the Cascades and Olympic mountains is declining long-term,[8] sea level is rising,[9] and ocean chemistry is changing in ways that are harmful to local marine species like shellfish and salmon.[10] These changes are becoming increasingly visible in the form of more extreme weather events, higher King Tides, more poor air quality days from wildfire smoke, and less predictable snow cover for water supply and winter recreation, for example.

Recent events have reinforced concern about climate change and underscore the need to reduce climate risks and increase resilience:

- In June 2021, unprecedented temperatures associated with a major heat wave (the Pacific Northwest Heat Dome) led to 126 heat-related deaths in Washington State, including more than 30 deaths in King County. Temperatures exceeded 100°F for three consecutive days, peaking at 108°F at Sea-Tac Airport, 109°F in Renton, and 118°F in Maple Valley. Initial attribution studies found that the event was "virtually impossible without human-caused climate change."[11]

- In September 2022, a fast-moving wildfire threatened the towns of Skykomish, Gold Bar, and Index. The Bolt Creek Fire, which grew 7,600 acres in the first 24 hours and burned for more than six weeks, forced residential evacuations, required frequent closures of Highway 2, damaged forest lands of economic and cultural significance to the Tulalip Tribes, and impacted air quality over large portions of the Puget Sound region for weeks.

- On December 27, 2022, a low-pressure storm converged with the peak of King Tides to cause unprecedented coastal flooding along Puget Sound shorelines, including flooding along the Vashon-Maury Islands shoreline and in the economically disadvantaged neighborhoods of South Park and Georgetown in Seattle.

WHAT IS CLIMATE RESILIENCE?

Resilience is the ability of individuals, communities, and social, economic, and environmental systems to withstand and adapt to disruptions while maintaining their core identities, functions, and structures.[12]

Rising greenhouse gas emissions are expected to increase the frequency, intensity, and/or duration of events like the 2021 Heat Dome, 2022 Bolt Creek Fire, and 2022 King Tide flooding, amplifying existing challenges while creating new challenges. Figure 25 shows some of the ways that projected warming may affect the region. King County residents are likely to face a higher risk of heat stress with more days over 90°F, more strain on summer water supplies due to less mountain snow and lower summer streamflows, and increased river and coastal flooding due to heavier rain events and sea level rise, among other changes.

Reducing climate change vulnerability and building resilience is essential. As climate change intensifies, King County must strengthen its capacity to cope with hazards, respond to long-term shifts, and evolve in ways that ensure sustainability and equity. This requires not only adapting to immediate risks—such as extreme heat, flooding, and sea level rise—but also fostering the ability to learn, innovate, and transform in response to an uncertain future.

Figure 25. Projected Impacts of Climate Change in King County[13]

Projected changes in very hot days, snowpack, peak streamflow, summer streamflow, extreme precipitation, and sea level rise in King County under a high greenhouse gas emissions scenario. Changes are relative to 1980–2009 unless noted otherwise.

King County	2050s (2040–2069)	2080s (2070–2099)	Impacts include
Very hot days change in days above 90°F	↑ 20 days Range: 10–28 days	↑ 41 days Range: 24–59 days	• Increased risk of heat related illness, death • Higher likelihood of wildfire, summer drought • More harmful algal blooms
April 1 snowpack change in April 1st snow water equivalent	↓ 76% Range: -61 to -86%	↓ 95% Range: -86 to -97%	• Less water storage for summer water needs • Longer wildfire season • Winter recreation losses
Peak streamflow change in one day peak volume	↑ 25% Range: +9 to +48%	↑ 36% Range: +15 to +56%	• More river flooding • Increased risks for floodplain communities • Negative effects on salmon populations
Low summer streamflow change for June–September	↓ 38% Range: -23 to -51%	↓ 48% Range: -34 to -61%	• Less water for summer hydropower, irrigation • Negative effects on salmon populations • Impacts on water quality
Extreme precipitation change in 24 hour, 25-year event	↑ 13% Range: -3 to +24%	↑ 12% Range: +2 to +36%	• More urban, local flooding • Increased potential for landslides • Impacts on water quality
Seattle	**2050**	**2100**	
Sea level rise 50% probability of exceedance value and likely range*	↑ 10″ Likely range: +7 in. to +1.1 ft	↑ 2.3′ Likely range: +1.7 to +3.1 ft	• More coastal flooding, inundation • Damage to coastal infrastructure, communities • Changes in coastal habitat

*Change in sea level rise relative to 1991-2009 average.

Sources: Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington | Climate Impacts Group; UW Climate Impacts Group Interactive Sea Level Rise Data Visualizations (Miller et al. 2018)

KEY ISSUES

King County's diverse geography—stretching from Puget Sound's low-lying marine shorelines to the snow-capped crests of the Cascade Mountains—and the people, places, and ecosystems in King County face a range of climate hazards that require tailored, place-based solutions. Key issues and opportunity areas, organized into nine focus areas for the 2025 SCAP, include the following:



Sea Level Rise Preparedness

- Sea level rise poses risks to homes, businesses, and infrastructure on the marine shoreline.
- Loss of critical near-shore habitat for juvenile salmon and other marine species is also a concern.
- Local action on sea level rise is needed to reduce threats to public health and safety, protect shoreline habitats, and reduce economic and environmental impacts.



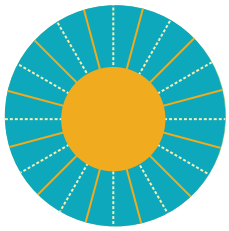
River Flood Management

- More intense heavy rain events and the shift to more winter precipitation falling as rain rather than snow in the mountains increases the potential for flooding and channel migration in King County river systems.
- Reconnecting and restoring river floodplains to naturally store and convey flood waters helps reduce flood risks while enhancing habitat benefits and strengthening climate resilience.
- Working with at-risk floodplain residents on flood risk mitigation is also critical.



Extreme Precipitation and Drought Mitigation

- More intense heavy rain events can worsen drainage problems and lead to more urban flooding, landslides, erosion, combined sewer overflows, and water quality issues.
- The risk of drought increases with climate change, requiring more active management of water resources to meet water needs for people and the environment.
- Expanding the use of multi-benefit approaches like stormwater parks and Green Stormwater Infrastructure will help reduce stormwater flooding and improve water quality when too much water is an issue while water conservation and reuse will help when not enough water is a concern.



Extreme Heat Adaptation

- All climate scenarios point to hotter summers and more extreme heat events in King County. Extreme heat risks are amplified in areas with more heat-absorbing hard surfaces (such as concrete and buildings), less green space, and fewer trees, creating the "heat island effect."
- Increasing community resilience to extreme heat and adapting the built environment to better handle heat will reduce heat-related illness and help vulnerable populations stay safe in the heat.



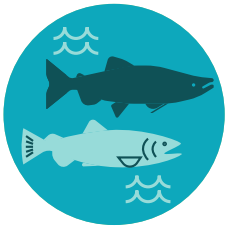
Forest Resilience and Urban Tree Canopy Expansion

- King County's forest lands and urban tree canopy provide numerous economic, ecological, and cultural benefits. Ensuring that forests and urban tree canopy can remain healthy in the face of stressors like disease, drought, heat stress, and invasive species is critical to maintaining and enhancing these benefits.
- Growing a more robust and healthier urban tree canopy is also important, particularly in urban heat islands and in communities with inequitable access to trees and green space.



Wildfire Risk Reduction

- Hotter temperatures, declining snowpack, and drier summers increase the potential for wildfire in King County. Risks to people and infrastructure are greater in areas where development sits adjacent to or within forested areas (the wildland-urban interface).
- Coupled with improving forest resilience, implementing measures that reduce wildfire risk at the household and community level and planning for wildfire response and recovery will help communities stay safe when a wildfire occurs.



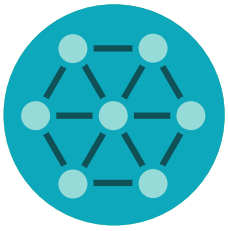
Salmon Recovery and Habitat Connectivity

- Climate change creates significant challenges for salmon and kokanee survival. Key stressors include hotter summer water temperatures, higher winter flood flows, lower summer stream flows, and habitat loss in King County lakes, rivers, and marine shoreline.
- Employing nature-based solutions to protect, connect, and restore habitat will help native salmon populations survive in the face of climate change and ensure that Coast Salish Tribes can maintain their strong spiritual and cultural connections to salmon.



Climate-Ready Capital Projects

- King County invests millions of dollars annually in public infrastructure improvements and delivery of local services, including wastewater conveyance and treatment, public transit, stormwater management, maintenance of roads and bridges, floodplain management, habitat restoration, public health services, management of parks and open spaces, and land use planning.
- Accounting for current and future climate impacts when making those investments is essential to building resilient infrastructure, communities, and ecosystems given the long-lasting nature of those decisions.



Regional Capacity Across Hazards

- Climate change impacts are not bound by jurisdictional lines and affect complex and inter-connected natural, socioeconomic, and regulatory systems, underscoring the importance of working with regional partners on climate preparedness.
- Regional collaboration can leverage limited resources and staff capacity, reduce duplication of effort, facilitate institutional learning, catalyze action at broader regional scales, and ensure that neighboring climate preparedness efforts complement each other.

Central to each of these is the fact that climate change is a risk multiplier for many communities. Existing inequities related to health care, housing, employment, language, and other factors can create disproportionate impacts for people living with low incomes, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities (i.e., frontline communities). Health factors (e.g., age, pregnancy) and underlying medical issues such as cardiovascular, respiratory, kidney, cerebrovascular, or mental health conditions can also increase vulnerability to climate impacts. Centering equity in climate preparedness is necessary to ensuring that frontline communities are not disproportionately affected by climate change.



Climate hazards such as wildfire smoke can increase risks for people with asthma, cardiovascular disease, or who are pregnant. Lower income communities are more likely to be disproportionately affected by climate hazards.

STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

The 2025 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) builds on King County's commitment to equitable climate preparedness, expanding efforts to address a broader range of climate impacts while continuing work initiated in the 2020 SCAP. As both a local government and a regional service provider, King County has a unique responsibility to ensure that climate action is comprehensive and equitable. The County oversees critical functions—including land use planning, public health, flood and stormwater management, habitat restoration, waste management, transportation, emergency response, housing, and equity initiatives—all of which are increasingly affected by climate change.

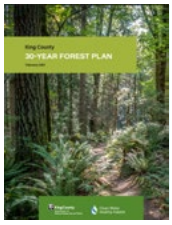
This dual role creates both an opportunity and an obligation to take a holistic approach, ensuring that efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen climate resilience are integrated across sectors and communities.

County Policies and Strategic Plans

King County is working to integrate climate preparedness and equity into its policies and planning framework, ensuring that resilience efforts are data-driven, community-informed, and coordinated across agencies. Foundational policies and plans for advancing climate resilience include:



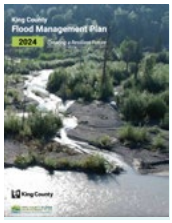
King County Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan (2020). Identifies a shared vision and set of measurable goals for protecting and restoring the water and land in King County.



King County 30-Year Forest Plan (2021). Guides efforts to preserve and expand forested areas, which play a critical role in carbon sequestration, watershed health, and climate resilience.



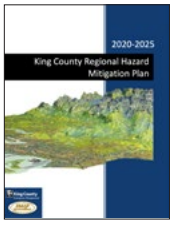
King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy (2022). Outlines actions to prevent and respond to wildfire risks, particularly in the wildland-urban interface.



2024 King County Flood Management Plan (2024). Addresses risks caused by flooding along the county's rivers and streams, in coastal areas, and in urban areas.



King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy (2024). Focuses on reducing risks associated with extreme heat events, particularly for vulnerable populations in urban heat islands.



King County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2025). Assesses natural and human-caused hazards that can impact the King County region and develops strategies to reduce risk and build resilience.

Sustainable & Resilient Frontline Communities (SRFC) Framework. Ensures that climate preparedness efforts address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on frontline communities.

County Programs and Initiatives

King County also advances climate resilience through collaborative initiatives, public engagement, and investments that address wildfire, flooding, landslides, and drought. These efforts focus on expanding partnerships, enhancing public awareness, and improving technical support to better prepare communities for climate impacts:

- **Puget Sound Climate Preparedness Collaborative** – Strengthens regional partnerships to advance climate preparedness and foster cross-jurisdictional coordination across the Puget Sound Basin.

- **Outreach and Education Initiatives** – Expands public engagement, technical assistance, and information-sharing about climate impacts and preparedness. These efforts provide communities with the tools and knowledge needed to mitigate risks, including those related to wildfire, heat, and flooding.

Centering Climate Equity

Finally, King County's climate preparedness efforts are grounded in its commitment to equity and social justice. A consistent focus on equity in the development and implementation of climate actions ensures that SCAP initiatives actively work to reduce the disproportionate impacts of climate change on BIPOC and low-income communities. This focus aligns with the SRFC framework, particularly in shared areas of work related to community preparedness for extreme weather events, expanding urban tree canopy, and building regional capacity for improving health outcomes. Ensuring continued coordination between climate preparedness actions and the SRFC section will be a key priority for 2025–2030.



SUMMARY

King County is committed to equitably preparing for climate impacts and increasing community resilience in ways that provide benefits today and in the coming decades. The actions in this section build on the County's ongoing work to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all who live and work here by:

- systematically integrating climate preparedness into agency decision making and capital planning;
- increasing agency understanding of climate impacts on infrastructure and operations;
- supporting multi-benefit and community-based climate solutions;
- strengthening health and equity outcomes; and
- building local and regional capacity and partnerships for addressing climate change impacts.

Becoming a more climate resilient King County will require a sustained commitment to climate action, even in the face of limited resources and other challenges. This includes:

- working in partnership with communities—particularly those disproportionately affected by climate change—to develop the information, tools, and changes needed to reduce the harmful effects of climate change and build stronger and more resilient communities;
- leading by example, and in doing so, helping other jurisdictions accelerate their own climate preparedness efforts and contribute to climate resilience more broadly in the Puget Sound region; and
- having the courage to go beyond incremental change to engage in deeper, more transformational change where needed.

Success also requires collective action on the part of King County governments, organizations, and other public and private sector partners. No single agency or program can build a climate resilient King County alone. Collaborative work is needed to ensure that key goals—health, equity, environmental protection and restoration, economic resilience, and reliable provision of critical public services—are met in a changing climate.





SEA LEVEL RISE PREPAREDNESS

Rising sea levels are a direct result of climate change, due primarily to water expansion from warmer ocean temperatures and increased melting of glaciers and ice sheets. Local factors, including changes in land elevation, also affect how much sea level rises in a specific location.

Throughout King County, higher King Tides and storm surge are already impacting shoreline homes, businesses, infrastructure, and habitat. Preparing for and adapting to sea level rise is necessary to minimize the negative economic and environmental impacts of sea level rise, support the natural processes needed to maintain shoreline habitat, and reduce risks to public health and safety.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Sea level in King County is projected to rise approximately one foot by the 2050s and two to three feet by 2100, relative to water levels in 2000, unless greenhouse gas emissions drastically decrease.[14] Both lower and higher amounts of sea level rise are possible, depending on different GHG emissions scenarios, with up to five feet of sea level rise considered a plausible upper estimate for 2100.

