



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**April 12, 2016**

**Motion 14609**

**Proposed No. 2016-0196.2**

**Sponsors McDermott**

1           A MOTION adopting the King County 2016 (FY 2017)  
2           Federal Legislative Agenda and King County 2016 (FY  
3           2017) Federal Policy Interests.

4           WHEREAS, the King County council and the King County executive have  
5 worked together through their respective government relations staff and desire to bring  
6 their positions on federal issues to the attention of the Second Session of the 114th  
7 Congress and the First Session of the 115th Congress, and

8           WHEREAS, King County desires to work cooperatively with other local  
9 governments and other organizations to achieve its 2016 (FY 2017) federal legislative  
10 goals, and

11           WHEREAS, King County is dependent on a strong fiscal partnership with the  
12 federal government for addressing transportation and infrastructure, public health,  
13 affordable housing and homelessness, homeland security, flood control and other  
14 important needs, and

15           WHEREAS, the King County council and the King County executive will  
16 continue to review congressional developments for possible revisions of King County's  
17 2016 (FY 2017) federal legislative goals;

18           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:


19           The King County council hereby adopts the King County 2016 (FY 2017) Federal  
20 Legislative Agenda, Attachment A to this motion, and King County 2016 (FY 2017)

- 21 Federal Policy Interests, Attachment B to this motion, as King County's highest priorities  
22 for federal action in the 2016 (FY 2017) congressional cycle.  
23

Motion 14609 was introduced on 3/28/2016 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 4/11/2016, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles and Ms. Balducci  
No: 0  
Excused: 1 - Mr. Gossett

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

**Attachments:** A. King County's 2016 Federal Agenda, B. King County 2016 (FY 2017) Federal Policy Interests

# Investing in **People** & Communities

## King County's 2016 Federal Agenda

King County is fortunate to have a strong economy fueled by innovation, and a skilled workforce that is drawing jobs and job-seekers to our region. However, structural obstacles and increased population growth have created challenges that leave the county in an ongoing struggle to address critical problems, including the county's aging roads and bridges and public health programs. We have worked to provide local solutions, like Best Starts for Kids, but King County must continue to have a strong partner in the federal government if we are to achieve the future we seek for all King County residents.

Our 2016 agenda includes protecting funding levels for critical programs and services, investing in infrastructure, partnering on solving the homelessness crisis, and advancing prevention and upstream solutions for both people and the environment.



### A Strong Investment

Our primary federal objective is to ensure continued, robust investment in King County and its 2.1 million residents. King County effectively leverages federal resources to foster vibrant and healthy communities, serve our most vulnerable, and facilitate innovation across the region. In the 2015/2016 budget, King County relied on \$300M in federal grant funding for transportation programs; \$90M in federal funding for public health programs; and \$70M in federal funding for developmental disability, substance abuse, mental health, and housing programs.

We would like to see these investment levels increased or maintained, and in exchange we are committed to achieving continued positive outcomes as a return on that investment.



### Infrastructure for the Future

Investments in transportation, flood control infrastructure, and systems to ensure the clean-up and health of Puget Sound are needed to keep King County a thriving hub of economic development and healthy communities. King County appreciates assistance included in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, and now we must go beyond maintaining basic transportation levels.

Our rapidly growing economy calls for vastly expanded transit services; and population growth has increased demands on our 1,500 miles of county roads and 181 county bridges (57 are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete). Increased federal investments are needed to ensure people can continue to get to work, school, and back home safely, quickly, and affordably.



### Homelessness

More than 10,000 people are without permanent housing each night in King County, including 4,500 who are unsheltered, living in cars, tents and on the streets.

We need a multi-faceted federal partnership that addresses the immediate emergency, and makes homelessness rare, brief, and one-time. Our approach must include strategies around opioid addiction and substance abuse, mental health, traumatic life experiences, ability to work, and adjusting to life-altering changes, such as veterans returning home.



**King County**

## Mobility and Infrastructure

*King County seeks to partner with the federal government to maintain and expand infrastructure in the following ways:*

- Support dedicated funding for maintenance, repair and replacement of aging roads and deficient bridges.
- Protect businesses and people by expanding flood protection infrastructure. Develop clean water and habitat protection projects in coordination with the King County Flood Control District. Support the Flood Control District in securing Army Corps of Engineers cooperation on the Lower Green River Corridor Plan, including Programmatic Section 7 consultation.
- Increase funding for programs that help local governments fund and finance road, bridge, and transit projects, such as the TIGER and TIFIA programs.
- Improve failing Army Corps of Engineers infrastructure, including the Ballard Locks, Howard Hanson and Buckley Diversion Dams.
- Invest in regional efforts to realize the Eastside Rail Corridor's potential for innovation in mobility and land use.

