DATE: August 4, 2015

TO: Metropolitan King County Councilmembers

FROM: Kymber Waltmunson, King County Auditor

SUBJECT: Follow-up on Performance Audit of the King County 2012 Strategic Climate Action Plan

King County has made considerable improvements to the Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) through its 2015 update. The updated SCAP was recently submitted to the County Council and is awaiting adoption in fall 2015. Our evaluation of this update found that the County Executive provided an effective management structure for strategic planning and that the updated SCAP established explicit connections between actions and goals based on rigorous technical analysis. The update has also made substantive progress in strengthening community engagement and cost-effectiveness analysis of climate actions.

We will continue to follow up on the recommendations that are in progress as future SCAP reports and updates become available.

Of the five audit recommendations:

DONE	2	Recommendations have been fully implemented Auditor will no longer monitor
PROGRESS	3	Recommendations are in progress or partially implemented Auditor will continue to monitor
OPEN	0	Recommendations remain unresolved Auditor will continue to monitor

Please see below for details on the implementation status of these recommendations.

Implementation Status as of August 2015

#	Quick Status	Recommendation	Status Detail
1	PROGRESS	The County Executive should ensure that the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan update and its subsequent implementation and monitoring are informed by input from a broad representation of community stakeholders in King County.	King County has collaborated and engaged with a broad and diverse representation of community stakeholders in conducting the 2015 SCAP update. The County partnered with cities in the region through the King County and Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) to develop shared goals and commitments to address climate change. For specific input on strategies and priorities, the County consulted with subject matter experts, collected ideas through interactive online surveys, conducted small group discussions in multiple languages, and interviewed residents from rural unincorporated communities. To complete this recommendation, King County should seek input from a broad representation of community stakeholders for subsequent plan implementation and monitoring.
2	DONE	The 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan update team should establish explicit, and whenever possible, quantifiable connections between the overarching climate goals and specific strategies and actions.	The SCAP team met the intent of this recommendation by conducting technical analysis and logic modeling to understand requirements for achieving the overarching climate targets for communitywide and county operations greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction. The analysis was done on two scales. First, for communitywide GHG targets, the County collaborated with K4C and Climate Solutions to identify quantifiable local pathways to get the region on track to a 50% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030. The specific strategies for implementing those pathways will require continued collaboration. Second, for county operations, the SCAP team analyzed the GHG impact of meeting goal-area specific targets in the 2015 SCAP and showed that implementing the commitments in the 2015 SCAP would allow the County to meet its 25% reduction in GHG emissions by 2020.

#	Quick Status	Recommendation	Status Detail
3a	PROGRESS	The County Executive should ensure that: a. the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) update incorporates verifiable economic analysis of the cost-effectiveness of current and potential actions to reach SCAP targets	As part of the 2015 SCAP update, King County conducted a pilot cost effectiveness assessment. This was a good first step in implementing this recommendation, which will enhance decision-makers' and implementers' ability to understand and prioritize the most cost-effective means of reducing emissions. This recommendation will be closed as the county more fully applies cost-effectiveness analysis including an operational "cost of carbon" in future updates of the SCAP.
3b	PROGRESS	The County Executive should ensure that: b. subsequent Strategic Climate Action Plan annual reports provide explicit information about progress toward the overarching climate targets and goals	The County Executive has designed the 2015 SCAP to serve as both a strategic plan and an annual report. The updated plan includes progress reports on previously established targets. Subsequent annual reports will include information about progress toward achieving overarching climate targets and goals. We will follow up on this recommendation after the next annual publication.
4	DONE	The County Executive should ensure there is an effective management structure in place to conduct the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan update. Additionally, the County Executive should ensure this team has sufficient resources and support, to the extent possible, to complete the update.	The County Executive provided resources, support, and an effective management structure for the recent SCAP update. The Executive identified the 2015 SCAP update as a priority for 2015-2016 work plans and budget and ensured sufficient management support and resources to complete the update. Specifically, the Climate Leadership Team (CLT) scoped and identified resource needs and developed a cost-share approach to support climate work in 2015-2016, which included the SCAP update. The SCAP update team reported regularly to Cabinet meetings and Special Attention meetings of the Executive and Executive Leadership Team. In addition, the CLT appointed a project manager for the SCAP update and identified sponsors, leads, and teams for each of the goal areas in SCAP to support detailed drafting and development of specific recommendations.

Ben Thompson, Deputy County Auditor; Chelsea Lei, Management Auditor; and Elise Garvey, Management Auditor, conducted this review. Please contact Chelsea at 477-6523, or Elise at 477-1038 if you have any questions about the issues discussed in this letter.

cc: Dow Constantine, King County Executive
Fred Jarrett, Deputy County Executive
Rhonda Berry, Assistant Deputy County Executive
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
Ken Guy, Division Director, Department of Executive Services (DES), Finance & Business Operations Division (FBOD)
Eunjoo Greenhouse, Interim Deputy Director, DES, FBOD
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Michael Jacobson, Deputy Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
Megan Smith, Environmental Policy Advisor, King County Executive Office (KCEO)
Bob Burns, Deputy Director, DNRP
Grover Cleveland, Council Relations, Policy Unit, DNRP
Matt Kuharic, Senior Climate Change Specialist, Policy Unit, DNRP
Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council
Shelley Harrison, Administrative Staff Assistant, KCEO