HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

MINUTES FOR THE OCTOBER 20, 2026 MEETING

Date: **Time:**	Tuesday, October, 20th, 2026 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Virtual Meeting Link (ZOOM):	https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/82402137397
Meeting ID: **Password:**	824 0213 7397 406692

Meetings are open to the public. Meeting minutes will be made available on King County's HCRC Website once approved.

KING COUNTY STAFF LIAISON

Scarleth Lever Ortiz

Also in attendance: Sandra Gallagher, Isabella Boparai, Appointment-in-Process Commissioner Position #5 Warlina Wheeler

Member	Roles	Present/Absent/Excused/ Vacant
Position 1: Vacant	Vacant	VACANT
Position 2: Emily Huynh	Commissioner	Present
Position 3: Allison Hastings	**Secretary/Historian**	Present
Position 4: Vacant	Vacant	VACANT
Position 5: Vacant	Vacant	VACANT
Position 6: Jennifer Karls	**Co-Chair**	Present
Position 7: Mona Jaber (WITHDRAWN)	Commissioner	VACANT
Position 8: Steven Sawyer	Commissioner	Present
Position 9: Daisy Wong	**Co-Chair**	Excused
Position 10: Vanessa Sanchez-Mexicano	Commissioner	Present
Position 11: Vacant	Vacant	VACANT

AGENDA

TIME	ITEM	PRESENTER & ACTION
6:00 PM (3 mins)	**Call to Order** Called to order: 6:04pm	HCRC Co-Chairs Karls *Administrative*
6:03 PM (3 mins)	**Public Comments** No one from the public is in attendance.	HCRC Co-Chair Karls *Administrative*
6:06 PM (3 mins)	**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes** - September 26, 2026 Approval of Meeting Minutes: Yes Votes: 4 (All who are present)	HCRC Co-Chairs Karls *Action Item*
6:09 PM (10 mins)	**Civil Rights Team Updates** - Study Sessions: Today were the last 2 (which will be posted in the recordings library). We completed 20 study sessions. - Commissioner Appointments Timeline: o Appointments are in process. They are being routed to Council. It will then take 30 days for the appointments to be official. Scarleth is waiting to hear if the appointees need to attend a Council meeting. o Scarleth is collaborating with Rosa to determine recruitment process to fill Commissioner Jaber's vacancy. o Executive Zahilay expected to come to the December meeting. Chief Performance & Accountability Officer Vishal Barghava, and/or Deputy Chief of Performance, Leah Tivoli & Accountability Officer- expected to attend in November. o By March, the annual report is due, with the addendum, which will be the powers and duties report. - 2026-2027 Annual Report Timeline o Key Milestones: Sandra has been gathering data and reviewing the minutes and beginning a draft for our review. This includes posting public comment, subcommittees, 20 study sessions, and meetings with other public officials. Sandra would like to better identify the outcomes. She is trying to add in goals as well. o January Executive Leadership Team Briefing: 1/15/27 is the date for the Executive Leadership Team Briefing.	Scarleth Lever Ortiz *Administrative* **Action Items and Persons Responsible:** **Sandra** to follow up to learn more about the meetings with public officials that the external subcommittee completed. Sandra will share first draft of Annual report. **Jennifer** will share information with Sandra. **All Commissioners:** Review study sessions, if you haven't been able to. **Scarleth** will send Executive Leadership Briefing Memo, which will include preferred scenario recommendation, when approved by HCRC, Sandra will use memo to begin drafting Changes to the Powers & Duties Recommendations for

	They meet weekly to hear from different department heads. We can share our recommendations and get input. o Final Draft Review: All commissioners will do final review. o Transmittal: April, but we need to be finished by March. - 2026-2027 Annual Report Draft o Outline: Sandra is working on this. o HCRC Changes to the Powers & Duties Recommendations | Methodology Overview section: Not started yet.	HCRC's review and approval **Due date:** Next 2 weeks, if possible
6:19 PM (45 min)	**HCRC Retreat Recap & Next Steps** - Review addendum (Pulls together all of the things we discussed at the retreat) o We discussed the 3 branches and how best to situate the work: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. Resources may not change based on where the work is housed. Commissioner Sawyer notes the following necessary resources: ▪ Fully funded ▪ Dedicated staff ▪ Protected by ordinance ▪ Direct reporting authority o Metro and OLEO structures could be helpful. o Need to think about the incorporated cities as a way to expand services. 88% of CR's requests are outside jurisdiction. Expansion of services will require additional resources, but expanding services could also generate revenue from the cities. - Confirm preferred scenario to draft recommendations: 4 scenarios displayed in the slide deck. o HCRC and CR in Legislative Branch. o HCRC and CR form an independent Executive Branch division. o HCRC and CR remain in the Executive Branch, but have a reduced scope, with the HCRC acting as an advisory body. o No change, which would require statutory revisions to align scope with capacity.	HCRC Executive Committee *Discussion* **Action Item:** Outreach to Council Members **Person Responsible:** All members (active and nominees) + Jennifer Karls to CM Von Reichbauer **Due Date:** Before November meeting.