## Addressing Homelessness

*Homelessness has reached crisis levels in King County, with thousands of individuals and hundreds of families spending each night on the streets. King County seeks to partner with the federal government on permanent solutions:*

- Support federal efforts to increase funding for combating opioid addiction, and invest in medication assisted treatment to transition people safely off heroin and prescription opiates.
- Prioritize increasing permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing resources to help communities address family, youth, chronic, and veteran homelessness.
- Fully fund the Tenant Based Rental Assistance and Homeless Assistance Grant programs.
- Increase funding for the Veterans Affairs Supported Housing Program by \$75 million and the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program by \$200 million.
- Increase CDBG and HOME funding by 20% in 2017, and restore CDBG to its 2001 level and HOME to its 2004 level by 2020.
- Approve Washington's Medicaid Transformation Waiver request.
- Increase intensive employment and education services to homeless individuals.

## Realizing King County Potential

*King County supports policies and investments that will create safe and sustainable communities, accessible justice systems, and equitable opportunities for all residents:*

- Develop approaches to reduce gun violence and programs to encourage safe storage of guns.
- Address laws that exacerbate disproportionality in the criminal justice system and improve post-prison opportunities.
- Support local governments in the continuing effort to enroll uninsured individuals in health insurance plans.
- Support federal programs and initiatives that address gender pay equity, paid family leave, immigration reform, and sex trafficking.
- Revise the federal Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion rule to allow Medicaid to be used to reimburse providers for evaluation and treatment of mental health and substance abuse care at facilities that are larger than 16 beds; and to exempt stays of up to 30 days.
- Align restrictive federal confidentiality rules specific to substance abuse treatment with the HIPAA and other related regulations, which will support our work to integrate behavioral and physical health care.
- Encourage responsible and innovative stewardship of King County watersheds, the Puget Sound, and our other natural resources like the lower Duwamish River.
- Clarify that rebates provided by utilities to private property owners for water efficiency and storm water related improvements are not subject to federal income tax.
- Designate the Mountains to Sound Greenway as a National Heritage Area.
- Request that federal decisions relating to coal and oil include complete lifecycle costs and benefits of mining, transport, and export, including economic, environmental, and health impacts.
- Adopt policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as outlined in the County's Strategic Climate Action Plan.
- Increase funding and incentives for renewable energy technology, and reallocate unspent Federal Qualified Energy Conservation Bond authorization to states that have fully distributed their allocations.



## KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON 2016 (FY2017) Federal Policy Interests

### **Conservation, Natural Resources and Habitat Protection and Restoration**

King County is committed to conservation and restoration efforts and the health of the Puget Sound. The County seeks federal funding for programs such as the ***Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF)*** to implement habitat protection and restoration projects. PCSRF is the cornerstone of funding for salmon recovery in Washington State and has supported more than 10,000 projects that have resulted in significant improvements in habitat condition and availability. We also support efforts to designate Puget Sound as a "Great Waterbody" to make it a formal Clean Water Act program through such legislation as the ***Puget Sound Recovery Act***.

We support investments in improvements to US Army Corps infrastructure, including the ***Hiram Chittenden Locks***, a critical passage for juvenile salmon and an essential navigation link between Puget Sound and Lake Washington, and the Howard Hanson and Buckley Diversion Dams. Finally, we support funding sources such as the ***Clean Water State Revolving Fund*** which helps protect our natural resources by investing in clean water infrastructure and continued federal funding for the ***Army Corp's Ecosystem Restoration Projects*** including the work underway on the Duwamish-Green Riverway.

King County is home to over 200,000 acres of protected forestland, over 14,000 acres of farmland and 26,000 acres of parks and open space. We strongly support funding for trail and open space acquisitions.

### **Climate Change and Energy**

Through adoption of the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP), King County has committed to work collaboratively with local, state, and federal partners to reduce greenhouse gasses and create opportunities to act on climate solutions that achieve social, economic and environmental benefits for King County residents. King County supports efforts to implement the SCAP, including development of renewable energy technology. In addition, the County supports federal decisions that include the complete lifecycle costs and benefits of ***coal and oil mining, transport and export***.

We support federal grants through the Department of Transportation, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency that provide for ***alternative fuel vehicle investments***. The County is working towards replacing our transit fleet with hybrid electric buses, developing additional electric-car charging infrastructure, and purchasing more alternative fuel vanpool fleet vehicles. We are committed to reducing greenhouse gasses from County fleets; hybrid buses now comprise 50 percent of our bus fleet. Further, we support programs that incentivize transit use by our citizens, including the ***tax credit for employer-provided transit passes*** and the reauthorization of the ***Commuter Trip Reduction program***.