Rising sea levels can permanently flood low-lying areas, cause more frequent coastal flooding in places that rarely experience it today, increase shoreline and bluff erosion, impact habitat, contaminate coastal aquifers, corrode materials exposed to more saltwater, and increase damage to shoreline infrastructure. The severity of these impacts will vary by location depending on how quickly land rises as you move away from the shoreline, exposure to waves, and proximity of infrastructure to the water, for example. Hard armoring of the shoreline (i.e., use of bulkheads and sea walls) is making it difficult to maintain natural processes like erosion (especially from feeder bluffs) that provide the sediment needed for local beaches and shoreline habitat to keep pace with sea level rise.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions a climate-resilient marine shoreline where people can live and work safely in proximity to the marine shoreline; where risks associated with sea level rise decrease over time; where public and private shoreline infrastructure is built in the right places and designed to account for sea level rise; and where beach and marine shoreline habitats can adapt and move naturally in response to sea level rise, ensuring that tribes can meaningfully exercise treaty rights to harvest species that depend on healthy marine shorelines.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Protected the vital functions of the Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment station in the Duwamish Valley by building the facility for two feet of sea level rise, launched a study looking at the impacts of sea level rise on groundwater in the Valley, and deepened local partnerships to coordinate planning for sea level rise in the lower Duwamish.
- Established areas on Vashon-Maury Island where construction must account for sea level rise.
- Worked with State Parks to redesign Saltwater State Park amenities associated with the McSorley Creek Shoreline and Estuary Restoration project to account for sea level rise.
- Identified sea level rise risks and adaptation actions for King County-owned infrastructure.
- Partnered with the U.S. Geological Survey to model sea level rise impacts on coastal flooding.
- Initiated a coastal hazard vulnerability study for Vashon-Maury Islands to look at risks associated with both sea level rise and shoreline landslides.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

- **Prep 1.** Develop a sea level rise strategy for unincorporated King County
- **Prep 2.** Update King County Shoreline policies and codes to account for sea level rise
- **Prep 3.** Promote multi-benefit approaches for reducing sea level rise impacts on private property
- **Prep 4.** Seek funding to reduce sea level rise and flood risks to on-site wastewater infrastructure
- **Prep 5.** Partner with shoreline jurisdictions to support coordinated planning for sea level rise
- **Prep 6.** Support equitable long-term solutions for sea level rise in the Duwamish Valley

Image source: Washington Department of Ecology



PREP 1.
DEVELOP A SEA LEVEL RISE STRATEGY FOR UNINCORPORATED KING COUNTY

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.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

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

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Shoreline residents; Washington Sea Grant

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

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

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



PREP 2.
UPDATE KING COUNTY SHORELINE POLICIES AND CODES TO ACCOUNT FOR SEA LEVEL RISE

Incorporating sea level rise into local codes and policies is integral to building long-term climate resilience in King County. The County will address sea level rise code and process improvements including forthcoming Washington Department of Ecology requirements on integrating sea level rise into the 2029 Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update. The County will also address needed code and process improvements for the interrelated topics of shoreline development and redevelopment, shoreline armoring, shoreline septic system requirements, sea level rise mitigation, and coastal flood risk reduction identified via work completed in the 2020 SCAP. Since parts of the County's SMP are implemented through flood codes and policies, the updates will also address their intersection with potential flood code updates.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD; ECO; PSB–RP

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; WDFW

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts

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

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



PREP 3.
PROMOTE MULTI-BENEFIT APPROACHES FOR REDUCING SEA LEVEL RISE IMPACTS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Addressing sea level rise requires a range of tools and resources to support risk reduction measures for private property, particularly for lower income residents. King County will evaluate and promote multi-benefit approaches for adapting private property to sea level rise, with a focus on options that reduce the potential for flood and erosion damage, support shoreline habitat, and improve water quality. Approaches include home elevations and/or moving structures or appurtenances (such as on-site septic sewage systems) back from the shoreline. Where adaptation options are limited, voluntary buyouts may be the safest and most practical way to adapt to sea level rise. Results from the assessment will be used to inform long-term planning for sea level rise in King County.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting; DNRP–WLRD; PHSKC–EHS; PSB

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; shoreline residents; WDFW; Washington Sea Grant

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building

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

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 4.
SEEK FUNDING TO REDUCE SEA LEVEL RISE AND FLOOD RISKS TO ON-SITE WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Sea level rise and increased flooding due to precipitation changes represent a risk to on-site wastewater infrastructure in unincorporated King County. Building from and expanding sea level rise work completed in 2025 for Vashon and Maury Island, the County will identify where sea level rise and flooding are most likely to impact on-site sewage systems on Vashon-Maury Island and unincorporated areas in the lower Duwamish Valley adjoining South Park, and where the equity-related needs for addressing those impacts are greatest. King County will then work with partners to secure funding to improve wastewater infrastructure in high-risk areas.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–EHS

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–OEM; DNRP–WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community-based organizations; other sewer districts as appropriate; Seattle Public Utilities; Vashon Community Council

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Septic System Maintenance and Side Sewer Repair Rebate Program; King County Shoreline Master Program

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 5.
PARTNER WITH SHORELINE JURISDICTIONS TO SUPPORT COORDINATED PLANNING FOR SEA LEVEL RISE

Building regional consistency in sea level rise risk management approaches can reduce duplication of effort, provide opportunities to leverage limited resources, and contribute to better action outcomes. King County will work with shoreline jurisdictions to support stronger alignment in planning for sea level rise, inclusive of sea level rise planning needs for the County's infrastructure located in incorporated areas. This work will support a shared understanding of mapping tools and resources to support local action, how peer communities are planning for sea level rise, and opportunities for building more consistency in shoreline policies and regulations related to sea level rise.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD, WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County shoreline jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | **Accelerated** | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other



PREP 6.
SUPPORT EQUITABLE LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS FOR SEA LEVEL RISE IN THE DUWAMISH VALLEY

Sea level rise presents unique challenges to residents, businesses, and the environment along the Duwamish River. Collaboration and coordination are needed to ensure that individual and collective sea level rise planning efforts in the Duwamish Valley are effective, efficient, equitable, and community-centered. King County will work with partners to support coordinated, long-term equitable solutions to sea level rise and compounding hazards in the Duwamish Valley, including its unincorporated areas. This includes pursuing joint funding opportunities and pilot projects, as appropriate, to implement multi-benefit projects that reduce risks from sea level rise; support community, economic, and environmental resilience; promote salmon recovery; and advance environmental justice.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD, WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
City of Seattle–Office of Sustainability and Environment; Duwamish River Community Coalition; Northwest Seaport Alliance; Port of Seattle; Seattle Public Utilities; WRIA 9

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; Duwamish Valley Resilience District (City of Seattle); King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Shoreline Master Program; WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:
Advocate/ Support | Convene | Implement

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



RIVER FLOOD MANAGEMENT

King County rivers and floodplains provide important ecological, economic, and cultural benefits to local communities and tribes. Benefits include water quality improvement, flood storage and conveyance, habitat for threatened and endangered salmon, recreation, employment, and local food production. Fully functional floodplains allow the river to inundate and migrate in the areas needed to provide these natural, economic, and cultural benefits.

King County rivers can also pose significant flood and channel migration risks to people living and working in floodplains. River flooding is the County's most frequent and costliest natural disaster, with extreme flooding occurring every two to five years on average.[15] The Snoqualmie River is the most flood-prone watershed in King County.

While flooding and channel migration can produce negative consequences and threaten public safety and property, flooding and channel migration are both natural occurrences. In areas where floodplains and watercourses remain connected or have been reconnected to their floodplains, periodic floods help to create and maintain channel networks, floodplain wetlands, and vital and productive habitats.[16] Preserving, protecting, and enhancing river floodplains in ways that reduce flood risks and benefit habitat can provide win-win solutions for reducing the impacts of climate change on river flooding.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Climate change increases the potential for river flooding and channel migration. While results will vary by location and by the return frequency of different flood events (e.g., the 1 percent annual chance flood event versus the 10 percent annual chance event), floods in the coming decades are likely to be larger and/or occur more frequently due to the combined effects of wetter winters, more intense heavy rain events, and more winter precipitation falling as rain rather than snow in mountain watersheds. The likelihood of increased flooding is greatest on unregulated rivers like the Snoqualmie but even rivers with dams, like the Green and White rivers, could see increased flooding.

Flooding can threaten livelihoods; damage homes, businesses, and built infrastructure; and disrupt critical services such as transportation, water supply, and agriculture. A recent flood risk assessment in King County estimated that a 1 percent annual chance river flood event could potentially cause county-wide damages equal to or exceeding $368 million.[17] Low-income communities, renters, people with limited English proficiency, and BIPOC communities face greater challenges in recovery and resilience. Meanwhile, past efforts to reduce flood risk and manage floodplain land uses have harmed and reduced habitat essential to support salmon populations, affecting the ability of tribes to fully exercise their treaty rights.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions resilient communities and floodplains where flood risks to people and structures are reduced while supporting salmon recovery, agriculture, open space, and other community priorities. Floodplains are connected and restored, increasing their ability to naturally store and convey flood waters, protect water quality, sustain habitat, and build healthy soils for agriculture. Flood management infrastructure is planned and built to withstand climate change. Floodplain residents have the knowledge, resources, and capacity to protect themselves before and during floods, with equitable access to programs that reduce flood risk and support recovery.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Included climate change as a major strategic priority in the 2024 update of the King County Flood Management Plan.
- Piloted an approach for incorporating climate change into capital planning for flood management projects as part of the Tolt River Levee Level of Service project, with funding from the Flood Control District and grants.
- Moved levees back to allow more space to store flood water and restore floodplain habitat, where feasible, with funding from the Flood Control District, and other local, state, and federal partners.
- Elevated 66 homes and acquired 215 at-risk properties and 600 acres since 2008, with funding from the Flood Control District.
- Partnered with the University of Washington (UW) Climate Impacts Group to initiate an assessment of climate change impacts of flooding on King County rivers, with funding from the Flood Control District.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

- **Prep 7.** Incorporate climate change into flood management projects
- **Prep 8.** Expand residential flood risk mitigation tools countywide to benefit those most vulnerable to flooding
- **Prep 9.** Collaboratively create and implement targeted outreach on flooding, inclusive of climate impacts
- **Prep 10.** Continue to meet or exceed federal flood standards
- **Prep 11.** Evaluate potential changes in flood risks from climate change
- **Prep 12.** Assess the risk posed by climate change on small and medium sized dams in King County



PREP 7. INCORPORATE CLIMATE CHANGE INTO FLOOD MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

Climate change, natural river processes, and population growth will change flood risk, making it important that flood management capital projects be built for and/or are adaptable to future conditions. Prescriptive approaches to designing flood mitigation capital projects may limit the resilience and adaptability of flood risk reduction infrastructure, however. Contingent on funding from the Flood Control District, the Surface Water Management fee, or other sources, King County will continue efforts to develop and implement approaches to incorporating climate resilience into the planning, design, and construction of flood management capital projects. The work will utilize recently updated modeling showing how climate change may affect flooding in King County rivers to inform the design and construction of flood risk reduction projects. Building resilience into flood management infrastructure may include designing capital infrastructure to handle a wider range of future flow projections, purchasing a larger right of way to accommodate adaptive management actions, or designing infrastructure in ways that can be modified over time based on changing flow conditions and predictions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County Flood Control District; UW Climate Impacts Group; WDFW

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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



PREP 8. EXPAND RESIDENTIAL FLOOD RISK MITIGATION TOOLS COUNTYWIDE TO BENEFIT THOSE MOST VULNERABLE TO FLOODING

The ability to strategically leverage flood buyouts and home elevations as risk reduction tools for river flooding in King County is limited by several factors, including geographic constraints, funding, upfront costs to homeowners, and homeowner interest. As a result, residential flood risk mitigation programs do not always benefit those who are most vulnerable to flooding.

Contingent on funding from the Flood Control District or other sources, King County will work with partners to expand the use of voluntary residential flood risk reduction and mitigation actions (e.g., voluntary buyouts, home elevations, and other repairs) in ways that benefit more at-risk property owners, including those who have greater financial need within the county. Work on this action includes determining where residential properties are at highest risk of flooding under current and future conditions, identifying and prioritizing residential properties where assistance is needed, focusing residential flood risk mitigation tools on communities countywide that have documented harm from flooding, and augmenting existing funding sources for residential flood risk mitigation projects via federal grants and leveraging local funding for grant match requirements and/or for properties that are not eligible for federal grants.

Work on this action will support repetitive loss areas in the Sammamish, Skykomish, Green, Cedar, and Snoqualmie River Basins and on Vashon Island. Aspects of this work will also require expanding the use of residential home elevations beyond the Snoqualmie Basin. When practicable, efforts to reduce flood risk to homes and other components of the built environment through this action will be done with consideration for protection of farmland.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–OEM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
FEMA; King County Flood Control District; WEMD

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 9. COLLABORATIVELY CREATE AND IMPLEMENT TARGETED OUTREACH ON FLOODING, INCLUSIVE OF CLIMATE IMPACTS

Consistent and coordinated messaging to people in areas at high risk for flooding is critical to supporting their ability to take protective action and to raise awareness of climate impacts on flooding. Contingent on funding from the Flood Control District or other sources, King County will connect with local partners to incorporate information on changing flood risk and ways to reduce that risk into outreach for people living, working, and traveling through river and coastal floodplains. Work on this action includes developing prioritized messages that incorporate climate impacts and actions people can take to reduce risks. Basin and/or hazard specific messaging will be included as applicable.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES—OEM; ECO; PHSKC

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Flood Control District; floodplain communities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; FEMA Community Rating System membership; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 10. CONTINUE TO MEET OR EXCEED FEDERAL FLOOD STANDARDS

In 2024, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued new rules to address increased flood risk, make communities more resilient, and help reduce the damage caused by both current and future flooding. As part of this change, FEMA issued an updated Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) requiring that agencies establish local standards to protect FEMA-funded projects from flood risk (effective September 9, 2024). Similarly, effective January 1, 2025, the Department of Housing and Urban Development established their own FFRMS standards to address flood risk for residential properties. However, these requirements were rescinded in 2025.

If needed in the future and contingent on funding from the Flood Control District or other sources, King County will conduct analysis and mapping efforts using FEMA or other federally authorized approaches to establish updated FFRMS flood elevations ("how high") and floodplains ("how wide") across the County's floodplains. The availability and accessibility of public funding for Presidential Disaster Declarations, Federal Housing Administration loans, and FEMA grant funding, among other sources of federal funding, could be dependent on this work. This analysis would identify changes in policy, codes, and standards needed to account for climate change.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DES–OEM; DLS–Permitting

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County Flood Control District

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 11.
EVALUATE POTENTIAL CHANGES IN FLOOD RISKS FROM CLIMATE CHANGE

Effectively preparing for increased flooding due to climate change requires understanding the risk from projected increases in flood flow frequency and volume. Contingent on funding from the Flood Control District or other sources, King County will evaluate climate change flood risk using projected changes in flood flows for King County rivers. The assessment will examine how projected changes in flood flow volume equate to changes in flood depth and inundation extents, helping King County determine how flood risk may change in communities currently affected by flooding as well as in floodplain adjacent communities who may experience flooding under future climate scenarios. Information from the assessment will be used to inform basin-specific risk assessment and code, policy, and design updates.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County Flood Control District; Seattle Public Utilities; UW Climate Impacts Group; US Army Corps of Engineers

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 12.
ASSESS THE RISK POSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE ON SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED DAMS IN KING COUNTY

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, by 2030, seven out of 10 dams in the United States will be over 50 years old. The high average age means that most dams will not have been built to current standards, increasing risk to downstream areas. Furthermore, at the time of their construction, the dams may have been considered low hazard potential so they may not be able to withstand increasingly frequent and severe weather events or other natural hazards like earthquakes. These risks are compounded in areas with increased development in downstream inundation zones.