	o Other issues: Interlocal agreements and protected classes. There are 17 protected classes in King County; we could work on fine-tuning clarity of definitions. o Regarding interlocal agreements, we could home in on providing greater access to existing services through interlocal agreements. - We need to come to agreement about how we provide arguments for and against each scenario and think about how to unpack/dig into each scenario. We need to explain our methodology/reasoning for recommending or not recommending each scenario. We can consult the Korematsu Report and other resources we already have. - Commissioner Karls is noting that connectivity/collaboration is a gap we could potentially fill. There seems to be interest in collaboration with us/breaking down silos among different agencies. Scarleth said that collaboration, as described by HCRC, hasn't really been done during her tenure. Commissioner Sawyer is noting that the County seems to have moved away from having people with some responsibility for coordinating/working on equity within the departments and county; this might be moving the county backwards. We could consider some other solutions/recommendations. Commissioner Sawyer suggests an Equity Summit. - Our HCRC staff team was the Office of Equity, Race, and Social Justice. This was a robust office with different iterations. Right now, the former team is under the compliance team. Scarleth also wants to note that the language access work is trying to close the gaps in the depts. Right now, as noted during Study Session, language compliance is inconsistent throughout the County. The ADA work is in a similar space; the County still needs more work to create accessibility for employees and public. We need one path: oversight and compliance. It could be helpful to have all of these functions under one umbrella: ADA, language access, civil rights. That is how it was under the Office of Equity, Race, and Social Justice. However, the Civil Rights function has been isolated due to core function (investigations). There is an opportunity to leverage these three (3) teams with a focus on oversight and compliance. Gaps identified in translation, gender, disability cannot be closed by the LA and ADA teams. The County has 18,000 employees and numerous departments/services. The ADA and Language Access teams could help identify gaps and provide recommendations to departments on how to close them.	

	- Daisy and Jennifer can dive into the interlocal agreements a bit more since they had some discussions about these. - Bottom line: We need to make our recommendations and back them up with information/details that we've gathered and studied. Communicate the method behind the recommendation. Our scenario planning will be helpful for the Executive Leadership Team Meeting. - Confirm engagement strategy & timeline : This can help inform where recommendations land, and we can help inform their position too. We could consider reaching out to former Commissioner Jaber's Council Member. Commissioner Karls is willing to do the outreach. These will be introductory meetings; an opportunity for them to put a face to the name of the HCRC. - Brief discussion of immigration issues and the study session with Derek Baker, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Rich Stolz, Immigrant & Refugee Lead Advisor.	
7:05 (5 min)	**Break**	**Break**
7:10 (15 min)	***Fall/Winter Work Plan*** - Finalize action items, roles, responsibilities - Our 2027 work plan will be in time for the next budget cycle. The work plan should really entail what's needed in terms of infrastructure to accomplish goals. 2027 work plan could be about implementing Phase One of recommendations—infrastructure and resources. For example, we know we need to better understand what's happening with language access, disability, and gender/LGBTQIA equity. We need a compliance arm to understand what's happening, where the gaps are, and what solutions may exist. Get very clear on our strategies, establishing interlocal agreements, and defining protected classes.	HCRC Executive Committee *Discussion* **Action Item:** Fuller draft of annual report/work plan. **Persons Responsible:** CR Team **Deadline:** By Next Meeting, 11/17/26
7:25 (30 min)	**Break Rooms – WE DID NOT DO THIS. HCRC members discussed as a large group.** - Coordinate schedules to complete assigned tasks in pairs or trios	HCRC Members *Discussion*
7:55 (5 min)	**Adjourn** - Other report outs: Scarleth suggests we consider the logistics for November and December meetings. Commissioner Sawyer suggests we have in-person meetings since we will have Executive Team guests. Majority of commissioners agree.	HCRC Co-Chairs Karls *Administrative* **Action Item:** Send Scarleth suggestions for potential

	Commissioner Sanchez-Mexicano suggests that the White Center Hub could be good. - Confirm action items/next steps **Adjourned at 7:53pm.**	locations for November and December meetings. **Persons Responsible:** All Commissioners. **Due date:** Friday, Nov 23rd.

King County
Office of the Executive

Human & Civil Rights Commission (HCRC)

Tuesday, October 20th, 2026 Public Meeting

Operational Updates



Staff Liaison: Scarleth Lever Ortiz/Sandra Gallagher

Last update: 10/20/26

King County
Office of the Executive

Agenda



HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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Scarleth Lever Ortiz

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Position 7: Mona Jaber	Commissioner
Position 8: Steven Sawyer	Commissioner
Position 9: Daisy Wong	**Co-Chair**
Position 10: Vanessa Sanchez-Mexicano	Commissioner
Position 11: Vacant	Vacant

Commissioner Jaber resigned position on Oct 15, 2026

TIME	ITEM	PRESENTER & ACTION
6:00 PM (3 mins)	**Call to Order**	HCRC Co-Chairs Karls *Administrative*
6:03 PM (3 mins)	**Public Comments**	HCRC Co-Chair Karls *Administrative*
6:06 PM (3 mins)	**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes** - September 26, 2026	HCRC Co-Chairs Karls *Action Item*