### **Economic Development**

We encourage federal efforts to partner with local governments and provide them with tools needed to build strong, diverse and sustainable economies. We encourage federal support to help develop economic strategies

For additional information, please contact:  
Rachel Smith 206-790-9168  
Mac Nicholson 206-477-7908

to retain existing businesses and strategically recruit new ones in key industrial clusters in which the region has a competitive advantage.

### **Emergency Management and Flood Hazard Reduction**

King County supports integrated approaches to major river flood hazard reduction, including development of regional standards for levee maintenance that both protect public safety and meet state and federal requirements for protecting listed species and maintaining levees. King County and its partners are working towards completion of the **System Wide Improvement Framework (SWIF)** in the Green River Valley and support additional engagement from the federal agencies involved to provide regulatory certainty and seek support in securing Army Corps of Engineers cooperation on the Lower Green River Corridor Plan, including Programmatic Section 7 consultation. The County believes **revisions to the National Flood Insurance Program levee certification** program are necessary to reflect the true risk that remains even with the presence of a levee. King County supports **extending the exemption from income tax to state and local flood mitigation funds** to eliminate the current disincentive for homeowners to elevate their homes. Currently only funds from FEMA for home elevations are exempt from federal income tax.

### **Equity and Social Justice**

King County believes that every person has the right to live, work, learn, feel safe and play free from discrimination. We support legislation that prevents discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations and lending practices. We also support efforts to reduce and reverse disproportionate outcomes in the areas of race and social justice. The County is committed to reducing recidivism in our community and supports federal programs to that end. Further, we **support equal and fair pay for all** working people and specific efforts and actions to reduce gender pay disparity.

King County is home to thousands of immigrants whose work benefits our cities, county and state. We believe that **comprehensive immigration reform** will improve the safety and security of our nation and provide a clear path to citizenship for hard-working immigrants who already contribute to our communities and our economy.

### **Health Care and Support**

Opioid Abuse has reached a crisis stage in King County, and is a significant factor in the sharp rise in homelessness in our communities. We strongly support efforts to increase investments in programs that provide medication assisted treatment and expand their availability, expands the use of Suboxone, and provides additional training and support for health care providers.

We support policies that ensure our citizens receive timely care in an appropriate setting. We support repealing the exclusion of **Institutions for Mental Disease** from Medicaid reimbursement or revising the policy to allow for short-term stays of less than 30 days, and to allow for reimbursement at facilities with more than 16 beds. This change will increase access for patients who need short-term access to psychiatric or detoxification services.

The County also seeks to promote integration of care by **revising federal substance abuse privacy laws**, originally designed in 1972, to align more closely with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009.

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Mac Nicholson 206-477-7908

The County supports legislation to maintain **Medicaid coverage for inmates** who are otherwise eligible to receive Medicaid and other federal health benefits until they are convicted, sentenced and incarcerated. This will help us break the cycle of recidivism and reduce health disparities by providing and continuing coverage to a population of low-income adults with substantial physical, mental health and substance abuse needs.

King County develops and implements creative and effective strategies and programs that prevent the leading causes of poor health, ensure access to appropriate and quality physical and behavioral health services, and promote individual health and interventions to reduce health disparities. Supporting and expanding this work requires stable funding at the federal level for our public health, mental health and chemical dependency prevention and support infrastructure. Critical components of our system of regional public health include **preparedness funding, both from CDC and the Department of Homeland Security's Urban Areas Security Initiative and State Homeland Security program, CDC disease control and prevention, and Maternal Child Health Block Grants.**

King County is proud of its efforts to lead the Coverage is Here King County campaign. To date, more than 268,000 King County residents have enrolled in health insurance plans because of the **Affordable Care Act**. Additionally, the County supports the activities funded by **the Public Health and Prevention Fund**, which advances the overall health of King County residents.

We support steps that will reduce use of tobacco and tobacco by-products including cigars, and support **FDA authority to regulate all tobacco products**. Nicotine poisonings have sharply increased especially among children as e-cigarettes which deliver liquid nicotine have become more widely available. King County supports federal legislation such as the **Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act** that would require child resistant packaging on these products.

### **Homelessness and Housing**

King County and its regional partners including local governments and non-profits participate in All Home an effort to make homelessness brief, rare and one-time.

We support the many federal initiatives that provide services to maintaining housing stability, including **increasing funding for Section 8 Rental Assistance, McKinney Homeless Assistance grants, HOME, and Community Development Block Grants. We also support connecting County investments supporting veterans with the federal government's initiative to end homelessness for veterans. We support increasing investments in programs such as Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing allow the County to do that.**

Programs such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act provide critical funding to assist homeless youth to find employment and stability.