King County will pursue opportunities to conduct a climate risk assessment of smaller to medium-sized dams (Class 2 and Class 3) in the County where an increase in impacts to human life and/or economic impacts are a concern. The comparative risk analysis will support hazard mitigation planning in these areas, including risk communication, preparedness, policy development, and infrastructure investment.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–OEM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
County and city councils; regional urban planners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Hazard Mitigation Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | **New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other

EXTREME PRECIPITATION AND DROUGHT MITIGATION

Hydrologic extremes, like heavy rain or drought, can create challenges for people, the environment, and infrastructure in King County. A major cause of heavy rain in King County is atmospheric rivers—long, narrow bands of moisture in the sky that bring large amounts of rain and snow to the West Coast. While these events are a natural part of the water cycle, strong atmospheric rivers can lead to widespread flooding, landslides, and other damage.

The causes of drought in King County are more varied. The Pacific Northwest region is dependent on winter rains and a robust snowpack to fill reservoirs for drinking water and hydropower, and to provide ample cool water in rivers and streams during our dry summers. A low snowpack, or one that melts off too quickly because of a warm spring, can make it difficult to meet water needs for people and salmon through summer. Drought can also be intensified by hotter than normal summer temperatures and a delay in the return of fall rains.

Changes in hydrologic extremes affect many issues that King County is actively working on, including flood management, stormwater management, salmon recovery, and recycled water. Actions in this focus area cover stormwater management and recycled water. Actions related to river flooding and salmon recovery are covered in separate focus areas.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Climate change is expected to lead to more intense heavy rain events and drier summers in King County. While individual model results vary, climate modeling projects that the heaviest two-year, 24-hour rain events in King County will increase 14 percent on average (range 7 to 30 percent) by the 2080s, relative to 1980–2009.[18] Many locations could see increases exceeding 20 percent. This increases the likelihood of urban flooding and combined sewer overflows in locations where stormwater control is absent or unable to keep up with runoff volumes.

Stormwater infrastructure is designed and built to operate for many decades, meaning that the infrastructure built today will still be operating as climate change becomes more pronounced. King County research[19] finds that stormwater management facilities designed for future (2080s) rainfall will need to be 10 percent to over 100 percent larger in volume than those based on 1990s rainfall, depending on land use, soil infiltration, and facility type. Avoiding overflows in older, more urbanized areas where stormwater and sewage are conveyed in the same pipe (combined sewers) also becomes more difficult with heavier rain events. Understanding and preparing for the range of possible outcomes is critical to ensuring that stormwater systems can meet current and future service loads and mitigate future rainfall projections.

Changes in summer conditions will also have impacts. Climate change is expected to lead to lower snowpack, earlier spring runoff, and hotter summers, reducing the amount of water available instream for summer irrigation and salmon. King County investments in the delivery of recycled water to irrigators in the Sammamish valley are helping to keep more water in streams for salmon during the summer by providing an alternate source of water for growing summer irrigation demands.

[18] Results are for percent change in the maximum amount of water from the 24-hour rain storm that occurs on average once every two years, relative to the average for 1980-2009. Modeling based on a high greenhouse gas emissions scenario (RCP 8.5). See Raymond and Rogers (2022).

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions a future where the impacts of heavier rain events and more intense summer drought are being effectively mitigated. Where stormwater runoff from heavier rain events is controlled using built and nature-based solutions that provide multiple benefits equitably to communities and the environment. Stormwater is cleaner, helping to ensure that groundwater, lakes, and streams are clean, healthy, and accessible. Lives, homes, and properties are protected from stormwater-related flooding and damage, including damage from erosion and landslides. Water bodies that are in or important to predominantly BIPOC communities reach these goals promptly and thoroughly. Additionally, work on recycled water is helping to reduce the impacts of summer drought on water users and salmon.



Roadside rain garden for capturing and treating stormwater from streets and sidewalks.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Opened the Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station (2022), the Wastewater Treatment Division's (WTD) newest combined sewer overflow control project, to treat high stormwater flows from extreme rain events. By January 2024, the treatment station had protected the Duwamish River and Puget Sound from 32 million gallons of polluted stormwater.
- Partnered with the UW Climate Impacts Group to develop hourly rainfall projections for King County through the 2080s. Used those data in preliminary assessments of climate change impacts on stormwater infrastructure, wastewater infrastructure, and combined sewer overflows.
- Via the RainWise rebate program, supported the installation of 379 cisterns and 100 rain gardens on private properties, managing a total of 4,750,000 gallons of stormwater in areas where combined sewer overflows are a concern.
- Integrated climate change into King County's regional stormwater investment priorities.
- Piloted new technologies to help optimize the performance of existing stormwater facilities during heavy rain events.
- Made progress in establishing relationships with farmers related to recycled water and worked with some of the largest irrigators in the Sammamish Valley to expand the use of recycled water, helping to reduce water withdrawals and benefit streamflow in the Valley.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

- **Prep 13.** Develop guidance and standards for climate resilient stormwater infrastructure
- **Prep 14.** Address barriers to using street trees and Green Stormwater Infrastructure to manage extreme precipitation along roadways and on public lands
- **Prep 15.** Advance stormwater parks through a countywide roadmap
- **Prep 16.** Accelerate Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Legacy Facility Retrofits
- **Prep 17.** Increase on-site stormwater system capacity at King County landfills and transfer stations
- **Prep 18.** Expand the use of recycled water
- **Prep 19.** Reduce water use by King County government and develop an operational Drought Response Strategy

PREP 13.
DEVELOP GUIDANCE AND STANDARDS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENT STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

More intense heavy rain events can create widespread challenges for managing stormwater runoff and flooding. King County will continue work on developing a standard methodology for climate resilient stormwater facility design (including Green Stormwater Infrastructure, leveraging King County work with the Washington Department of Ecology to update statewide stormwater design software to include updated bias corrected climate change projections. This includes updating hydrologic and hydraulic watershed models that will serve as tools for developing a climate change methodology and guidance for King County stormwater management. Once developed, the County will utilize the results of this work to develop King County stormwater facility design guidance and standards, where appropriate.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; local King County jurisdictions; UW Climate Impacts Group

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; Land Conservation Initiative; Regional Stormwater Action Goals

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:



Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:



Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



County | **Grant** | Other

PREP 14.
ADDRESS BARRIERS TO USING STREET TREES AND GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE TO MANAGE EXTREME PRECIPITATION ALONG ROADWAYS AND ON PUBLIC LANDS

Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) and street trees provide multiple benefits for environmental and public health. However, initiation and maintenance of these projects often face financial and regulatory barriers. King County will seek opportunities to conduct one or more pilot projects to identify and address regulatory and operational challenges to expanding the use of street trees and multi-benefit GSI projects in road rights-of-way and public lands. Work on this action includes securing funding to implement the pilot project(s) and initiating construction. The pilot project(s) will be associated with one or more King County Roads projects in Skyway and/or North Highline where GSI, including tree planting and preservation, would provide clean water, reduce localized flooding, and provide extreme heat mitigation co-benefits by helping to increase the number of street trees. Insights gained from this work will inform updates to the King County Roads Standards and other policies, standards, and regulations, as needed, that may currently limit the use of street trees and GSI in new or retrofit capital projects. Implementation of this action will prioritize areas in urban, unincorporated King County most lacking in canopy cover.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads; DNRP–Parks, WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Businesses; community groups in Skyway and/or North Highline; King County jurisdictions; non-profit organizations; residents

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; reducing disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; DLS Subarea Plans; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ERSJ Strategic Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy; Land Conservation Initiative; Regional Stormwater Action Goals

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 15.
ADVANCE STORMWATER PARKS THROUGH A COUNTYWIDE ROADMAP

Stormwater parks provide an opportunity to build significant co-benefits into stormwater management facilities. These co-benefits include adding neighborhood green spaces, reducing urban heat, increasing community amenities, green workforce opportunities, and providing wildlife habitat. King County will lead the development of a preliminary feasibility analysis for accelerating the strategic siting of 30 stormwater parks across King County, in line with the County Executive's regional Stormwater Summit goals. The project will develop a preliminary spatial assessment across King County's geography to support strategic siting and development of stormwater parks designed to help control current and projected changes in stormwater runoff. Initial maps will be pilot tested with the Our Green/Duwamish Coalition in the Green-Duwamish River watershed with the goal of identifying specific multi-benefit project sites for piloting stormwater park development. The County will then use this roadmap for seeking design and construction funding.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–DO, Parks

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
King County cities; non-governmental organization partners (e.g., The Nature Conservancy, Stewardship Partners); the Puget Sound Regional Council; the South-Central Local Integrating Organization; Our Green/Duwamish

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy; Land Conservation Initiative; Regional Stormwater Action Goals; Salmon Recovery Plans

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 16.
ACCELERATE GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEGACY FACILITY RETROFITS

Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) benefits overburdened, urbanized communities lacking in existing infrastructure, like Skyway and White Center, by both improving water quality and providing flow control for stormwater runoff. King County will develop a work plan and define implementation pathways to achieve the Regional Stormwater Action Goal of providing flow control to 5,000 acres across King County within 30 years. Work for 2025–2030 will include identifying priority areas for GSI and detention pond retrofits, estimating the total cost of full implementation, identifying a pathway of coordination and funding strategies to achieve full implementation, and starting construction on priority projects such as the White Center Regional Stormwater Park, Cemetery Pond, and Sunrise Elementary retrofits.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting, Roads; DNRP–Parks

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Duwamish Tribal Services; Skyway Coalition; Our Green/Duwamish

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; Our Green/Duwamish; Regional Stormwater Action Goals; Skyway Stormwater Management Action Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 17.
INCREASE ON-SITE STORMWATER SYSTEM CAPACITY AT KING COUNTY LANDFILLS AND TRANSFER STATIONS

Heavy rainfall can overwhelm leachate and contaminated stormwater storage and conveyance systems at landfills and transfer stations. To help adapt to projected increases in heavy rain and reduce the likelihood of system overflows, King County will implement smart controls to monitor and manage leachate and contaminated stormwater at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill and relevant closed landfills, creating greater resilience to the impacts of extreme precipitation. Work on this action includes installing sensors that monitor reservoir levels and incorporate weather forecasts to allow real-time monitoring and support storage optimization.

King County will also assess current designs for stormwater conveyance and storage at Cedar Hills, closed landfills, and transfer stations, and implement approaches that reduce runoff from extreme precipitation events. This includes retrofitting or updating designs to account for current and projected increases in stormwater volume. Steps taken as part of this work will help reduce stormwater runoff, reduce peak flows and pollutant loads downstream, and reduce the risk of erosion and flooding at or near the landfills.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; local jurisdiction stormwater utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Solid Waste Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 18.
EXPAND THE USE OF RECYCLED WATER

Climate change is placing added stress on summer streamflows and increasing irrigation water demand in agricultural areas like the Sammamish Valley. To help reduce water withdrawals and benefit summer streamflow in the Sammamish Valley, King County will continue efforts to ensure reliable delivery and expand the use of recycled water from the Brightwater Treatment Center in the Sammamish Valley. The County will also continue to work with stakeholders to explore opportunities in other areas across the county where there is an interest in using recycled water.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WTD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
City of Renton; farmers in the Sammamish Agriculture Production District; Washington Water Trust

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; Regional Wastewater Services Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | Moderate | **Hard**

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | **Grant** | Other

PREP 19.
REDUCE WATER USE BY KING COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND DEVELOP AN OPERATIONAL DROUGHT RESPONSE STRATEGY

Water is a valuable resource, critical for wellbeing of people, fish, and ecosystems. As our region's summers become hotter and drier due to climate change, the importance of efficient water use increases. King County government is a major water consumer, using water for a variety of functions in its office buildings and restrooms, to irrigate playfields and parks, and to clean and support processes at solid waste, transit, and wastewater facilities. This water usage and associated wastewater treatment costs total several million dollars per year across County agencies. Energy and associated GHG emissions to heat and pump potable water, and to pump and treat wastewater, are also significant.

Since the 2020 SCAP, County agencies have taken steps to better manage and reduce County government water usage. This includes initial baselining of water usage data; implementing projects to reduce water usage, such as limited installation of low flow toilets; planting more drought tolerant landscaping; and adding water-related credits and actions into the County's green building program and scorecard. King County will further progress on this work by (1) completing a water usage inventory for all major water uses; (2) continuing to implement water usage reduction strategies; and (3) completing an operational Drought Response Strategy by 2027 focused on water use efficiency and actions County agencies can take during periods of drought when local water utilities ask customers to take water conservation steps. Collectively, these actions will save resources and contribute to a more drought resilient King County.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO; DNRP–DO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DAJD; DES–FMD; DLS; DNRP–Parks, WLRD, WTD; Metro–GM

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local water utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Building Energy and Green Building Focus Area; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; Salmon Recovery Plans

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

EXTREME HEAT ADAPTATION

Concern about higher summer temperatures and the potential for more extreme heat events has grown as the impacts of climate change become more evident. This concern was heightened with the June 2021 Pacific Northwest Heat Dome, an event made 150 times more likely because of climate change.[20] The 2021 Heat Dome currently stands as the single most deadly climate disaster event in Washington State with more than 125 reported heat-related deaths statewide, including 34 deaths in King County.

Though heat affects everyone, not everyone is impacted equally. Factors influencing vulnerability to heat include where a person lives or works, access to housing, occupation, income, age, degree of social isolation, and prevalence of pre-existing medical conditions. Spatial analysis of King County shows that local heat islands (Figure 26) tend to have a higher proportion of people living with low incomes, seniors living alone, people with limited English proficiency, and cardiovascular disease. These hotter areas also have fewer trees and more paved surface relative to cooler areas of the county, increasing exposure for people who are most at risk. For additional SCAP actions related to urban forest canopy, see the Forest Resilience and Urban Tree Canopy Focus Area.