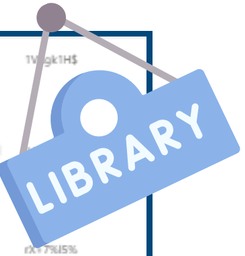
6:09 PM
(10 mins)
	Civil Rights Team Updates
	- Study Sessions
	- Commissioner Appointments Timeline
	- 2026-2027 Annual Report Timeline
	  ○ Key Milestones
	  ○ January Executive Leadership Team Briefing
	  ○ Final Draft Review
	  ○ Transmittal
	- 2026-2027 Annual Report Draft
	  ○ Outline
	  ○ HCRC Changes to the Powers & Duties Recommendations | Methodology Overview
		Scarleth Lever Ortiz
		Administrative

6:19 PM (45 min)	**HCRC Retreat Recap & Next Steps** - Review addendum - Confirm preferred scenario to draft recommendations - Confirm engagement strategy & timeline	HCRC Executive Committee *Discussion*
7:05 (5 min)	**Break**	**Break**
7:10 (15 min)	***Fall/Winter Work Plan*** - Finalize action items, roles, responsibilities	HCRC Executive Committee *Discussion*
7:25 (30 min)	**Break Rooms** - Coordinate schedules to complete assigned tasks in pairs or trios	HCRC Members *Discussion*
7:55 (5 min)	**Adjourn** - Other report outs - Confirm action items/next steps	HCRC Co-Chairs Karls *Administrative*

HCRC Study Sessions

July 2026 - October 2026





20

30-min virtual sessions
totaling 10 hours of learning

[● REC]

CLICK HERE

100%
completed

HCRC Key Milestones Timeline



Tue 8/18/26
HCRC Public Meeting

Sat 9/22/26
Public Meeting/Retreat

Conversations w/CM, Executive, Chief Performance & Accountability Officer

Tue 11/17/26
Public Meeting

Fri 1/15/17
Executive Leadership Team Briefing

Feb 2/16/27
Public Meeting

Apr 4/20/27
Public Meeting

SUBMIT

Annual Reported Transmitted

Wed 9/2/26
Law & Justice Committee Hybrid Briefing

Tue 10/20/26
Public Meeting

New appointments confirmed by Council

+ 30-day wait period

Tue 12/15/26
Public Meeting

New Appointees Onboarded

Tue 1/19/27
Public Meeting

Mar 1/23/27
Public Meeting

Annual Reported Routed for Transmittal

Annual Report + CPD Addendum



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Scenario B – Independent Executive Branch Office 4

Scenario C – Reduced Scope Advisory Model 5

Scenario D – No Structural Change (Status Quo) 5

Protected Classes & Interlocal Agreements (Structure-Neutral Work) 5

DRAFT

CLICK HERE

I. 2026 HCRC Results

Initial draft will be based on meeting notes from March – September. Staff will route to HCRC for review once completed.

II. 2027 Work Plan

Initial draft will be based on outcomes from Oct, Nov, Dec meetings. Staff will route to HCRC for review once completed.

III. Recommendations for Changes to Powers and Duties

HCRC will review methodology & scenarios during the 10/20 meeting, and identify Commissioners interested in drafting recommendation sections based on final "recommended scenario".

