



Capital Projects Oversight: 2024 Biennial Report

IMPROVING CAPITAL PROJECTS PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Capital Projects Oversight Program provides independent oversight of King County's capital construction efforts. The program promotes accountability and improved performance of capital projects and programs, with a focus on high-risk projects, and provides timely and useful information to Councilmembers and other county decision-makers. All program costs are funded through the Capital Improvement Program budget.

Capital Projects Oversight in 2022 and 2023

In 2022 and 2023, the Capital Projects Oversight Program initiated two audits to identify capital project management improvements that will help King County achieve its goals of a zero-emission bus fleet and restored habitat access for salmon. In our performance audit of King County Metro Transit's capital program, we recommended steps to address common causes of schedule delays, estimate accurate project timelines, and focus resources on high priority projects. Our audit of the Fish Passage Restoration Program, published in March 2024, examined the program that removes County-owned barriers in local streams to restore salmon access to essential spawning habitat. We identified ways the program could increase its impact and improve collaboration with local tribes, several of which have treaty-protected fishing rights.

County agencies concurred with both audits' recommendations and have already begun implementing improvements.

As part of our ongoing oversight of the County's highest risk capital projects and programs, we continued to monitor the status and risks to the Regional Wastewater Services Plan update, capital improvements to the Harborview Medical Center campus, the Northeast Recycling and Transfer Station project, and the Permanent Support Facilities project at Cedar Hills Landfill.

The Capital Projects Oversight Program also continued to collaborate with the King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget to facilitate the risk scoring of current capital projects, and we worked together to streamline the process agencies follow to submit their data for the annual risk scoring process.

Key results



Improved schedule estimates and reduced risks on Metro Transit IT projects



A more transparent and verifiable approach to setting the County's sewage treatment capacity charge



Improved accuracy of county sewer rate forecasting



More proactive risk mitigation and reduced construction costs on Solid Waste Division's permanent support facilities project

77%

Action toward implementation

TOOK ACTION

Following up on our recommendations increases transparency and accountability and positive change. In the past two years, we followed up on 22 audit recommendations. We track recommendations until they are complete.



Publications

During this two-year period, our office conducted two capital projects audits and three oversight reports. We also followed up on recommendations from five projects. All are available on the on the [King County Auditor's website](#).

Audit reports

- *Metro Transit: Strengthening Data, Communication, and Continuous Improvement Processes Could Help Reduce Project Delays*
- *Fish Passage Restoration: Opportunities to Increase Impact, Transparency, and Collaboration*

Oversight reports

- *Solid Waste Division Permanent Support Facilities: Unaddressed Risks Could Delay Project Delivery and Increase Costs*
- 2022 Auditor Recommendations on Project Risk Monitoring
- 2023 Auditor Recommendations on Project Risk Monitoring

Follow-up reports

- Cedar Hills Regional Landfill Permanent Support Facilities
- Wastewater Capacity Charge: Unclear Whether Growth is Paying for Growth
- Utility Long-Term Rate Forecasts Audit
- Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network
- Courthouse Revitalization Audit

2022-2024 audit team

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