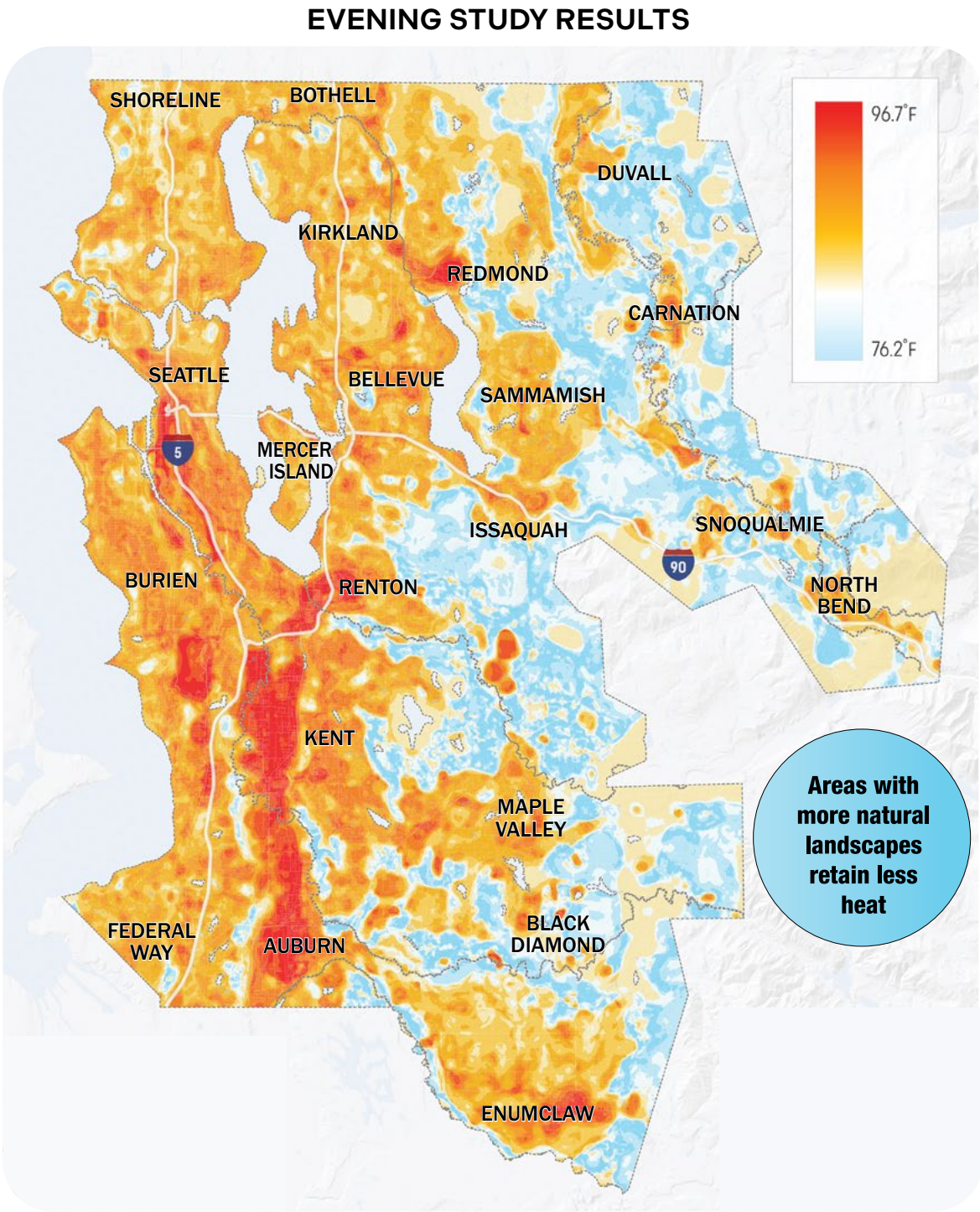
WHAT'S AT STAKE

All climate projections show a continuing trend of rising summer temperatures, underscoring the need to be better prepared for extreme heat events as they exist today and with climate change. Average summer maximum temperatures in King County are projected to be about 3.7°F warmer by the 2030s and 10.5°F warmer by the 2080s compared to the 1980–2009 historical average.[21] Nighttime temperatures also increase, limiting the potential for homes to cool and people to recover after hot days. Additionally, the likelihood of more frequent and hotter daytime heat waves increases.

Increasing temperatures and an aging population will add to heat-related health risk in western Washington. Local studies show that hospital admissions, emergency medical service calls, and risk of death in King County increase on hotter days (defined as 97°F with humidity).[22, 23] By 2050, heat-attributable deaths in the Puget Sound lowlands (which includes western King County) under both a low and high greenhouse gas emissions scenario could increase 87-178 percent.[24] Adults over age 60—a growing demographic—are particularly at risk. The number of King County residents over age 65 is projected to double from approximately 305,000 in 2020 to 617,000 in 2050, increasing from 13.4 to 21.4 percent of the projected population.[25]

Figure 26. King County heat islands

Differences in land use, land cover, and geography will cause temperatures to vary over relatively small scales. Areas in red and orange on the map indicate areas with hotter surface temperatures relative to areas in blue. The hotter areas are referred to as heat islands.



Source: King County (2020)

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions a future where the harmful effects of extreme heat on people and places are equitably reduced. This will be achieved by effectively preparing for and responding to heat events, expanding the use of built and nature-based solutions that reduce extreme heat impacts, and strengthening the resilience of communities most affected. King County communities will be safe and healthy both indoors and outdoors during extreme heat events through increased access to cooling for vulnerable residents, heat-resilient infrastructure and community design, accessible and equitably distributed green spaces, increased heat safety awareness, and support for community-led heat preparedness efforts.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Mapped areas in King County with elevated surface temperatures (known as "heat islands") (2020). Mapping results have been used to support decisions related to placement of King County Metro bus shelter installations and property acquisitions in urban areas by the King County Land Conservation Initiative.
- Created the King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy (2024) in partnership with local governments, community partners, and frontline communities.
- Updated operational plans and increased technical capacity for heat response by King County agencies.
- Developed multilingual heat education and communications to share with community partners.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

Implement the King County Extreme Heat Mitigation strategy, inclusive of the following:

- **Prep 20**. Expand access to cooling locations for communities
- **Prep 21.** Facilitate and support community-led strategies and initiatives to address extreme heat
- **Prep 22.** Reduce heat impacts through effective building and development codes and policies
- **Prep 23.** Integrate tree planting into ongoing efforts to adapt bus stops for extreme heat

PREP 20.
EXPAND ACCESS TO COOLING LOCATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

Community-based organizations with local facilities are uniquely positioned to provide cooling locations that are culturally compatible and attuned to the needs of their high-risk community members. King County will work with community partners and local jurisdictions to identify opportunities and support the development of cooling locations at community-trusted facilities. Support provided can range from identifying potential locations and site hosts, assisting facilities with obtaining cooling-related resources and upgrades, training community-based organization staff to operate cooling locations, and connecting community facility staff to Resilience Hub resources if interested.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS; DES–OEM; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community-based organizations; King County Regional Homelessness Authority; local jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Energize Program; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 21.
FACILITATE AND SUPPORT COMMUNITY-LED STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS EXTREME HEAT

Community-based organizations and service providers who work with heat-sensitive communities are best positioned to identify and develop additional strategies that directly address community needs and priorities. King County will work with local service providers, community-based organizations, and other relevant partners to integrate extreme heat response into existing programming that serves vulnerable groups and to develop funding streams for community-led heat resilience projects. This includes supporting the funding and distribution of cool kits for people who are unhoused; building out a network of service providers that can support vulnerable groups with heat safety messaging and item distribution during extreme heat events; developing a new grant program or modifying existing funding offerings to financially support community-led heat solutions; and as part of work included in the Sustainable and Resilient Frontline Communities Section, creating and distributing multilingual and culturally-relevant heat safety information with community members.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DCHS; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community-based organizations; King County Regional Homelessness Authority; local jurisdictions; local service providers

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Energize Program; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 22.
REDUCE HEAT IMPACTS THROUGH EFFECTIVE BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT CODES AND POLICIES

Housing conditions play a significant role in preparing communities for the impacts of climate change and in protecting the health of individuals during severe weather events such as extreme heat. One of the primary tools for standardizing how new or existing buildings are designed, built, or altered is building codes. Developing codes that improve thermal comfort or increase heating and cooling efficiencies help ensure access to safer and more energy efficient buildings over time. Building codes can also help reduce the heat island effect by reducing overall thermal loading on buildings.

King County will convene subject matter experts through the Regional Code Collaboration to adapt the New Buildings Institute's Heat Code Overlay to the County and to develop additional guidance as needed to integrate heat resilience into building and energy codes. After development of the model codes, the County will work with relevant partners to advocate for adoption of these codes at the Washington State Building Code Council. For codes not adopted at the state level, the County will work with local jurisdictions to integrate these requirements into local codes as well as incorporate them into initiatives such as financial incentives and building scorecards.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting; DNRP–SWD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Affordable housing developers; local jurisdictions; Regional Code Collaboration; State Building Code Council; supportive business industry partners

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; economic opportunity and workforce diversity; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

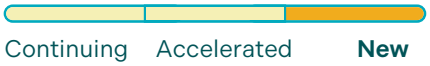
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Energize Program; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy

EARLY ACTION

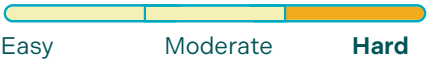
KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



PREP 23.
INTEGRATE TREE PLANTING INTO ONGOING EFFORTS TO ADAPT BUS STOPS FOR EXTREME HEAT

Many King County bus stops lack cover from the weather. During heat waves, this can create additional challenges for riders with underlying health conditions or limited mobility. The County will expand its efforts to increase rider protection from extreme weather to include tree plantings near bus stops in low tree canopy cover areas. Since 2021, King County's Bus Stop Improvements program has been constructing at least 10 percent of new weather-related improvements in areas that experience extreme heat. The program will expand on this action by introducing tree planting at bus stops in areas with low tree canopy cover. The County will coordinate closely with local jurisdictions to ensure that new trees comply with local right-of-way requirements and that the trees will be adequately supported during the establishment period. To start, the program will plant new trees within at least one bus stop each calendar year with the goal of expanding as barriers to this work are identified and addressed.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Mobility

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Partner jurisdictions

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Metro Connects; Metro Mobility Framework

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

OTHER SCAP ACTIONS BENEFITING HEAT RESILIENCE

In addition to the actions in this Focus Area, many actions in the Climate Preparedness section and other sections of the 2025 SCAP will help to reduce the impacts of extreme heat on people and places in King County. For example, community resilience during extreme heat events will be strengthened by actions to:

- Co-develop multilingual and culturally competent heat safety and preparedness trainings (SRFC 18: Co-create community climate hazards and resilience training),
- Increase access to energy affordability programs for income-qualified residents (SRFC 35: Establish a "one stop shop" for utilities affordability programs),
- Expand heat pump installation programs to include more facility types and geographic areas (GHG 29: Directly facilitate retrofits of housing and community assets of frontline communities to reduce emissions and provide access to cooling),
- Develop building codes and policies that help to reduce heat impacts (GHG 33: Develop regional green building codes), and
- Support heat safety programs in schools (SRFC 8: Advance climate resilience in K–12 schools).

The 2025 SCAP also supports nature-based solutions that can cool or prevent heat islands and help residents stay cool. This includes actions that will:

- Accelerate the rate of protection of forests, parks, and natural lands (GHG 53: Protect remaining high conservation value lands),
- Increase access to green space by creating multi-benefit stormwater parks (Prep 15: Advance stormwater parks through a countywide roadmap), and
- Bolster healthy urban tree canopy coverage (Prep 29: Expand urban tree canopy and partnerships across jurisdictions).

These actions collectively work together to reduce heat risk and adapt our built environment to better handle heat.



FOREST RESILIENCE AND URBAN TREE CANOPY EXPANSION

King County's extensive forest lands, totaling more than 800,000 acres countywide, and urban tree canopy provide a wide range of economic, ecological, and cultural benefits. These forests and urban tree canopy regulate water quantity and quality, improve air quality, improve mental health, support recreational opportunities, and cool urban heat islands. County forests also provide renewable timber resources and have the capacity to sequester and store carbon, an ecosystem service critical to reducing climate change. For additional SCAP forest actions related to carbon sequestration, see the Forests and Agriculture Focus Area in the Reducing GHG Emissions section.

Retaining and expanding tree canopy and ensuring equitable access to green space has become increasingly important and challenging as development intensifies in the King County region. Equally important is ensuring that forests and urban tree canopy can remain healthy in the face of stressors like disease, drought, heat stress, and invasive species. Forest health treatments such as selective thinning, replanting to include a diversity of species, and removal of invasive species may be needed to restore forest health. Actions needed to help grow a more robust and healthier urban tree canopy include routine tree maintenance (e.g., pruning and trimming), proper siting and site conditions for planting, invasive weeds control, and adequate watering for new trees.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

King County Parks has approximately 27,000 acres of forests that provide many regional benefits but also pose a significant management challenge given growing environmental stressors from climate change, drought, urban development, and increased fire risk. Prior to County ownership, most of the forests now managed by King County regenerated from clearcut harvests, leading to excessively dense or sparse stands, low species diversity, and/or minimal understory vegetation. These site conditions, if left unaddressed, leave County forests susceptible to insects, diseases, and extreme weather such as heat, drought, and windstorms.

Urban tree canopies are also facing increasingly challenging conditions. Between 1992 and 2016, forest cover in cities in King County declined from 23 percent to 18 percent (a loss of more than 10,000 acres) and from 37 percent to 29 percent in urban unincorporated areas (a loss of approximately 2,000 acres) as the area of developed land increased.[26] High mortality rates among newly planted trees in urban environments are common due to hotter summer temperatures, poor planting conditions, and challenges with proper tree care as young trees are getting established. Established trees are also seeing increased stress and damage from heat, drought, insects, and disease.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions forests and green spaces that are protected, widespread, equitably distributed, healthy, and connected in ways that sustain habitat, clean air, cool waters and air temperatures, and natural streamflow. The county's urban tree canopy is thriving and inequities in tree cover and green space, especially in urban heat islands and low-canopy neighborhoods, are eliminated. Investments in pursuit of this outcome are paired with strategies and policies to prevent displacing low-income residents.



Restoring King County forests to create a broader range of tree species, sizes, and ages helps County forests be more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Planting more trees near streams also keeps streams cooler in summer, supporting salmon recovery.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Developed the King County 30-Year Forest Plan (2021), a shared countywide vision for rural and urban forest cover and forest health. Includes priorities, goals, and strategies related to climate change and urban tree canopy.
- Committed to preparing 1,000 acres of forest (about 500,000 trees) to be more resilient in a changing climate with warmer, drier summers.
- Increased the amount of funding available for land conservation through a voter-approved reset to the Conservation Futures Tax levy (2022).
- Created the Urban Forestry Forum (2022) and hired an Urban Forestry Program Manager (2023) to foster collaboration on countywide urban forestry objectives.
- Incorporated forest resilience and urban tree canopy priorities into countywide strategies on wildfire risk reduction (2022) and extreme heat (2024).

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

- **Prep 24.** Develop an outcome-based forest management framework for King County-owned forestland
- **Prep 25.** Accelerate forest restoration on King County-owned lands
- **Prep 26.** Increase local supply of climate-adapted seedlings for forest restoration
- **Prep 27.** Support implementation of forest management best practices by private forest landowners
- **Prep 28.** Explore opportunities to strengthen connections between King County forest stewardship and Indigenous and tribal values, knowledge, and practices
- **Prep 29.** Expand urban tree canopy and partnerships across jurisdictions

PREP 24.
DEVELOP AN OUTCOME-BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR KING COUNTY-OWNED FORESTLAND

Forest management is critical for maintaining healthy natural ecosystems, supporting biodiversity, and providing public health benefits. King County will develop a forest management framework for its forested property and benchmarks for success based on achieving healthy, climate-resilient forests. This framework will document current health, establish desired future conditions, and identify a timeline for achieving restoration benchmarks. The framework will also incorporate long-term monitoring and maintenance and adaptive management plans.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks; WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
WDFW; WDNR

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; Open Space Plan

KING COUNTY ROLE:



Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:



Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:



Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



County | Grant | Other

PREP 25.
ACCELERATE FOREST RESTORATION ON KING COUNTY-OWNED LANDS

Well-maintained forest land supports healthy communities, pollution mitigation, and resilient natural ecosystems. King County will improve forest resilience and carbon sequestration potential on County-owned forestland by continuing to accelerate proactive stewardship and restoration efforts. Forest management actions will be identified, designed, and implemented to improve ecological conditions and climate resilience, with examples including selectively thinning overcrowded areas; planting native and climate-tolerant tree seedlings; performing ongoing maintenance based on site-specific conditions (e.g., vegetation management); and monitoring results to inform next steps.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Consultants; forestry contractors; regional seedling nurseries; WDNR

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; Land Conservation Initiative

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

PREP 26.
INCREASE LOCAL SUPPLY OF CLIMATE-ADAPTED SEEDLINGS FOR FOREST RESTORATION

Choosing the right tree species to thrive in a changing climate is an increasingly important consideration. King County will develop best practices and seek to expand seedling resources for climate-resilient restoration throughout King County and the region. This includes completing the initial phase of climate-adapted seedling trials, integrating findings into agency planting strategies, and ensuring study findings are distributed to forestland managers. The County will also develop a climate-adapted planting policy to guide large-scale planting and restoration projects, address assisted migration, and maintain a list of acceptable plant species to be used in mitigation and restoration projects. Finally, the County will work with partners to identify options for increasing the availability of climate-resilient tree seedings. This may include expanding the County's nursery and/or creative partnership with local agencies, partners, and private nurseries.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks, WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local seedling nurseries; WDNR