WORK IN PROGRESS

Retreat Recap

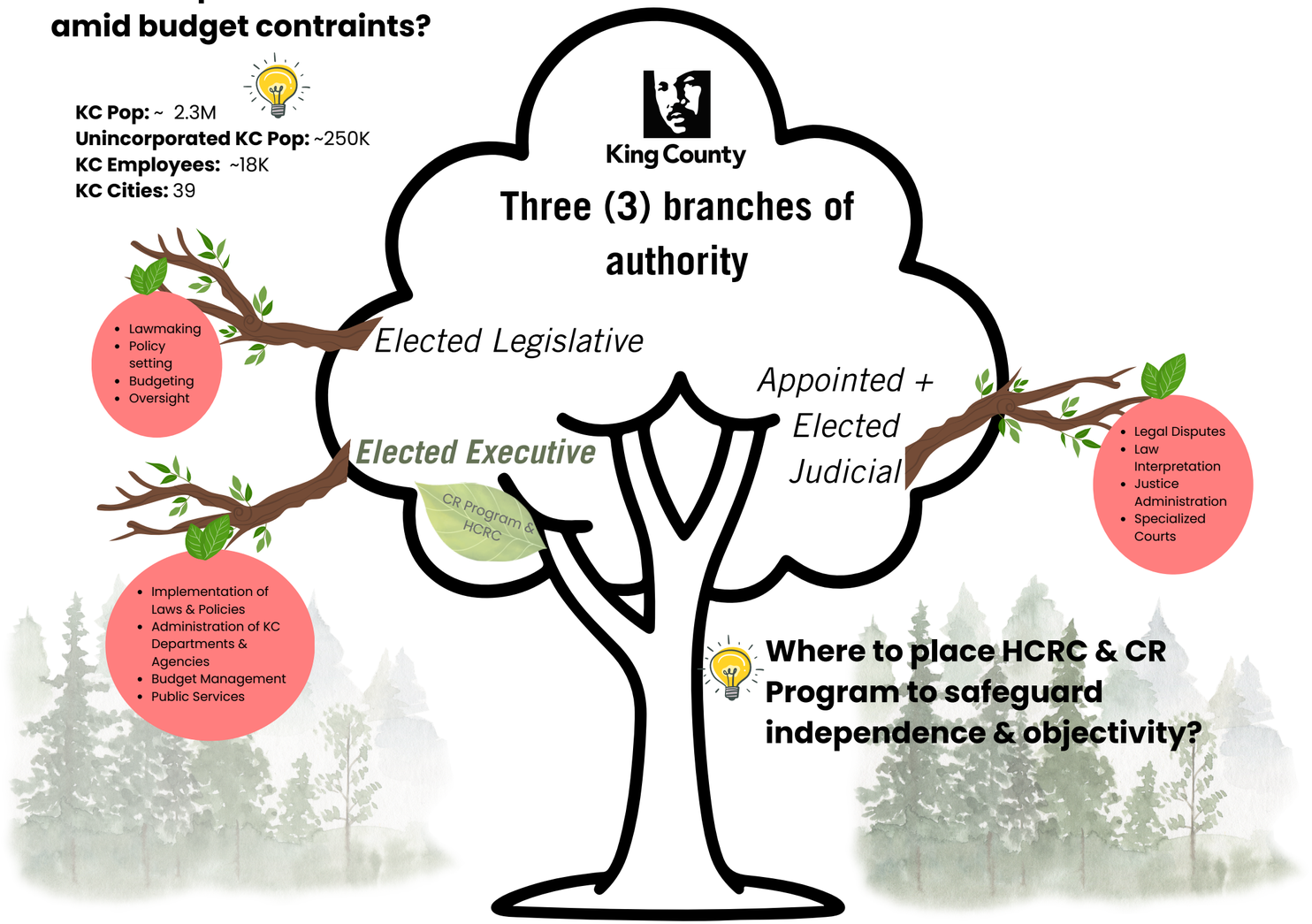


Funding	Staffing	Intangibles
1. Consulting, contracting 2. Events (space, food) 3. Data collection 4. Accessibility & accommodations (childcare, transportation, technology) 5. Professional training, continuing education (engagement in national & international forums for staff & commissioners) 6. Community expertise (stipends) 7. Multilingual/multicultural outreach & engagement & education	1. Executive Director 2. Administrative Assistant 3. Policy Adivsors & Analysts 4. Communications Specialist 5. Investigators 6. Community Engagement Specialists 7. Data Analysts 8. Childcare Provider	1. Cultural competency, skills & expertise 2. Community Relationship building (community members community-based organizations) 3. Relationships with elected officials & policy makers 4. Inclusive (human-centered design) 5. Safety & trust, commitment to follow-through 6. Independence to mitigate conflicts of interest
Parking Lot	• Clarifying or expanding the scope of power of the commission (hospitals, schools, prison system/DAJD)	• Regional convener & engage with cities towards interlocal agreements



How to expand services amid budget contraints?

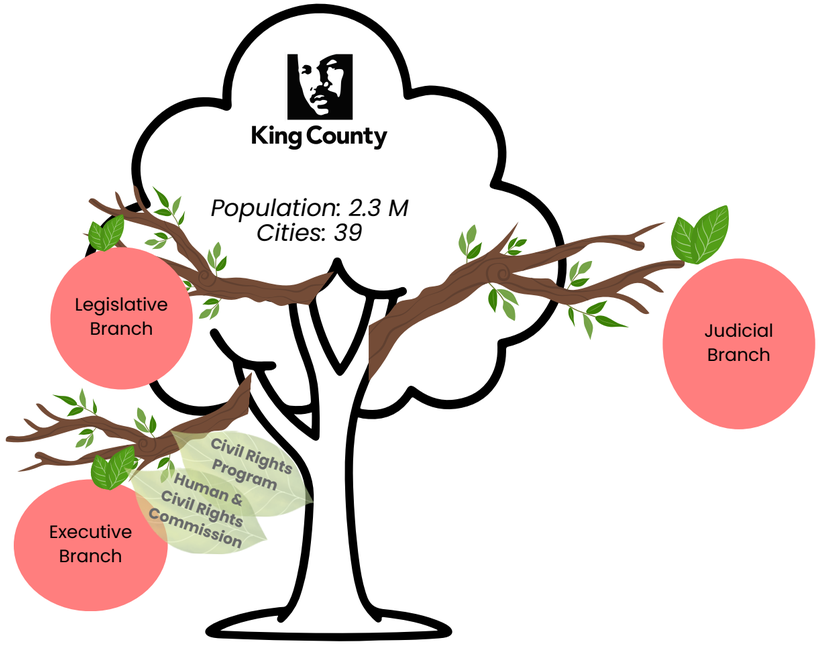
KC Pop: ~ 2.3M
Unincorporated KC Pop: ~250K
KC Employees: ~18K
KC Cities: 39



