



**Sustainable Communities and Housing Projects
Demonstration Project
Area Zoning and Land Use Study
2024 King County Comprehensive Plan
December 2023**

I. Overview

This study reviews the currently eligible properties for the Sustainable Communities and Housing Projects demonstration project adopted in King County Code (K.C.C.) 21A.55.101.

The purpose of the demonstration project "is to provide affordable housing and workforce housing integrated into developments containing market rate housing and maximize sustainable development, which includes bike, pedestrian and transit connections, a mix of housing types, and the use of recyclable materials." The demonstration project is currently authorized for certain parcels in White Center (White Center Workshop),¹ Skyway-West Hill (Brooks Village),² and Federal Way (Kit's Corner).³

As part of reviewing the development regulations for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update, current demonstration projects authorized in K.C.C. Chapter 21A.55 were reviewed to remove expired and inactive projects. This review identified that when the Sustainable Communities and Housing Projects demonstration project was adopted in 2009,⁴ it did not formally impose the "DPA" Demonstration Project Area zoning condition on any of the eligible parcels. This appears to be an oversight at this time. A zoning change would be needed to accurately reflect the DPA condition on these properties. However, no development has occurred under the demonstration project. So, it is appropriate to also review whether 1) the demonstration project is still needed, and 2) if so, which, if any, of the current eligible properties should continue to be eligible under the project.

II. Land Use Information

A. Parcel and Vicinity Information

White Center Workshop Parcel

¹ Attachment A to Ordinance 16650 [\[LINK\]](#)

² Attachment B to Ordinance 16650 [\[LINK\]](#)

³ Attachment C to Ordinance 16650 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴ Ordinance 16650 [\[LINK\]](#)

0623049375

Brooks Village Parcels

1148300010	1148300020	1148300030	1148300040
1148300050	1148300060	1148300070	1148300080
1148300090	1148300100	1148300110	1148300120
1148300130	1148300140	1148300150	1148300160
1148300170	1148300180	1148300190	1148300200
1148300210	1148300220	1148300230	1148300240
1148300250	1148300260	1148300270	1148300280
1148300290	1148300300	1148300310	1148300320
1148300330	1148300340	1148300350	1148300360
1148300370	1148300380	1148300390	1148300400
1148300410	1148300420	1148300430	1148300440
1148300450	1148300460	1148300470	1148300480
1148300490	1148300500	114830TRCT	

Kit's Corner Parcel

2191600870

The White Center Workshop parcel is in the south-central portion of North Highline, in the vicinity of Dick Thurnau Memorial Park. It has an Urban Residential, High (uh) land use designation and a R-18 (Urban Residential, 18 dwelling units per acre) zoning classification. The site is owned by King County and currently developed with an office buildings and a cell tower. It was also recently used as a COVID isolation and recovery site. There is public and water service to the site. There are no apparent environment constraints on the site. Zoning on adjacent parcels include:

- to the north, R-18 and R-48 (Urban Residential, 48 dwelling units per acre);
- to the east, R-48;
- to the south, CB (Community Business) and R-48; and
- to the west R-48 and R-18.

The Brooks Village parcels are in the western portion of Skyway-West Hill, northwest of the Skyway business district Unincorporated Activity Center. They have an Urban Residential, Medium (um) land use designation and a R-8 (Urban Residential, 8 dwelling units per acre) zoning classification. The site is owned by King County and currently undeveloped. There is public and water service to the site. There is a stream on and adjacent to the site, as well as potential landslide hazard areas and their buffers. A critical areas study was completed in 2021, which identified four wetlands on the site and a stream along the eastern edge of the parcel.⁵

Zoning on adjacent parcels include:

- to the north, R-8;
- to the east, R-48 and incorporated areas of the City of Seattle;
- to the south, R-8; and
- to the west R-8 and R-6 (Urban Residential, 6 dwelling units per acre).

The Kit's Corner parcel is in the western portion of Federal Way's Lakeland South Potential Annexation Area (PAA).. It has an Urban Residential, Medium (um) land use designation and a R-8 (Urban Residential, 8 dwelling units per acre) zoning classification. The

⁵ Brooks Village RFP; ZoomGrants program webpage; accessed 10/29/23 [\[LINK\]](#)

site is owned by King County and currently undeveloped. It is located immediately adjacent to the Interstate-5 (I-5) and State Route 18 (SR-18) interchange. There are no sewer or septic facilities on the site, and it is served by a water district. The parcel is part of a former landfill, there is a stream on portions of and adjacent to the site, as well as potential wetlands. Zoning on adjacent parcels include:

- to the north, R-8;
- to the east, R-48 and incorporated areas of the City of Seattle; to the south, R-8; and
- to the west R-8 and R-6 (Urban Residential, 6 dwelling units per acre).

III. Regulatory Context and Analysis

This section evaluates whether 1) the demonstration project is still needed, and 2) if so, which, if any, of the current eligible properties should continue to be eligible under the project.