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



PREP 27.
SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREST MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES BY PRIVATE FOREST LANDOWNERS

While King County has been successful in ensuring that private forest landowner plans include actions that enhance forest resilience, property owners often face technical and financial barriers to implementing recommendations in those plans. In collaboration with partners, the County will support small private forest landowners with enhanced levels of education, technical support, and financial assistance to ensure they can implement best management practices for forest health improvement, wildfire risk reduction, and climate resilience. This includes best management practices that will help prevent wildfire ignition and spread on their forested properties.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCD; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; U.S. Forest Service; WDNR; WSU Extension

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; King County Community Wildfire Protection Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



Advocate/ Support | **Convene** | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:



Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:



Within current capacity | **Additional** | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



County | **Grant** | **Other**

PREP 28.
EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN KING COUNTY FOREST STEWARDSHIP AND INDIGENOUS AND TRIBAL VALUES, KNOWLEDGE, AND PRACTICES

Tribal communities have served as stewards of local land since time immemorial. King County will seek opportunities to work with area tribes to explore if and how the County's climate and forest stewardship goals and objectives may overlap with tribal values, knowledge, and practices. Where alignment or opportunities for alignment exists, King County will seek ways to collaboratively implement forest practices that honor tribal knowledge and support tribal values and practices. Examples could include improving forest conditions that support the ability of tribes to exercise treaty rights and cultural practices; creating broader public understanding of pre-settlement forest conditions and stewardship by the Coast Salish peoples; and identifying culturally-relevant plants and trees for restoration efforts.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks, WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Area tribes

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; engagement; relationship building; share benefits

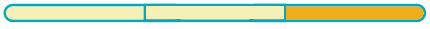
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; King County ERSJ Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



PREP 29.
EXPAND URBAN TREE CANOPY AND PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS JURISDICTIONS

Establishing robust and healthy urban forests that yield long-term benefits requires maintaining and expanding tree canopy, particularly in areas over pavement and in low-canopy neighborhoods where it's most needed. While many communities have had success with tree planting programs, survival for newly planted trees and proper tree care are ongoing challenges, particularly in urban environments. Development pressures and barriers to proper tree maintenance on public and private property are further compounding tree loss in urban areas.

King County will enhance tree canopy and forest health on public and private lands in urbanized areas and identify approaches that can leverage existing resources to achieve this goal. Specific actions include developing and implementing approaches to support tree retention, planting, and maintenance on private property; improving site conditions and early care for planting; supporting local efforts to identify, track, and achieve tree canopy goals; setting tree canopy goals for urban unincorporated areas and rural towns; developing and promoting a Tree Code Toolkit designed to assist cities crafting or revising tree regulations; updating the County's tree regulations for urban unincorporated areas and rural towns; and increasing investments in noxious weed management in urban areas.

King County was awarded a grant from the WA DNR, contingent on federal funding, to engage communities in planning and implementation activities to maintain and increase tree canopy in urban unincorporated King County. Activities include a data-driven canopy cover assessment, community engagement with the King County Open Space Equity Cabinet, Climate Equity Community Taskforce (CECTF), and other local community-based organizations, and implementation of three pilot projects to enhance local tree canopy. Insights from this work will guide further development and expansion of the King County Urban Forestry Program, consideration of site-specific tree canopy coverage targets for urban unincorporated areas, and work to address urban tree canopy inequities.

As part of this work, King County will continue to support the Urban Forestry Forum, created in 2022, to further foster collaboration on county-wide urban forestry objectives.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks, WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
CBOs, CECTF; Local jurisdictions; K4C; KCD; King County Open Space Equity Cabinet; King County residents; Nongovermental organizations; Urban Forestry Forum; WDNR

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County 30-Year Forest Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy; Land Conservation Initiative

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION

Large wildfires across the Pacific Northwest, along with rising concerns about local climate change impacts, have increased awareness that King County communities need to be better prepared for wildfire. This need was reinforced in fall 2022 when King County experienced two wildfires within a matter of weeks—the Bolt Creek fire near Skykomish (14,766 acres) and the Loch Katrine fire near North Bend (2,000 acres).

Climate change increases the potential for fires like the Bolt Creek and Loch Katrine fires. Much larger fires are also possible. While each fire is unique in its location, behavior, and impacts, these fires—along with wildland-urban interface fires in other regions, such as the January 2025 fires in Los Angeles—offer valuable insights into how King County can better prepare for growing wildfire risks.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Higher seasonal temperatures, lower mountain snowpack, and drier summers result in drier fuels (e.g., grasses, shrubs, trees) and a longer fire season, increasing the potential for wildfire. Research shows that area burned by wildfire in Western Washington could increase by +150 to +1,000 percent by the 2080s (relative to 1971–2000) under a high greenhouse gas emissions scenario.[27] As conditions become more favorable for wildfire in Western Washington, the odds that a smaller fire becomes a large fire that cannot be quickly contained increases, particularly if a fire occurs in late summer (when conditions are typically driest) with strong winds from Eastern Washington.

Population growth in King County and development in the wildland-urban interface also increase wildfire potential and risk. The county's wildland-urban interface, mapped by the Washington Department of Natural Resources in 2021, is home to more than 350,000 residents and over 2,000 commercial and industrial buildings (Figure 27). As population grows, the likelihood of more ignitions from human causes grows—about 85 percent of wildfires in Washington are started by people.[28] Fire suppression efforts may also become more complicated with increased development in the wildland-urban interface.

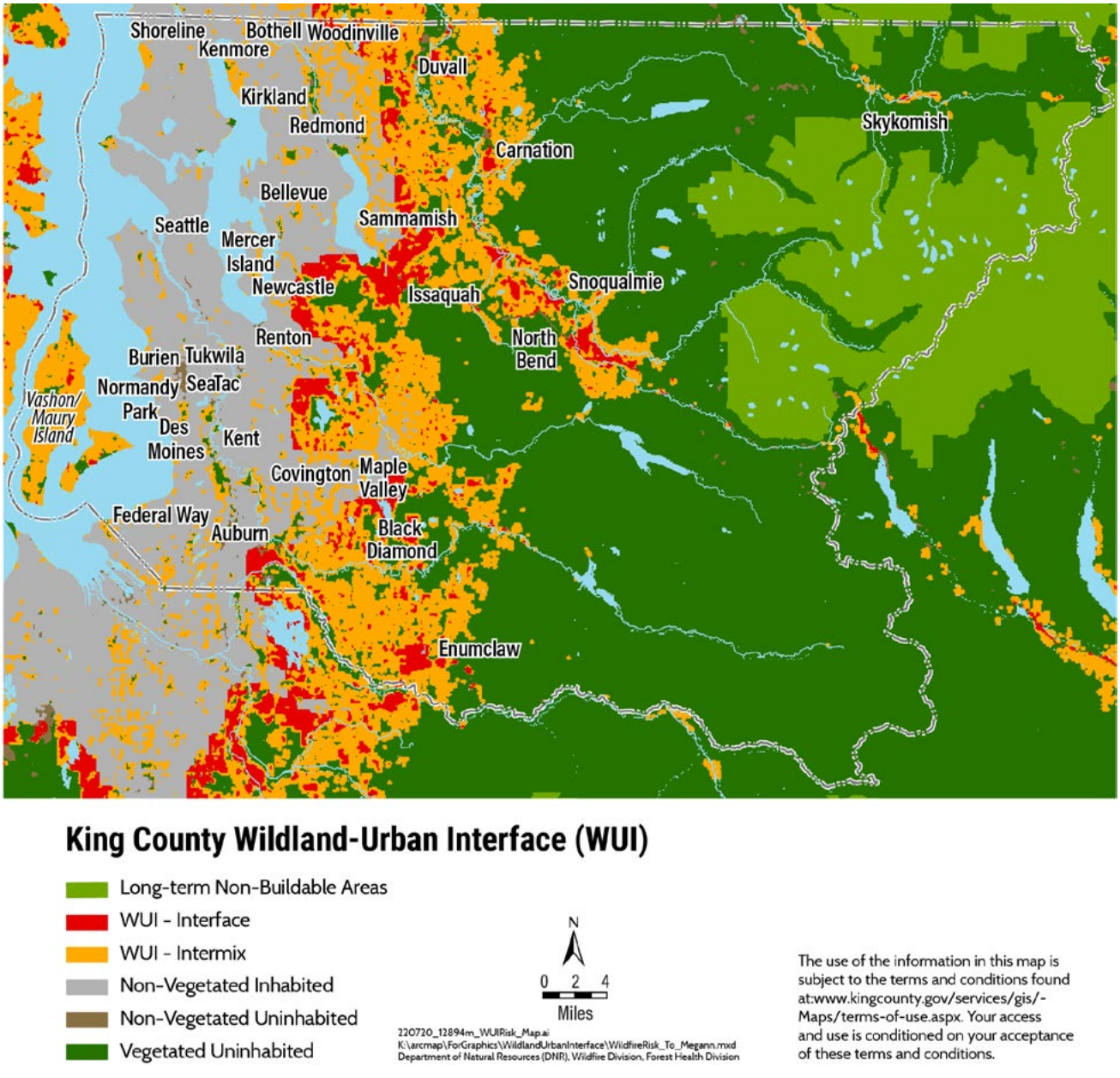
A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions a future where forests are managed to increase wildfire resilience in ways that are appropriate to Western Washington's ecology. Risks to residents, neighborhoods, and communities in the wildland-urban interface are lower due to collaboration and proactive investments in wildfire mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Residents have equitable access to information, programs, and resources to reduce risk and stay safe in the event of a fire. First responders have the capacity and resources needed to respond quickly, effectively, and safely to wildfires.

Figure 27. King County Wildland-Urban Interface

The color-coded map categories are based on the proportion of vegetation cover to structures in an area. Interface areas are those in which development and structures are bordered by wildlands on at least one side. Intermix areas are defined as a development or structure that is surrounded on two or more sides by wildlands.

Note: The Wildland-Urban Interface Map is not a map of wildfire risk. The WUI map classifications do not account for critical infrastructure, evacuation constraints, or other factors that determine if an area has a higher wildfire risk relative to other areas.



Source: Washington State Department of Natural Resources (2019)

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Worked with regional partners to develop the King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy (2022), a first-ever strategic framework for cross-jurisdictional and cross-organizational work on wildfire risk reduction in King County.
- Launched the "Ready, Set, Go!" wildfire evacuation messaging campaign (2023) in collaboration with nine counties, including Snohomish, Pierce, and Thurston counties.
- Increased technical assistance to landowners and ensured that stewardship plans address wildfire risk.
- Initiated development of countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2024) in collaboration with King County wildland-urban interface communities, first responders, and wildfire risk reduction experts.

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

Implement the Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy, inclusive of the following:

- **Prep 30.** Develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans
- **Prep 31.** Work collaboratively on shared wildfire risk reduction priorities
- **Prep 32.** Establish a wildfire adapted community coalition
- **Prep 33.** Standardize and promote best management practices for wildfire mitigation
- **Prep 34.** Plan for post-wildfire community recovery
- **Prep 35.** Prepare and plan for post-wildfire recovery on King County-owned forestland
- **Prep 36.** Create a wildfire management plan for landfills and transfer stations

PREP 30.
DEVELOP COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS

Community-scale wildfire risk assessments provide critical information that can be used by planning officials, hazard mitigation managers, land managers, and response agencies to support risk-based planning and decision making. King County will develop its first countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and work with multiple jurisdictions and partners across King County to create localized wildfire hazard maps and action plans that can be integrated into the County CWPP, making those jurisdictions eligible for a range of wildfire mitigation funding opportunities. Additionally, King County government and partners will implement a strategic outreach effort to raise awareness of wildfire risk reduction, develop plan templates and guidance for use by local communities, and assist partners with implementing action items listed in the King County CWPP.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–OEM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DLS–DO; DNRP–WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCD; local fire districts; state/federal natural resource agencies; tribes; utilities; wildland-urban interface communities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Hazard Mitigation Plan; King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 31.
WORK COLLABORATIVELY ON SHARED WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION PRIORITIES WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS AND PARTNERS

Wildfire risk reduction work is growing in complexity as agencies and organizations in the public and private sector become more engaged in the work. King County will seek and support opportunities to increase local wildfire mitigation capacity through coordination, collaboration, and partnership on issues related to: increasing wildfire preparedness, response, and recovery coordination with adjoining counties; updating and aligning wildland-urban interface code and policy updates across county jurisdictions; engaging with power utilities on wildfire risk reduction including actions to reduce wildfire ignition risk; supporting ongoing work with utilities and other partners to assess alternatives to current electricity distribution systems and technologies; implementing wildfire mitigation projects in high wildfire risk areas; and providing support to the King County Wildfire Mitigation Working Group.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–OEM; DNRP–WLRD; ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
KCD; local fire districts; state/federal natural resource agencies; tribes; utilities; wildland-urban interface communities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Community Wildfire Protection Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Hazard Mitigation Plan; King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



King County and local jurisdictions are working together to prepare for and reduce wildfire risks.