Methodology | Scenario Planning



Powers & Duties Recommendation



HCRC & CR as an Independent Team in the Legislative Branch (Models: OLEO, Ombuds Office, new Inspector General)

HCRC & CR as an Independent Team in the Executive Branch Team

A **B**

Scenario Planning

C **D**

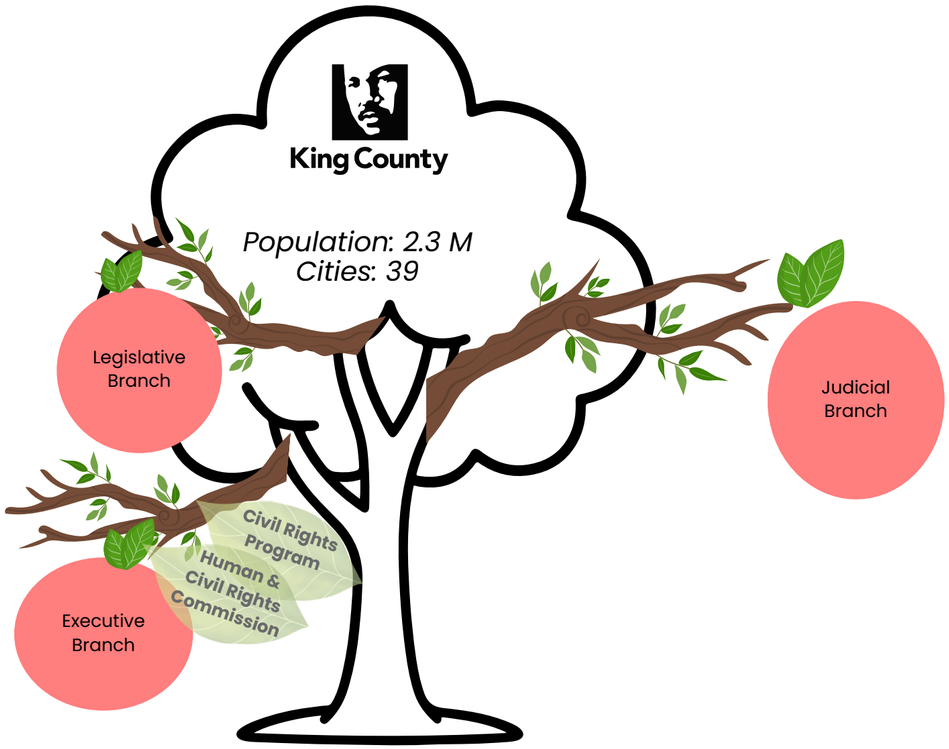
CR team in the executive branch supporting HCRC as an advisory body with a reduced scope

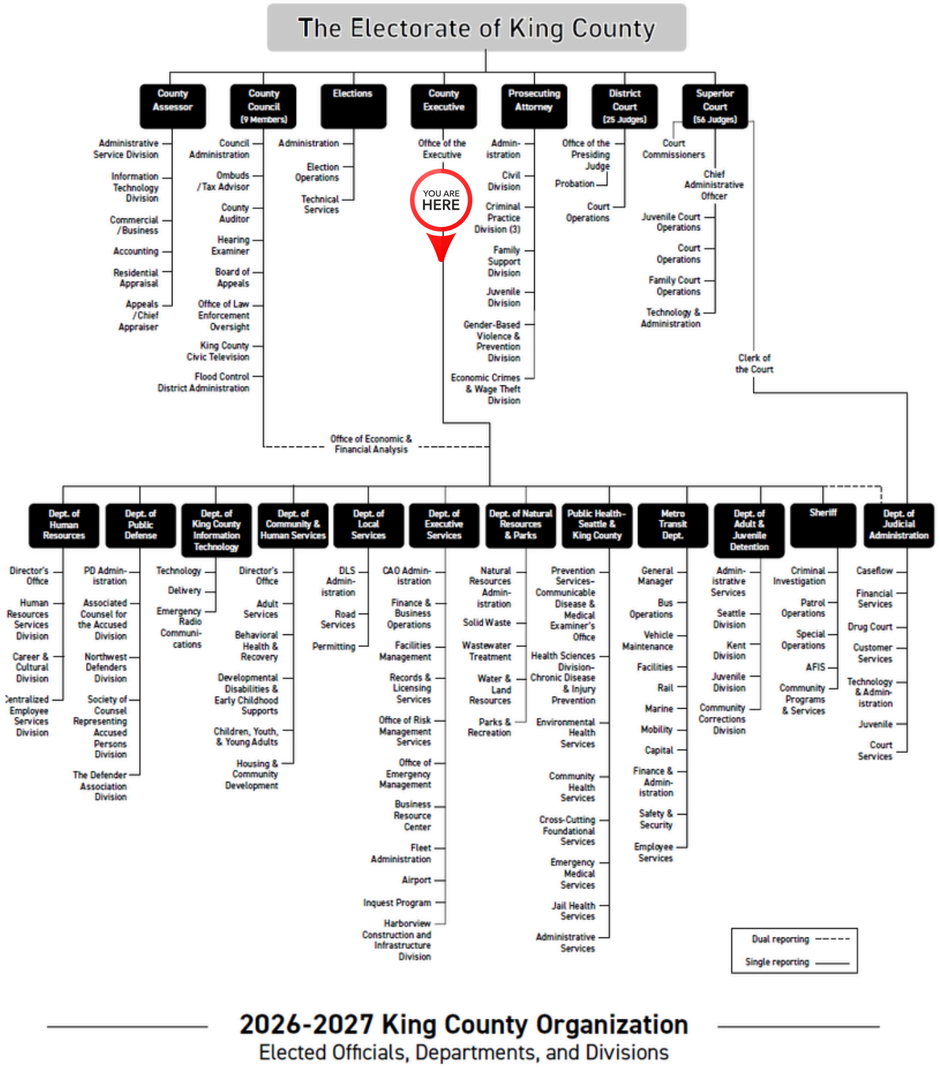
No change. CR team as a function of Executive Office supporting HCRC