The demonstration project was first adopted in 2009, and only technical terminology changes have been made to it since then. No projects have been developed under the demonstration project. However, the 2016 King County Comprehensive Plan, as amended,⁶ includes a variety of policies that support using incentives, regulatory flexibilities, and innovative models to achieve sustainable and affordable housing goals, such as the policies that follow (**emphasis added**).

U 133 King County encourages innovative, quality infill development and redevelopment in existing unincorporated urban areas. A variety of regulatory, incentive and program strategies could be considered, including:

- a. Special development standards for infill sites;
- b. Assembly and resale of sites to providers of affordable and healthy housing;
- c. Impact mitigation fee structures that favor infill developments;
- d. Greater regulatory flexibility in allowing standards to be met using innovative techniques;
- e. Coordination with incentive programs of cities affiliated to annex the area;
- f. Green Building techniques that create sustainable development; and
- g. Joint public/private loan guarantee pools.

U-122a King County should explore zoning policies and provisions and tools that increase housing density and affordable housing opportunities within unincorporated urban growth areas, with a focus on areas near frequent transit and commercial areas.

U 128 Density incentives should encourage private developers to: provide affordable housing, significant open space, trails and parks; use the Transfer of Development Rights Program, Low Impact Development and Green Building; locate development close to transit; participate in historic preservation; and include energy conservation measures.

⁶ Current Adopted King County Comprehensive Plan [\[LINK\]](#)

H-112 King County should encourage affordable housing through redevelopment of nonresidential buildings, such as schools and commercial buildings, in locations suitable for housing and in ways that preserve significant historic features where appropriate.

H-130 King County shall explore zoning policies and provisions that increase housing density and affordable housing opportunities within unincorporated urban growth areas near transit and near commercial areas.

H-133 King County shall encourage the development of new housing models that are healthy and affordable by providing opportunities for new models within unincorporated urban growth areas and near commercial areas. King County shall work to allow innovative housing projects to move forward, including affordable housing demonstration projects, affordable owner built housing, land trusts and cooperative ownership structures for rental and ownership housing, co-housing and other innovative developments.

H-134 Density bonuses and other incentives for the development of affordable housing by for-profit and non-profit developers shall be available within unincorporated urban areas, with a focus on commercial areas to both single family and multifamily developments to promote development of affordable rental and/or ownership housing. Bonuses shall be periodically reviewed and updated, as needed, to assure they are effective in creating affordable housing units, especially in coordination with any mandatory inclusionary affordable housing requirements that may be adopted.

H-157 King County should expand its use of surplus county owned property and air rights over county owned property for affordable housing and its possible use for other public benefits, such as human services; and should consider conveyance of properties to public or non-profit housing developers and agencies at below-market cost for the purpose of building or providing affordable housing. Surplus county property shall be prioritized for housing development that will be consistent with King County adopted plans. This policy shall be carried out consistent with King County Charter Section 230.10.10 and other applicable laws, regulations and contract restrictions, such as grant funding requirements.

I 601 King County should develop incentives for the Urban Growth Area that encourage the development industry to provide a broad range of housing and business space, including areas of the county with the most disparate outcomes in health, economic prosperity and housing conditions, where residents may be at high risk of displacement. Incentives could include:

- a. Identification of geographic areas with infill opportunities, granting budget priority status and allowing more flexible development standards;
- b. Density bonuses for site designs which provide public benefits (for example, grid roads that connect with other developments and limit impacts on arterials);

- c. Incentives which lower financial development risk;
- d. Joint development opportunities at county owned or operated facilities, utilization of air rights on county owned or operated facilities, and the establishment of transit supportive design guidelines; and
- e. County capital improvement funding for public urban amenities including transportation, parks, open space, cultural and other facilities for cities participating in the King County Transfer of Development Rights Program.

The Housing Chapter of the King County Countywide Planning Policies also " The Countywide Planning Policies in the Housing Chapter has an overarching goal to " provide a full range of affordable, accessible, healthy, and safe housing choices to every resident in King County ...", as well as polices that support incentives and related strategies for sustainable and affordable housing, as follows (emphasis added).

DP-45 Adopt flexible design standards, parking requirements, incentives, or guidelines that foster green building, multimodal transportation, and infill development that enhances the existing or desired urban character of a neighborhood/community. Ensure adequate code enforcement so that flexible regulations are appropriately implemented.

H-11 Adopt policies, incentives, strategies, actions, and regulations that increase the supply of long-term income-restricted housing for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households and households with special needs.

H-14 Prioritize the use of local and regional resources (e.g., funding, surplus property) for income-restricted housing, particularly for extremely low-income households, populations with special needs, and others with disproportionately greater housing needs. Consider projects that promote access to opportunity, anti-displacement, and wealth building for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities to support implementation of policy H-10.