PREP 32.
ESTABLISH A WILDFIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITY COALITION

Building effective local partnerships is key to developing sustained local capacity for implementing and maintaining wildfire mitigation practices. King County will pilot the development of a wildfire adapted community coalition in a higher wildfire risk area as a way of growing community capacity for wildfire mitigation and empowering communities to co-create solutions to their local wildfire challenges. The coalition will create a collaborative and cooperative space to share information, coordinate actions and work, and co-plan how best to adapt to and mitigate local wildfire threats. The coalition will be community-led and could include representatives from local communities, local fire services, community-based organizations, local government, local businesses, public land management agencies, and other stakeholders.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Community residents and leaders; KCD; local fire districts; state/federal natural resource agencies; Washington Resource Conservation & Development Council

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Community Wildfire Protection Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

PREP 33.
STANDARDIZE AND PROMOTE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION

According to the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, every one dollar spent on effective mitigation practices in the wildland-urban interface saves four dollars on future disaster losses. King County will work with partners to develop a set of standardized wildfire mitigation best management practices for improving protection of homes, other built infrastructure, and routes that could be used for evacuation. This set of standardized wildfire mitigation practices will be distributed for use by King County fire departments, local governments, natural resource management agencies, and community organizations. The County will also work with current and future wildfire mitigation or technical assistance service providers and programs operating in King County to incorporate these standardized wildfire mitigation best management practices into their services and operations.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DLS; DNRP–Parks

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Eastside Fire & Rescue; KCD; National Fire Protection Association; UW; state/federal natural resource agencies; WSU Extension; utilities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accountability; share benefits

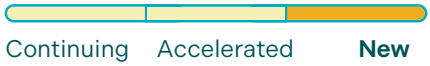
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Community Wildfire Protection Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



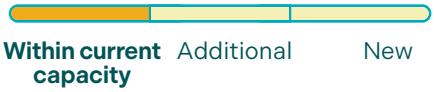
ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:



PREP 34.
PLAN FOR POST-WILDFIRE COMMUNITY RECOVERY

Recovering from a wildfire, especially one that burns homes and structures, is complicated. King County will convene partners and create a wildfire-specific annex to the King County Disaster Recovery Plan that outlines basic actions to take following a wildfire disaster impacting homes, public facilities, and infrastructure. The Disaster Recovery Plan identifies key agencies, their roles and responsibilities during the recovery phase, and short-term and long-term recovery goals and objectives. The plan will address federal programs such as Federal Emergency Management Agency public assistance and individual assistance, Small Business Administration loans, and housing recovery programs through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The wildfire-specific annex will be updated with the Disaster Recovery Plan every five years or following any major disaster.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–OEM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DLS–Permitting, Roads; DNRP–SWD, WLRD; PHSKC–DO; PSB–RP

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
FEMA; King County jurisdictions; U.S. Small Business Administration; WEMD

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Community Wildfire Protection Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Hazard Mitigation Plan; King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy; Public Health–Seattle & King County Wildfire Smoke Response Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 35.
PREPARE AND PLAN FOR POST-WILDFIRE RECOVERY ON KING COUNTY-OWNED FORESTLAND

Wildfire is a natural process that can result in long-term ecological benefits. However, near-term impacts can include soil erosion and landslides, increased sedimentation and reduced water quality in nearby streams, spread of invasive plants, and slow return of carbon-sequestering forests. These impacts require immediate work to ensure the long-term recovery of areas burned by wildfire. King County will work with partners to identify and plan for wildfire mitigation and recovery practices that limit the negative, near-term impacts of wildfire on County-owned forestland. Key tasks include identifying higher risk County-owned forestland, identifying and integrating mitigation practices into County operations and projects, and developing wildfire recovery plan templates. Post-fire response plans will be developed and updated as needed to reflecting changing conditions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–Parks, WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Seattle Public Utilities; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Geological Survey; WDNR

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

PREP 36.
CREATE A WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR LANDFILLS AND TRANSFER STATIONS

Wildfire poses a notable risk to King County landfills and solid waste transfer stations. Potential impacts include damage to essential systems such as landfill cover systems, landfill gas and leachate management systems, and water systems. Wildfire can also limit operations or damage facilities. King County will develop and implement site-specific risk reduction plans to reduce wildfire risks for the Cedar Hills Regional landfill, closed landfills, and transfer stations. Anticipated actions include assessing site access for wildland fire trucks and air drops, assessing current on-site water supplies, securing additional water supply or storage as needed, implementing vegetation management strategies (e.g., fire breaks), purchasing and storing materials identified in the wildfire management plan on-site, installing weather stations to monitor humidity and wind, installing monitoring cameras to support early fire detection and suppression, selecting drought tolerant and fire-resistant vegetation species, and locating fueling at least 100 feet from other buildings at new facilities.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–SWD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Permitting

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Local fire departments; local water districts

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

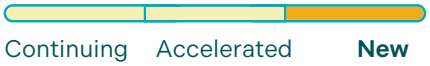
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy; Solid Waste Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:



FUNDING NEED:

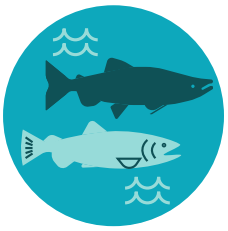


FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:





An aerial view of King County's wildland-urban interface.



SALMON RECOVERY AND HABITAT CONNECTIVITY

In Puget Sound, Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Their decline has deeply affected the personal, economic, cultural, and spiritual well-being of Puget Sound tribes while also causing significant losses within the region's commercial and recreational fisheries economy. The loss of salmon is also endangering other species, including southern resident orca, which has been listed as endangered under the ESA since 2005 and relies on Chinook salmon as a primary food source.

Multiple factors have contributed to the decline of salmonids in King County, including habitat loss, high summer water stream temperatures, insufficient summer streamflow, and water pollution. Climate change is exacerbating these stressors, underscoring the need to act quickly to protect and restore salmon habitat. This includes reconnecting floodplains, restoring stream corridors and shorelines, and reconnecting groundwater with streams to support cool summer streamflows. These nature-based solutions make salmon habitat and human communities more resilient to climate change, protect and improve critical infrastructure, and support local economies by generating jobs and promoting workforce development.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Climate change creates significant challenges for salmon survival. Increasing water temperatures, increased "flashy" stream and river flows from more intense winter rain events, lower summer stream flows, loss of shoreline habitat due to sea level rise, and impacts on marine food webs affect salmon across all life stages.[29] For example, more frequent and/or more severe floods in fall and winter can move rocks and gravel along river bottoms, scouring the riverbed and destroying salmon redds (nests). Earlier peak streamflows in spring may force young salmon to migrate out of streams too early, making it harder to compete in the marine environment and potentially creating mismatches with food availability. Lower late spring and summer streamflows may limit habitat available for spawning and rearing. Finally, warmer summer/early fall water temperatures in rivers and lakes can stress stream-rearing juvenile salmon, returning adult salmon, and Lake Sammamish kokanee. These changes collectively reduce the likelihood that salmon will reach adulthood and successfully spawn in natal streams. Salmon habitat protection and restoration efforts are improving conditions for salmon, but more work is needed.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions a future where native, wild fish populations are thriving and able to access ample healthy habitat in county streams, rivers, lakes, and bays, helping to sustain populations in the face of rising temperatures and more variable stream conditions. A future where tribes have abundant salmon to provide for their personal, economic, cultural, and spiritual prosperity, and all people can enjoy locally caught fish. King County is providing access to high quality, connected habitat for species to adapt their life histories and minimize the potential for local extinctions.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Worked with tribes, federal and state agencies, and local jurisdictions to increase access to high quality upstream habitat by inventorying and strategically removing fish passage barriers in King County streams.
- Enacted emergency actions recommended by regional partners to prevent the possible extinction of Lake Sammamish kokanee, helping kokanee rebound from a low of 19 returning adults in 2017-18 to more than 8,300 returning adults in 2024.
- Completed the 145-acre Fall City Floodplain Restoration Project, improving critical habitat for Chinook salmon and protecting farmland, homes, and businesses along the Snoqualmie River with funding support from the Flood Control District and other sources.
- Converted a former six-acre hotel site on the banks of the Duwamish River to provide critical intertidal habitat for juvenile salmon.
- Restored a nearly mile-long segment of the Cedar River to a more natural state as part of the 52-acre Riverbend restoration project, simultaneously improving salmon habitat and reducing flood risks for people, homes, and infrastructure with funding support from the Flood Control District and other sources.
- Partnered with watershed-based salmon recovery teams and other technical experts to develop climate change and salmon issue papers for major watersheds in King County.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

- **Prep 37.** Accelerate riparian tree planting
- **Prep 38.** Improve water quality and habitat conditions in large lakes and migratory corridors
- **Prep 39.** Integrate climate change into decisions benefiting habitat and agricultural resilience in the Snoqualmie Valley.
- **Prep 40.** Map current and projected wildlife habitat connectivity needs for vulnerable species

PREP 37.
ACCELERATE RIPARIAN TREE PLANTING

Mature and resilient riparian plantings provide the shade, food, and habitat complexity needed to support healthy salmon populations in King County rivers and streams. The County will work with partners to accelerate riparian tree planting to meet targets in priority river and stream corridors identified in salmon recovery plans. This includes building partner capacity and funding for this work; utilizing variable width buffers in the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District to support planting, as recommended by the Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood's Buffer Task Force; building strategic and durable funding mechanisms for long-term maintenance and coordinated stewardship activities; and working with local and state agencies to explore additional incentives and regulations that support work on private properties.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Cities; environmental non-governmental organizations; KCD; private landowners; Regional Fisheries Enhancement groups; tribes

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
30-Year Forest Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; Our Green/Duwamish; Salmon Recovery Plans; Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Recommendations

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 38. IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND HABITAT CONDITIONS IN LARGE LAKES AND MIGRATORY CORRIDORS

Lake Sammamish, Lake Washington, Lake Washington Ship Canal, and the Sammamish River are key salmon migratory bottlenecks where warm water and low dissolved oxygen can block or delay migration and exacerbate other stresses to salmon, such as predation and disease, that limit recovery efforts. Lake Sammamish is the year-round home for kokanee to rear before returning to spawn in tributary streams, so addressing key survival issues is critical. King County will work with partners to plan, implement, and coordinate actions to improve water quality and habitat conditions in these areas. For large lakes, priority actions include reconnecting and enhancing creek mouths and shallow-water rearing habitat, addressing impacts on the aquatic environment from artificial light at night, reducing predation on juvenile salmon and kokanee by invasive predatory fish, and controlling invasive aquatic weeds in Lake Sammamish. Priority actions in key salmon migratory areas include advancing and funding feasible engineered cold water supplementation solution(s) in the Lake Washington Ship Canal, and implementing cold water refuge and instream flow supplementation project opportunities in the Sammamish River.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; Lake Sammamish Kokanee Work Group; Snoqualmie Tribe; Trout Unlimited; WDFW; WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; Lake Sammamish Kokanee Blueprint; WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 39. INTEGRATE CLIMATE CHANGE INTO DECISIONS BENEFITING HABITAT AND AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCE IN THE SNOQUALMIE VALLEY

The Snoqualmie Valley is a critical location for agriculture, salmon habitat, and natural floodplain processes. King County will work with salmon recovery and agricultural interests in the Snoqualmie Valley to utilize climate change projections in the Snoqualmie Valley 2D hydraulic model to identify locations for improved access to critical off-channel floodplain habitat for juvenile salmon in the Snoqualmie floodplain, and to identify farmland at greatest risk of extreme flooding. Work on this action also includes partnering with Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, and Flood participants to conduct a low-flow threshold assessment for fish and agriculture and non-dam water storage study for the Snoqualmie Basin. Results from the model and this work can also be used to support Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, and Flood prioritization and location of agricultural drainage, habitat restoration, and flood risk reduction projects.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DLS–Roads

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Implementation Oversight Committee; Snoqualmie Indian Tribe; Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance; Snoqualmie Watershed Forum

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Recommendations

EARLY ACTION

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

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

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



PREP 40.
MAP CURRENT AND PROJECTED WILDLIFE HABITAT CONNECTIVITY NEEDS FOR VULNERABLE SPECIES

Accounting for climate change in wildlife habitat conservation can help ensure that local species have access to suitable habitat as climate changes, reducing the potential for local extinctions. Key to this work is understanding what and where those projected habitat needs are and how species can access that habitat. King County will work with partners to create a new wildlife connectivity map that accounts for climate change-related habitat connectivity needs for vulnerable species and habitats in the county. The work will utilize connectivity mapping data generated by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine potential alignments and set priority areas. Results from the mapping project will support regional efforts related to open space management, land acquisition, and habitat restoration, with the goal of providing the space needed for wildlife species to move seasonally and/or shift ranges to adapt to climate change.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Conservation Northwest; Forterra; WDFW

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building; share benefits

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; Land Conservation Initiative

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



CLIMATE-READY CAPITAL PROJECTS

Climate change affects many decisions regarding where and how King County builds public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, utilities, and buildings. Many of these assets will be in place for 50 years or more. The ability of those assets to provide reliable public services over that lifespan in a changing climate is contingent on the decisions we make today when planning and designing these facilities.

The goal of incorporating climate change into capital planning is to ensure that climate impacts are being accounted for in decision making and that adjustments are made as needed based on anticipated impacts. This process can help reduce existing vulnerabilities, avoid building—both literally and figuratively—new vulnerabilities into a system, and ensure that program goals and objectives can still be met in a changing climate. In most cases, the adjustments we are making today will provide benefit in the near term by reducing the potential for damage or harm related to today's extreme events.



WHAT'S AT STAKE

King County owns, maintains, and operates billions of dollars' worth of physical infrastructure necessary to support thriving communities, a robust economy, and a healthy environment. Failing to account for climate impacts as part of the capital planning process can result in costly damage, disrupted services, reduced asset life and/or performance, increased risks to public health, difficulty meeting environmental goals or regulatory requirements, reputational damage, and higher organizational insurance rates. People living with low incomes and BIPOC communities are disproportionately affected by these impacts.

A BETTER OUTCOME

King County envisions a future where it can continue providing reliable public services with little to no disruption from extreme weather events. Climate change impacts are systematically factored into capital planning processes and agencies are investing in approaches that build long-term resilience into projects. King County communities are healthier, the economy is thriving, and our environment is cleaner as a result of these investments.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Constructed the Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station to account for two feet of sea level rise.
- Completed climate change vulnerability assessments for different impacts (e.g., extreme precipitation, sea level rise) and programmatic areas to better understand how climate change affects operations and infrastructure.
- Initiated cross-departmental discussions on how to adapt capital planning processes to account for climate impacts.
- Incorporated evaluation of projected changes in heavy rain into the design of new culverts, helping to ensure that salmon can access high quality salmon habitat in a changing climate.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

In addition to climate resilient capital planning actions in other focus areas, King County will:

- **Prep 41.** Integrate climate preparedness into shared capital project planning processes
- **Prep 42.** Plan for wastewater climate adaptation investments
- **Prep 43.** Implement measures to minimize climate impacts in wastewater capital projects
- **Prep 44.** Build climate resilience into Metro infrastructure improvements
- **Prep 45.** Increase King County technical capacity for climate-informed decision making
- **Prep 46.** Evaluate how groundwater levels in the Lower Duwamish River Valley respond to climate change
- **Prep 47.** Inform climate resilient infrastructure investments at the King County International Airport



PREP 41. INTEGRATE CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS INTO SHARED CAPITAL PROJECT PLANNING PROCESSES

King County staff have identified the need and opportunity to better integrate climate preparedness into capital projects and programs, to increase accountability for this work, and to do so in a coordinated way across County agencies. King County will identify and implement changes in capital planning and budgeting processes shared across agencies to support early inclusion of climate change in those processes. This includes looking at steps related to project planning, chartering, predesign, and budgeting across and within agency capital planning processes and through the cross-departmental Capital Projects Management Working Group.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES; DLS; DNRP; Metro–Capital; PSB

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; Metro Climate Change Asset Vulnerability Study; Solid Waste Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



PREP 42. PLAN FOR WASTEWATER CLIMATE ADAPTATION INVESTMENTS

King County provides regional wastewater services for approximately 1.9 million people, including most urban areas of King County and parts of south Snohomish County and northeast Pierce County. Many of the wastewater system's fixed assets (e.g., pipes, regulator stations, pump stations, outfalls) are located within climate vulnerable areas. Ensuring that wastewater assets can continue to collect and treat regional wastewater in a changing climate is critical to protecting public health and water quality.

King County will develop a Wastewater Climate Adaptation Investment Plan identifying program, project, and policy investments needed to account for climate impacts in the County's regional wastewater system over time. The plan will allow King County to strategically scale up climate adaptation work by taking a holistic look at the entire regional wastewater system to characterize potential impacts and risks more fully, and describe solutions to minimizing those risks. The investment plan will provide a cohesive approach to preparing for and adapting to climate change at each step of project planning and delivery by integrating existing activities with new recommendations. The plan will also support communications around funding and resourcing needs for specific work.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WTD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Cities and sewer districts with local pipes connected to King County's regional wastewater system

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



PREP 43. IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO MINIMIZE CLIMATE IMPACTS IN WASTEWATER CAPITAL PROJECTS

Updating wastewater infrastructure to be resilient to the impacts of climate change is critical to protecting public health and water quality in Puget Sound, benefiting those who live, work, and play in the region. King County will integrate measures to avoid or minimize climate change impacts into the design and construction of up to two large wastewater infrastructure projects. Project teams for large wastewater projects will identify climate vulnerabilities and adapt projects to account for climate change based on the facilities' useful life, combined sewer overflow facility sizing guidance, engineering best practices, and other best available science. Design considerations include changes in precipitation, sea level rise and its associated groundwater impacts, and/or the need to adapt infrastructure over time. Large projects that may be included within the scope of this action include the Elliott West Wet Weather Treatment Station Upgrade, the Mouth of the Duwamish Wet Weather Facilities, and the Chelan Wet Weather Storage Tank.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WTD

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Ecology; City of Seattle

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportional impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



PREP 44. BUILD CLIMATE RESILIENCE INTO METRO INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Investing in capital improvements to piers and terminals that account for sea level rise and extreme weather events will protect both internal and external customers from harsh weather conditions while ensuring the resilience of marine infrastructure. King County will build climate resilience into planned infrastructure improvements for Metro-owned piers, docks, and terminals supporting passenger-only ferry service to West Seattle and Vashon Island. This work will focus on mitigating the impacts of extreme weather events and rising sea levels, including upgrading existing pier infrastructure to include shaded areas (where applicable and feasible) to protect both internal and external customers from harsh weather conditions.