Methodology | Scenario Planning



Placement, Independece & Objectivity





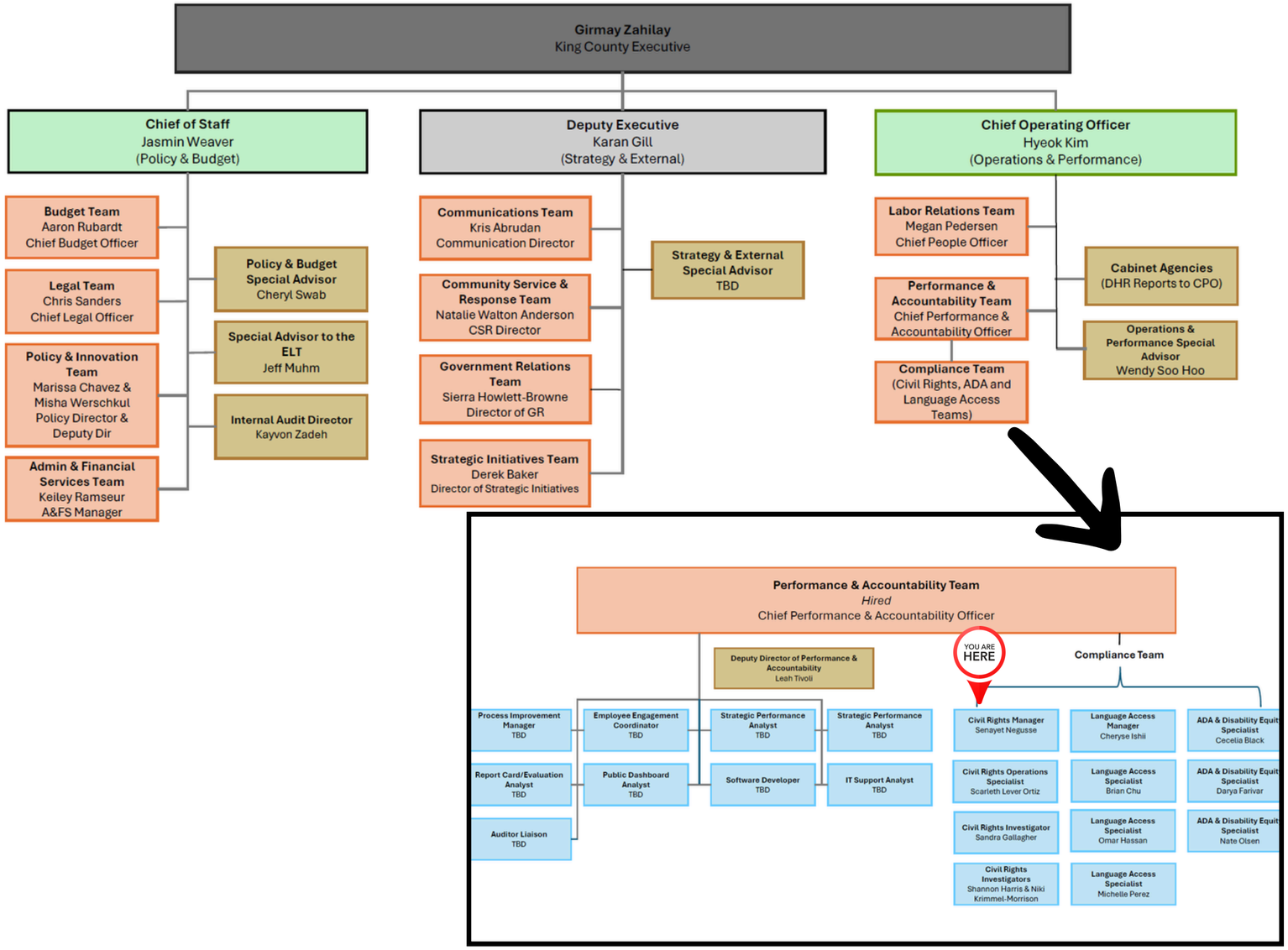
2026-2027 King County Organization
Elected Officials, Departments, and Divisions