H-18 Adopt inclusive planning tools and policies whose purpose is to increase the ability of all residents in jurisdictions throughout the county to live in the neighborhood of their choice, reduce disparities in access to opportunity areas, and meet the needs of the region’s current and future residents by:

- a) Providing access to affordable housing to rent and own throughout the jurisdiction, with a focus on areas of high opportunity;
- b) Expanding capacity for moderate-density housing throughout the jurisdiction, especially in areas currently zoned for lower density single-family detached housing in the Urban Growth Area, and capacity for high-density housing, where appropriate, consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy;
- c) Evaluating the feasibility of, and implementing, where appropriate, inclusionary and incentive zoning to provide affordable housing; and

d) Providing access to housing types that serve a range of household sizes, types, and incomes, including 2+ bedroom homes for families with children and/or adult roommates and accessory dwelling units, efficiency studios, and/or congregate residences for single adults.

H-20 Adopt policies and strategies that promote equitable development and mitigate displacement risk, with consideration given to the preservation of historical and cultural communities as well as investments in low-, very low-, extremely low-, and moderate-income housing production and preservation; dedicated funds for land acquisition; manufactured housing community preservation, inclusionary zoning; community planning requirements; tenant protections; public land disposition policies; and land that may be used for affordable housing. Mitigate displacement that may result from planning efforts, large-scale private investments, and market pressure. Implement anti-displacement measures prior to or concurrent with development capacity increases and public capital investments.

As part of the 2020 midpoint update to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the County completed a feasibility analysis of developing affordable housing on County-owned properties.⁷ This analysis determined that:

- the White Center Workshop site should be redeveloped in the short-term as COVID isolation and recovery site;
- the Brooks Village site has critical areas and difficult road access; and
- the Kit's Corner site was more appropriate for continuing its current use as a vacant site rather than for redevelopment for affordable housing.

The Brooks Village site is currently actively being evaluated for affordable housing development. In September 2023, King County closed a Direct Negotiation Request for Proposals (RFP) for Brooks Village. The "RFP was developed in response to a two-year community engagement process to identify community needs and priorities for the site."⁸ The stated purpose of the RFP is to identify a nonprofit developer and/or community-based organization to explore development of affordable homeownership on the site to decrease displacement pressure and increase affordable housing options in Skyway-West Hill. The RFP identifies that the site could likely be built with approximately 48 to 54 affordable units, in consideration of environmental constraints. Use of the demonstration project on this site could further support development in accordance with the RFP's goals. Future redevelopment of White Center Workshop is also still a possibility.

⁷ Affordable Housing Report: Current Efforts, Plan for Inventory and Feasibility Analysis of Affordable Housing on County-Owned Properties [\[LINK\]](#); Affordable Housing Report: Inventory and Feasibility Analysis of Affordable Housing on County-owned Properties [\[LINK\]](#)

⁸ Communities of Opportunity website; Brooks Village Direct Negotiation Request for Proposals (RFP); accessed 10/29/23 [\[LINK\]](#)

IV. Equity and Social Justice Analysis

Equity and social justice impacts should be considered in this evaluation. The 2019 Equity Scores for these sites are 4.67 for White Center Workshop and 5.00 for Brooks Village.⁹ These higher scores indicates a high presence of priority populations identified in K.C.C. Chapter 2.10 (people of color, people with low incomes, and/or people with limited English proficiency). Providing more access to affordable housing in these communities could reduce displacement risk and improve outcomes for residents. Kit's Corner has a 3.00 Equity Score, which indicates a more moderate presence of priority populations. This should not discount the affordable housing needs in that community. However, the location of the site immediately adjacent to the I-5/SR-18 interchange could have health impacts on residents should affordable housing be sited there.

V. Engagement

A draft proposed map amendment and imposing the DPA condition on the White Center Workshop and Brooks Village parcels to correct the 2009 error was included in the Public Review Draft of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. The Kit's Corner parcel was not included in the map amendment to add the DPA on the site, given the 2020 determination that the site was not suitable for affordable housing development. The Public Review Draft was issued for public review and comment in June to July 2023. Notice of the comment period was provided via the County website, County email distribution lists, social media, and area-specific newspaper notices. No comments were received on the draft proposal.

III. Conclusion and Recommendation

A. Conclusion

The Countywide Planning Policies and Comprehensive Plan have strongly support regulatory flexibilities and incentives for the development of sustainable, affordable housing. Both the White Center Workshop and Brooks Village sites have ongoing planning for potential affordable housing development that could benefit from use of the demonstration project. The Kit's Corner site is not appropriate for affordable housing development.

B. Recommendation

This study recommends:

- Retaining the development project in K.C.C. 21A.55.101;
- Retaining eligibility for the White Center Workshop and Brooks Village sites, and adding the DPA zoning condition to the parcels to accurately reflect their status; and
- Removing eligibility for the Kit's Corner site, and updating K.C.C. 21A.55.101 accordingly. No zoning change is needed, as the DPA was never formally imposed on the property.

⁹ King County Census Viewer (arcgis.com) [\[LINK\]](#) Scores range 1 to 5, with higher scores representing a more diverse, less wealthy population.