LEAD AGENCIES:
Metro–Capital, Marine

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
City of Seattle; Kitsap Transit; Washington State Ferries

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Metro Climate Change Asset Vulnerability Study

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

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

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

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

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



PREP 45. INCREASE KING COUNTY TECHNICAL CAPACITY FOR CLIMATE-INFORMED DECISION MAKING

As King County agencies look to systematically integrate climate change into decision making, the need for in-house technical expertise on climate to guide those decisions is growing, particularly in the context of hydrologic impacts. King County will form a new Science Section Climate Change Unit to assess and predict hydrologic impacts of climate change and inform County agency work on implementing and evaluating effective action on climate change. The unit, consisting primarily of existing staff, will provide in-house technical expertise related to climate science, scenario development, watershed modeling, and hydrologic monitoring and evaluation. Planned technical services initially include measuring and modeling the impacts of climate change on King County water resources and stormwater runoff, watershed modeling to inform and evaluate preparedness actions, technical assessments, data analysis in support of integrating climate change into capital planning, and finding optimal ways manage and protect water resources at watershed scales. Opportunities to provide additional types of technical support will also be evaluated and developed over time as appropriate.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WLRD Science Section

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
UW Climate Impacts Group

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
2024 King County Flood Management Plan; Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; Salmon Recovery Plans

EARLY ACTION

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

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

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



PREP 46. EVALUATE HOW GROUNDWATER LEVELS IN THE LOWER DUWAMISH RIVER VALLEY RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE

King County has significant infrastructure in the former floodplain of the lower Duwamish River Valley. Sea level rise and projected increases in rainfall are likely to lead to a higher groundwater table in the Valley, putting this infrastructure at risk of groundwater inundation. The ability to accurately assess groundwater inundation risks to County infrastructure is insufficient, however, due to key knowledge gaps regarding how much and how quickly groundwater levels are impacted by tidal events, river flows, and intense rainfall.

King County will continue to partner with U.S. Geological Survey and the King County International Airport to evaluate how groundwater levels in the lower Duwamish River Valley respond to sea level rise, flooding, and tidal fluctuations. The phased study, started in 2024, will improve understanding of how much groundwater levels in the Valley are impacted by tidal events, river flows, and intense rainfall. The work will create a groundwater framework of existing conditions, laying the foundation for additional work that studies projected changes in groundwater levels and groundwater inundation risk assessments for King County infrastructure in the Duwamish Valley.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DNRP–WTD

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DES–KCIA; ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
U.S. Geological Survey

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan; King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Shoreline Master Program

EARLY ACTION

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other



PREP 47. INFORM CLIMATE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS AT THE KING COUNTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

More information on how a changing climate will impact King County International Airport (KCIA) facilities and operations is needed to support planning for and investment in appropriate climate adaptation measures. King County will conduct three studies related to managing the impacts of extreme precipitation/flooding, extreme heat, and electric grid resilience to guide capital planning investments and preparedness at KCIA. The Stormwater Resilience Study will inform future capital improvements to Basin 3, which currently lacks stormwater management infrastructure. The Extreme Heat Study will investigate how hotter summer temperatures may affect airport infrastructure and operations, identify potential gaps, and implement data-driven capital investments. Finally, the Electrical Resilience Study will evaluate grid reliability at the airport, review current gaps, and determine technologies that can be implemented for safe and secure operation and improved facilities. This includes investigating underground electrical infrastructure and its vulnerability to changing groundwater levels.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–KCIA

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Puget Sound Energy; Seattle City Light

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
KCIA Capital Improvement Program

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:

Advocate/ Support | Convene | **Implement**

ACTION TYPE:

Continuing | Accelerated | **New**

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

Easy | **Moderate** | Hard

FUNDING NEED:

Within current capacity | Additional | **New**

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:

County | Grant | Other



King County's Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station, located in Seattle's Georgetown neighborhood. The station was designed to account for two feet of sea level rise.

REGIONAL CAPACITY ACROSS CLIMATE HAZARDS

Many climate impacts cross jurisdictional boundaries and the resources to prepare and build resilience vary between communities. As both a local government and regional service provider, King County is uniquely positioned to work across jurisdictional and organizational boundaries to tackle the complex challenges that climate change brings. Building capacity for local action and regional collaboration on climate preparedness can help to leverage limited resources, reduce duplication of effort, facilitate institutional learning, and improve action outcomes.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Remaining siloed in our work can lead to inefficient use of resources, disjointed planning, missed opportunities, sub-optimal outcomes, and a perpetuation of inequities that disproportionately affect communities living with low incomes and BIPOC communities.

A BETTER OUTCOME

We envision a future where climate preparedness efforts across King County and the Puget Sound Basin have been strengthened through strong internal and external collaborations and partnerships. We are seeing outcomes where the sum of the whole is greater than the parts, and where a person's ability to be safe and thrive in a changing climate is not dependent on whether they happen to live in a community that has the resources to prepare for climate change.

WHAT WE'VE DONE TO GET HERE

- Launched, co-chaired, and secured $2 million in grant funding to grow the work of the Puget Sound Climate Preparedness Collaborative, a network of local and county governments, tribes, regional agencies, and other organizations in the Puget Sound Basin working together to build community, economic, and environmental resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- Expanded the focus of the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration to include climate preparedness, creating additional opportunities to coordinate local jurisdictional work on climate change.
- Integrated climate change into King County hazard mitigation planning
- Developed a climate change health impacts surveillance system to track the impact of climate change on health and inform future actions.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

In addition to regional capacity building actions specific to other focus areas, King County will:

- **Prep 48.** Expand Puget Sound Climate Preparedness Collaborative support for local and tribal climate preparedness efforts
- **Prep 49.** Seek funding to increase rural community resilience
- **Prep 50.** Provide hazard mitigation grant support for King County departments and local communities
- **Prep 51.** Maintain and expand climate and health data to guide programs and policies
- **Prep 52.** Build climate change into Public Health communicable disease tracking

PREP 48.
EXPAND PUGET SOUND CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS COLLABORATIVE SUPPORT FOR LOCAL AND TRIBAL CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS EFFORTS

The Puget Sound Climate Preparedness Collaborative (the Collaborative) serves as a leader and convener of local climate adaptation professionals and facilitates collaboration, learning, and collective action on climate preparedness in the region. In its role as co-chair and organizational host of the Collaborative, King County will expand the Collaborative's work to reach more communities and support more needs. Planned activities include developing a broader portfolio of engagement activities and technical resources, providing technical support for climate action in smaller and less-resourced jurisdictions and tribes in the Puget Sound Basin, partnering with Coast Salish Tribes to develop and host a Tribal Partnerships Learning Series, partnering with frontline communities to develop and host a Puget Sound Climate Equity Learning Series, and informing and supporting stronger regional alignment in climate preparedness goals and outcomes.

LEAD AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Point-No-Point Treaty Council; Puget Sound jurisdictions; state agencies; the Tulalip Tribes

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Accessibility; alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement; reduce disproportionate impacts; relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge grant

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

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

PREP 49.
SEEK FUNDING TO INCREASE RURAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Rural areas are more likely to become isolated during extreme weather events or other disasters due to limited access and distance from services. These areas often face longer recovery times as well. King County will seek grant funding to enhance community resilience in rural areas to climate-related events such as extreme weather, wildfire, wildfire smoke, and other emergencies. Initial efforts will be focused on Skykomish and Vashon-Maury Island. Work on this action will include identifying existing structures that can serve as resilience hubs in Skykomish and on Vashon-Maury Island; providing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning upgrades and seismic retrofits to identified structures; and creating wildfire defensible spaces. Additional activities include hosting disaster skills training workshops, helping to equip hubs with emergency supplies and resources, and creating and maintaining partnerships with local organizations.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–OEM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO; DLS; PHSKC–DO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Town of Skykomish; Vashon Island; other interested communities

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; engagement; reduce disparate impacts; relationship building

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County Hazard Mitigation Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

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

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

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

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

PREP 50. PROVIDE HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT SUPPORT FOR KING COUNTY DEPARTMENTS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Climate change is increasing the risks associated with many natural hazards, including flooding, wildfire, landslides, and severe weather events. Federal and state hazard mitigation grants provide important opportunities to fund the preparedness actions needed to prevent or reduce these risks. Securing these highly competitive grants can be difficult for local governments and King County departments, however. King County will assist local governments and County departments with Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant applications, providing guidance and support throughout the application process. This includes trainings, webinars, and guidance for King County departments and eligible partners on how to create competitive HMA grants.

LEAD AGENCIES:
DES–OEM

PARTNER AGENCIES:
ECO

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
FEMA; King County jurisdictions; WEMD

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Hazard Mitigation Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:
Easy | Moderate | Hard

FUNDING NEED:
Within current capacity | Additional | New

FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:
County | Grant | Other

PREP 51.
MAINTAIN AND EXPAND CLIMATE AND HEALTH DATA TO GUIDE PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

Monitoring the occurrence of climate events and related health outcomes of concern is key to recognizing, responding to, and planning for climate change impacts on community health and well-being, especially for those at higher risk. As part of the 2020 SCAP, King County implemented a climate change and health data dashboard of 12 key indicators. King County will provide routine updates and expand data and staff resources to support more comprehensive reporting on these key indicators of climate exposures and health impacts. The enhanced data resources can be used to inform countywide programs and policies, as well as inform community outreach and education about the risks of climate change to health and actions that can be taken to reduce health risks.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC—EHS

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
City of Seattle; community partners; National Syndromic Surveillance Program; Tacoma and Pierce County Health Department; WDOH

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Reduce disproportionate impacts

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
King County Comprehensive Plan; King County ERSJ Strategic Plan; Public Health–Seattle & King County 2024–2029 Strategic Plan

EARLY ACTION

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

ACTION TYPE:
Continuing | Accelerated | New

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

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

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

PREP 52.
BUILD CLIMATE CHANGE INTO PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNICABLE DISEASE TRACKING

Climate change is impacting transmission of infections leading to frequent, larger and more complex outbreaks in our communities. People who have been historically and disproportionately impacted by communicable disease spread, including those who experience barriers to healthcare access, are likely to be at greater risk for adverse infection related health outcomes brought on by climate change. King County will evaluate and update its communicable disease surveillance approaches and external communications incorporating the One Health framework which acknowledges the health impacts related to the interconnectedness between humans, animals, and the environment. In a One Health approach, climate and environmental data (e.g. temperature, precipitation, humidity, vector abundance, etc.) are integrated into communicable disease surveillance systems to understand and monitor the relationships between climate factors and local/regional disease trends; enhance capacity for early detection of emerging disease threats; increase public and healthcare provider awareness through outreach and education; and implement prevention and control measures to mitigate risk, focusing on vulnerable populations. The expanded surveillance will involve enhancing existing and developing new data systems to incorporate additional data and sample collection, testing, analysis, reporting, and interpretation. Updated communications will support partner agencies to expand adoption and dissemination of the One Health framework, aligning with state and national efforts.

LEAD AGENCIES:
PHSKC–Prev

PARTNER AGENCIES:
DNRP–WTD

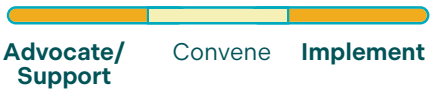
EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
CDC; UW; WDOH; WSU

EQUITY OBJECTIVES:
Alignment and partnership; capacity building; engagement

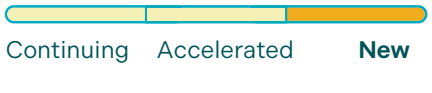
STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS:
WDOH

EARLY ACTION

KING COUNTY ROLE:



ACTION TYPE:



IMPLEMENTATION FEASIBILITY:

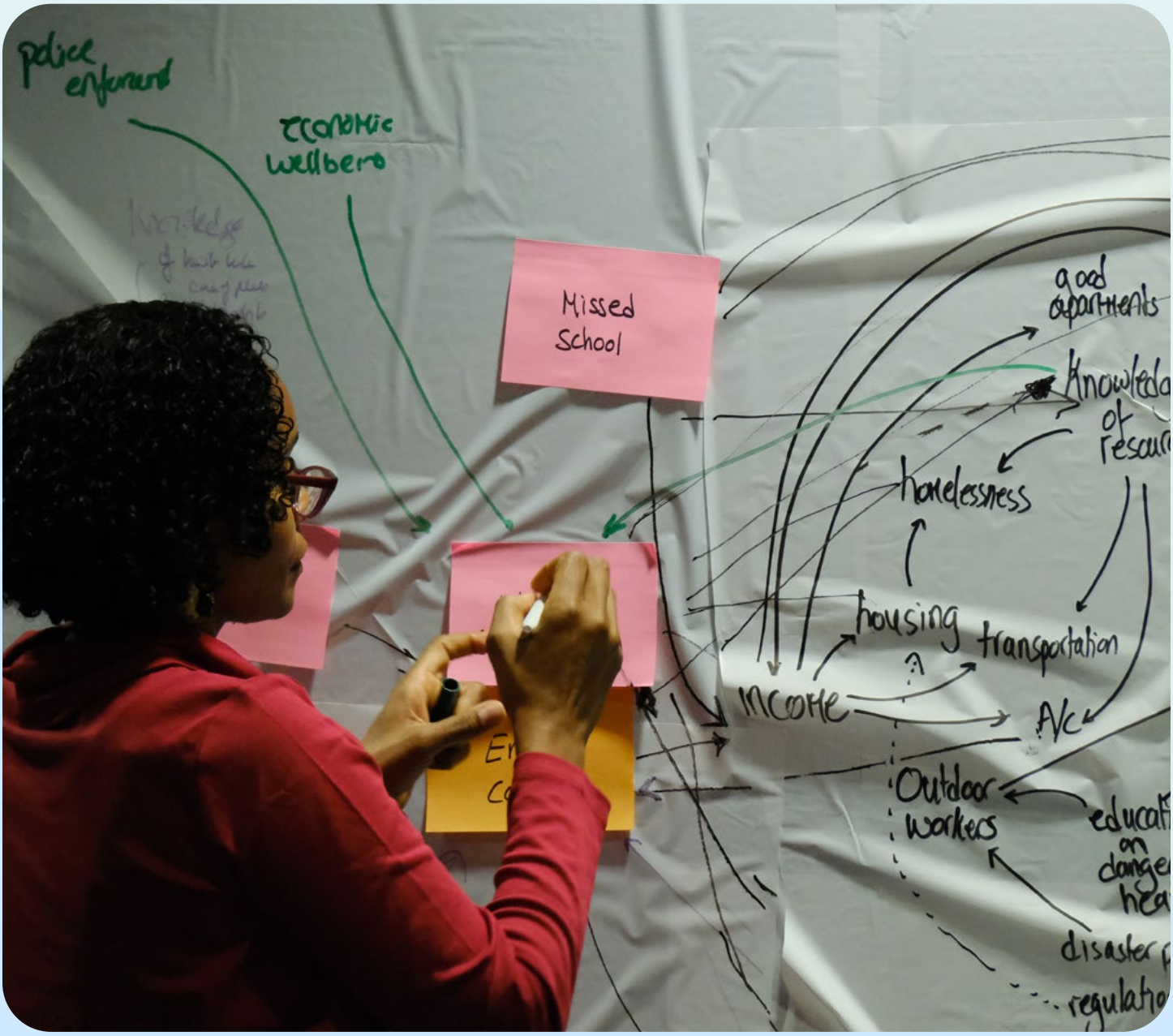


FUNDING NEED:



FUNDING DEPENDENCIES:





Dr. Saria Hassan, faculty from the Emory University School of Medicine, partnered with Public Health-Seattle & King County to facilitate a series of community modeling workshops in the city of Auburn to better understand the local impacts of extreme heat on health and other key factors.