October 2026

Methodology | Scenario Planning



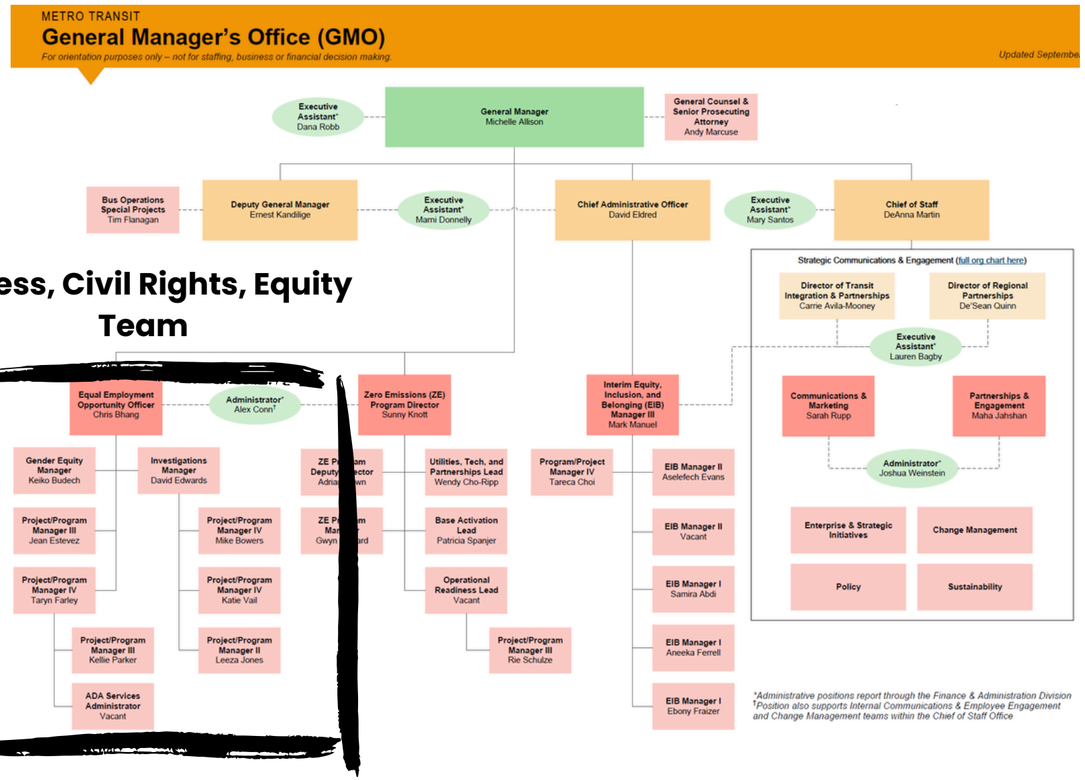
Executive Office as of 8/2026



Methodology | Scenario Planning



Executive Branch: Metro's ACE Team as of 9/2026



Access, Civil Rights, Equity Team

Legislative Branch: OLEO Team as of 8/2026

Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO) Staff

Our Team


Tamer Abouzeid, *Director*


Liz Dop, *Operations Manager*


Simrit Hans, *Policy Analyst*


Lea Hunter, *Senior Policy Analyst*


Katy Kirschner, *Deputy Director*


Megan Kraft, *Investigations Analyst*


Ryan McPhail, *Investigations Monitor*


Kate Miller, *Investigations Analyst*


Vanya Nanda, *Community Engagement Specialist*


Rick Powell, *Investigations Analyst*


Jamie Ridgway, *Investigations Analyst*


Jamie Tugenberg, *Community Engagement Manager*


Molly Webster, *Policy Analyst*

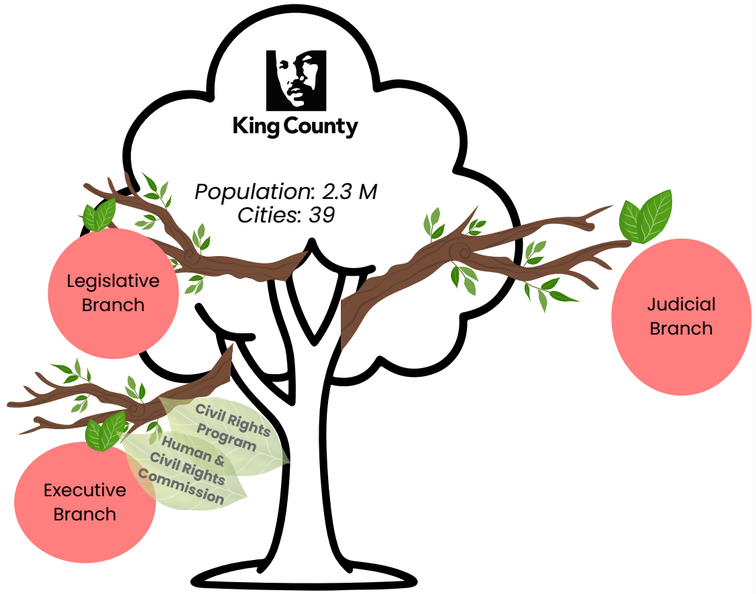

Sophie Ziliak, *Data Administrator/ Analyst & Special Projects Administrator*

Methodology | Jurisdiction



Intergovernmental Agreements

Protected Classes - No Action at this juncture





Unincorporated KC

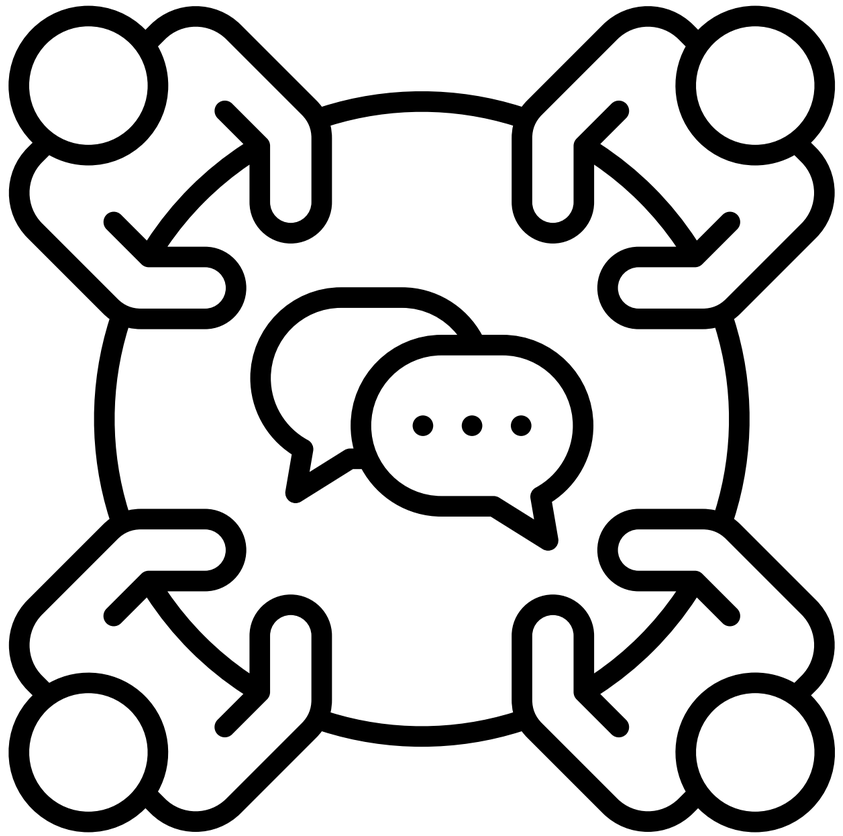
~ 250K residents
~18K KC employees

HCRC Discussion





- Retreat Recap
- Preferred Scenario
- Engagement Strategy

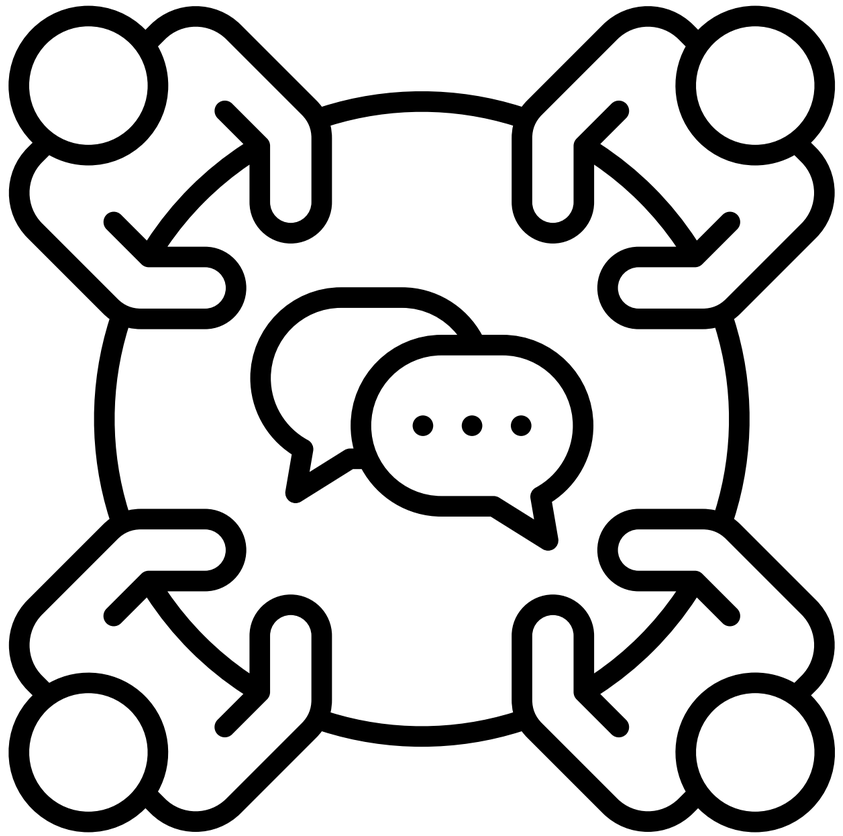


Fall/Winter Work Plan





- Action Items
- Roles/Responsibilities to complete deriverables



Closing Comments





- Report Outs
- Confirm Action Items
- Adjourn