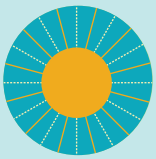
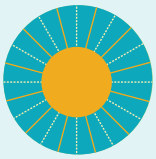
PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measurement is a key component of King County's action on climate change. Progress on SCAP actions, goals, and targets are regularly reported to the King County Council and the public. This process provides transparency by showing if and how SCAP actions are delivering on intended outcomes. Performance measurement can help identify when it is time to set new goals and targets. Performance measurement can also identify barriers that limit progress. The knowledge gained from performance measurement helps the County know how to move forward with its work to achieve SCAP goals.

The 2025 SCAP includes an updated climate preparedness performance measurement framework based on the section's new focus area topics. Each focus area includes a limited number of performance measures, using existing measures where possible, to align with related strategic priorities such as the King County Extreme Heat Mitigation Strategy, King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy, Clean Water Healthy Habitat Strategic Plan, 2024 King County Flood Management Plan, King County Hazard Mitigation Plan, King County Comprehensive Plan, Land Conservation Initiative, and 2024 Public Health—Seattle & King County Strategic Plan. This approach minimizes the need for additional data collection and reporting.

The table below organizes performance measures by **Focus Areas**, with each measure detailing objectives, **2030 Targets**, and **Current Status.** The 2030 Target and Current Status data allow for a quick gap analysis to show what the County has planned to achieve, and how much progress has been made. Together, these metrics help the County ensure that climate actions remain data-driven, equitable, and aligned with regional and state climate policies.

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 **Sea level rise preparedness**	**Prep PM 1. Reduce shoreline buildings at risk.** Reduce the number of shoreline buildings considered at risk in the coastal flood hazard zone of Vashon and Maury Island by 12 buildings (net) between 2025-2030 and every five years thereafter and 70 buildings (net) by 2050 (a 10 percent net reduction), relative to a 2010 baseline of 700 buildings.	***Current Status:*** *net increase of 6 buildings (2010-2023)* ***2030 Target:*** *12 buildings (net) removed*
 **Sea level rise preparedness**	**Prep PM 2. Improve natural shoreline function**. Protect, restore, and improve the function of natural shorelines in ways that allow marine shoreline habitats to grow and migrate with sea level rise. Relative to a 2018 baseline of 69 miles of marine shoreline in King County with hard armoring, work with partners to: • Remove 1.2-miles (net) of marine shoreline hard armoring in King County between 2025-2030 and every five years thereafter, and remove 7-miles (net) by 2050 (a 10 percent net reduction) • Where armoring is necessary, 50 percent of new or replacement armoring installed between 2025-2030 and every five years thereafter is soft armoring	***Current Status:*** *net increase of 364 feet in shoreline armoring (2013-2018);* *14 percent of new and replacement bulkheads were soft armoring (2013 and 2018)* ***2030 Target:*** *1.2-mile net reduction in hard armoring; 50 percent of new or replacement armoring is soft armoring*
 **River flood management**	**Prep PM 3. Connect river floodplains.** Work with partners to support healthy floodplain ecosystems and reduce flood risk by connecting and restoring fully functional river floodplains in King County. Relative to a 2020 baseline of 21,320 floodplain acres identified as partially functional (12,165 acres) or not functional (9,155 acres), increase the number of fully functional floodplain acres by: • 500 acres (net) between 2025-2030 and every five years thereafter, and • 3,000 acres by 2050 Fully functional river floodplains are those with native vegetation where the river is free to inundate and migrate.	***Current Status:*** *203 acres (2020-2025)* ***2030 Target:*** *500 acres*
 **River flood management**	**Prep PM 4. Reduce river floodplain properties at risk.** Work with partners to reduce the number of floodplain properties at risk to river flooding and channel migration through home elevations and buyouts by: • 18 Repetitive Loss or other high-risk Repetitive Loss Area properties between 2025-2030 and every five years thereafter, and • 88 Repetitive Loss or other high-risk Repetitive Loss Area properties by 2050 relative to a 2023 baseline of 166 Repetitive and Severe Repetitive Loss properties in King County and an additional 396 properties in King County Repetitive Loss Areas that have been identified for flood risk mitigation (562 properties total).	***Current Status:*** *Risk mitigated for 78 of 166 Repetitive and Severe Repetitive Loss properties (2022)* ***2030 Target:*** *18 Repetitive Loss or other high-risk Repetitive Loss Area properties*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 **Extreme precipitation & drought mitigation**	**Prep PM 5. Decrease stormwater runoff from roads.** Work with partners to protect salmon from toxic roadway runoff and reduce stormwater flooding. Relative to 2025, increase treatment of stormwater runoff from roads in King County, including incorporated areas, by: • 5 miles of roadway by 2030 and every five years thereafter, and • 100 miles of roadway by 2050.	***Current Status:*** *not available at this time* ***2030 Target:*** *5 miles*
 **Extreme precipitation & drought mitigation**	**Prep PM 6. Increase stormwater control.** Work with partners to clean and control stormwater runoff in King County through a mix of Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI), new or retrofitted detention ponds, and regional facilities including stormwater parks. Relative to 2025: • Provide additional flow control to 500 acres in King County by 2030 and 5,000 acres by 2050, and • Initiate development and/or build at least three stormwater parks in King County by 2030 and construct a total of 30 stormwater parks by 2050.	***Current Status:*** *171.5 acres of flow control; 4 stormwater parks in King County* ***2030 Target:*** *500 acres of additional flow control; 3 or more stormwater parks built or in development*
 **Extreme heat adaptation**	**Prep PM 7. Increase community-trusted cooling locations.** Work with communities to identify and designate five community-trusted cooling locations by 2030 for use during extreme heat events.	***Current Status:*** *0* ***2030 Target:*** *5*
 **Extreme heat adaptation**	**Prep PM 8. Provide community trainings on heat.** Provide heat preparedness trainings or related heat safety learning opportunities to at least 500 frontline community members, community-based organization staff, and service provider staff by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *0* ***2030 Target:*** *500 people*
 **Forest resilience & urban tree canopy expansion**	**Prep PM 9/GHG 16. Increase acres restored.** Relative to 2020, restore 2,000 acres of forests and natural areas on Parks-managed properties to improve climate change resiliency and enhance potential for carbon sequestration.	***Current Status:*** *1,333 acres (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *2,000 acres*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 **Forest resilience & urban tree canopy expansion**	**Prep PM 10. Implement forest stewardship plans.** Relative to 2025: • At least 200 landowners are participating in forest stewardship technical training annually by 2030, and • At least 90 percent of participants are implementing actions included in forest stewardship plans 1-, 3- and 8-years post training.	***Current Status:*** *166 landowners; 1-year: 86 percent, 3-year: 80 percent; 8-year: 90 percent* ***2030 Target:*** *200 landowners annually; 90 percent (1,3,8 years)*
 **Forest resilience & urban tree canopy expansion**	**Prep PM 11. Expand urban tree canopy.** Complete at least 10 urban canopy projects that plant at least 1,000 trees between 2025 and 2030 to enhance and increase tree cover in low-canopy areas and heat islands within urban unincorporated King County.	***Current Status:*** *1 project, 162 trees* ***2030 Target:*** *10 projects; 1,000 trees*
 **Wildfire risk reduction**	**Prep PM 12. Support residential wildfire mitigation.** Provide trainings, technical assistance, or related wildfire risk reduction learning opportunities to at least 500 King County residents by 2030.	***Current Status:*** *100 (2024)* ***2030 Target:*** *500*
 **Wildfire risk reduction**	**Prep PM 13. Help neighborhoods be prepared.** Work with partners to grow and maintain the number of active neighborhood preparedness groups in unincorporated King County. By 2030, 10 neighborhood groups are actively engaged in wildfire risk reduction.	***Current Status:*** *8* ***2030 Target:*** *10*
 **Wildfire risk reduction**	**Prep PM 14. Wildfire plans and projects are being implemented.** Community wildfire protection plans are in place and projects are being implemented. By 2030: • 100 percent of wildland-urban interface jurisdictions (12) have or are covered by a current wildfire mitigation plan. • At least 50 percent of priority King County Community Wildfire Protection Plan actions are being implemented.	***Current Status:*** *not available* ***2030 Target:*** *100 percent (12) jurisdictions; 50 percent of priority CWPP actions*

Section	Performance Measure	Target
 **Salmon recovery & habitat connectivity**	**Prep PM 15. Restore habitat access.** Work with partners to restore access to salmon and kokanee habitat in King County. Relative to 2020: • Access to at least 20 percent of salmon and kokanee habitat blocked by King County-owned barriers has been restored by 2030. • Access to 2/3rds (~67 percent) of King County's salmon habitat and all the kokanee habitat has been restored by 2050.	***Current Status:*** *6.2 percent (2025)* ***2030 Target:*** *20 percent*
 **Salmon recovery & habitat connectivity**	**Prep PM 16. Increase salmon survival.** Salmon populations are recovering throughout all major watersheds. Relative to 2020: • Juvenile salmon survival numbers are increasing by 2030 • Juvenile salmonid survival is approaching historic healthy levels by 2050	***Current Status:*** *declining overall (varies by watershed)* ***2030 Target:*** *Increasing*
 **Climate-ready capital projects**	**Prep PM 17. Adapt capital planning and projects.** Integrate climate change projections into planning for capital infrastructure projects. Relative to 2025: • The number capital planning projects designed and built by King County that have accounted for climate change is increasing over time, and • By 2035, 100 percent of projects are accounting for climate change impacts, as appropriate.	***Current Status:*** *not available* ***2030 Target:*** *increasing*
 **Regional capacity across climate hazards**	**Prep PM 18. Empower collaboration.** Pursue or otherwise help secure at least $500,000 in total grant funding by 2030, relative to 2025, for projects that support climate preparedness partnerships in King County and/or the Puget Sound region.	***Current Status:*** *$10,000* ***2030 Target:*** *$500,000*



Coastal flooding of Quartermaster Drive on Vashon Island during the December 27, 2022 King Tide.



Flooding of the Snoqualmie River Valley, December 2010.

ENDNOTES

1 NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, "Monthly Global Climate Report for Annual 2024," 2025. [LINK].

2 NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, "U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters," 2025. [LINK].

3 Barns et al, "Climate Change Increased the Likelihood of Wildfire Disaster in Highly Exposed Los Angeles Area," World Weather Attribution, 2025. [LINK].

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5 National Centers for Environmental Information, (n.d.).

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King County transit service depends on bus base capacity to grow service.

AGENCY AND PARTNER ABBREVIATIONS

The following table serves as a quick reference to assist readers in identifying the King County agencies and external partners involved in implementation of the plan.

Abbreviation/Acronym	Full Term
AWC	Association of Washington Cities
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CECTF	King County Climate Equity Community Taskforce
CEWG	King County Climate Equity Working Group
C3	Coalition for Climate Careers
Commerce	Washington State Department of Commerce
CWHH	Clean Water Heathy Habitat – King County
DAJD	Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention
DCHS	King County Department of Community and Health Services
DCHS–ASD	DCHS–Adult Services Division
DCHS–DO	DCHS–Director's Office
DCHS–HCD	DCHS–Housing & Community Development Division
DCHS–CYYA	DCHS–Children, Youth, and Young Adult Division
DES	King County Department of Executive Services
DES–DO	DES–CAO Administration
DES–FMD	DES–Facilities Management Division
DES–FBOD	DES–Finance & Business Operations Division
DES–Fleet	DES–Fleet Administration Division
DES–OEM	DES–Office of Emergency Management
DHR	King County Department of Human Resources
DHR–Admin	DHR–Administration & Operations Division
DHR–CCD	DHR–Career & Cultural Division

Abbreviation/Acronym	Full Term
DLS	King County Department of Local Services
DLS–DO	DLS–Director's Office
DLS–Roads	DLS–Road Services
DLS–Permitting	DLS–Permitting
DNRP	King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks
DNRP–DO	DNRP–Director's Office
DNRP–Parks	DNRP–Parks & Recreation Division
DNRP–SWD	DNRP–Solid Waste Division
DNRP–WTD	DNRP–Wastewater Treatment Division
DNRP–WLRD	DNRP–Water & Land Resources Division
ECO	King County Executive Climate Office
Ecology	Washington State Department of Ecology
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GMPC	King County Growth Management Planning Council
HCHN	Healthcare for the Homeless Network
ILFI	International Living Future Institute
LCI	King County Land Conservation Initiative
LFI	King County Local Food Initiative
K4C	King County–Cities Climate Collaboration
KCD	King Conservation District
KCRHA	King County Regional Homelessness Authority
KCIA	King County International Airport
KCIT	King County Information Technology Department
KCSO	King County Sheriff's Office
Metro	King County Metro Transit
Metro–GM	Metro–General Manager's Office

Abbreviation/Acronym	Full Term
Metro–VM	Metro–Vehicle Maintenance
Metro–TFD	Metro–Facilities
Metro–Marine	Metro–Marine
Metro–Mobility	Metro–Mobility
Metro–Capital	Metro–Capital
Metro–ES	Metro–Employee Services
Metro–F&A	Metro–Finance & Administration
MSWAC	Metropolitan Solid Waste Advisory Committee
NWPSC	Northwest Product Stewardship Council
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWPSC	Northwest Product Stewardship Council
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
OEOCE	King County Office of Economic Opportunity & Creative Economy
OERSJ	King County Office of Equity, Racial, and Social Justice
PAO	King County Public Attorney's Office
PHSKC	Public Health–Seattle & King County
PHSKC–CHS	PHSKC–Community Health Services
PHSCK–DO	PHSKC–Director's Office
PHSKC–EHS	PHSKC–Environmental Health Services
PHSKC–HSci	PHSKC–Health Sciences
PHSKC–Prev	PHSKC–Prevention
PSB	King County Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget
PSB–Budget	PSB–Budget
PSB–Grants	PSB–Grants
PSB–Performance	PSB–Performance and Strategy
PSB–RP	PSB–Regional Planning
PSCAA	Puget Sound Clean Air Agency

Abbreviation/Acronym	Full Term
PSE	Puget Sound Energy
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
RTC	King County Regional Transit Committee
SCL	Seattle City Light
SDOT	Seattle Department of Transportation
SnoPUD	Snohomish County Public Utility District
SPU	Seattle Public Utilities
SWAC	Solid Waste Advisory Committee–King County
USDN	Urban Sustainability Directors Network
USGBC	U.S. Green Building Council
UW	University of Washington
WDNR	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
WDFW	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDOH	Washington State Department of Health
WEMD	Washington State Emergency Management Division
WLIHA	Washington Low Income Housing Alliance
WORC	Washington Organics Recycling Council
WRIA	Water Resource Inventory Area
WSAC	Washington State Association of Counties
WSDA	Washington State Department of Agriculture
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
WRRA	Washington Recycling and Refuse Association
WSRA	Washington State Recycling Association
WSU	Washington State University