### **Human Services**

King County supports funding for human services programs that: help all children and youth grow and prosper socially and academically; offer paths to reduce or prevent involvement in the criminal justice system, crisis mental health and emergency medical systems; and provide a safety net of services and partnerships to support our most vulnerable residents. We further support initiatives that offer

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opportunities for independence, self-sufficiency and mobility for all residents, including those with developmental and other disabilities.

We believe children should have access to healthy and nutritious foods where they live, play and learn and support building on the successes of the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** and the **Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act** in the next reauthorization.

King County strongly supports funding for the newly reauthorized **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** which allows the County to operate WorkSource Renton, a one stop employment center, as well as programs serving youth and dislocated workers.

**The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** provides funds that allow the County to invest in projects serving low-income households, neighborhoods and communities including homelessness prevention, shelter diversion and other crucial needs. We strongly support restoring funding for CDBG to its 2001 level by 2020.

### Land Use and Built Environment

King County favors policies that support the integration of land use, transportation and public health through urban and suburban development standards, siting of hazardous land uses, transportation infrastructure, transit planning and building construction requirements. For example, King County supports efforts to invest in additional **green infrastructure**, using vegetation and natural processes to manage stormwater and combined sewer overflows.

### Law and Criminal Justice

King County supports a fair and accessible justice system that keeps people safe in their homes and communities. The County seeks resources to protect and support our children through tools like the **Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants** and **Child Support Enforcement Grants**. Further, the County supports continued funding for the **Medicaid Administrative Match Program** which allows the County to provide outreach and promote enrollment in Medicaid programs for court-involved youth and families.

To enhance public safety, we support changing federal policy to **allow banks to work with state authorized marijuana businesses**. Guidance from the Treasury Department last February has helped; however, we support legislative action that would add certainty for banks and legal marijuana businesses.

The County also supports efforts to ensure victims of crime receive the restitution due to them, through legislation such as the **Crime Victim Restitution and Court Fee Intercept Act**. The bill allows the Department of Treasury to intercept tax refunds to pay overdue court ordered fines, fees and victim restitution.

### Stormwater and Water Quality

We support revising **EPA's community affordability standards** to include a holistic view of implementation of the **Clean Water Act**, including evaluation of and prioritization of actions at a watershed and Puget Sound scale that allows local jurisdictions to achieve the greatest water quality improvements first.

In collaboration with our partners, we support an approach to the **Lower Duwamish Cleanup** that would enable high-priority clean-up actions to proceed and reduce human health risks as quickly as possible while

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minimizing construction impacts to local residents and businesses. Clean-up work should be subject to rigorous monitoring and adaptive management.

### Transportation

Robust, multimodal mobility is critical to economic growth and community livability in King County and the nation. With nearly 1,500 miles of paved roads, 51 miles of unpaved roads, and 181 bridges under County management, we have a diverse and complex mix of infrastructure needs to support our many communities. The County appreciates the passage of a multi-year surface transportation bill the FAST Act and supports funding at authorized levels. The federal government is a vital partner in our efforts to **preserve and maintain the aging local and regional roadway infrastructure**, replace transit busses and ferries and many other modalities that connect rural, suburban and urban communities.

In addition, the County supports a **change in Federal Highway Administration policy** that requires competitive bidding for all federally funded projects to allow the use of County maintenance crews. This would give the County the ability to conduct timely temporary and permanent repairs to transportation infrastructure damaged by storm events.

As the operator of one of the largest bus systems in the United States, King County strongly supports federal efforts to **fund public transportation improvements nationwide and to maintain existing transit mobility while growing both bus and light rail rapid transit systems**. We support innovative opportunities for transit-oriented development that serves a number of complementary goals, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, focusing density into urban areas, and providing for a range of affordability levels for County residents.

King County seeks federal support for the regional effort to design and develop key connections and compatible uses for the **Eastside Rail Corridor** which integrates economic development, transportation and utility needs.

We support legislation to reduce greenhouse gas levels caused by transportation, including legislation that gives transit vehicles priority in the design and operation of federal roads. So that we may replace our transit fleet with hybrid electric buses, develop electric car charging infrastructure and purchase alternative vanpool fleet vehicles, we support federal transportation programs that provide for those investments, such as **including local governments in the tax credit for purchase of electronic vehicles** and continuing the **subsidy of alternative fuel vehicles**.

The King County International Airport, or Boeing Field, is one of the busiest primary, non-hub airports in the nation. King County strongly supports **maintaining the FAA's Airport Improvement Program**, which provides funds for critical activities such as including a new Air Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) station, and resources for a new airport master plan.

### Waste Reduction and Recycling

We support development of holistic product education, stewardship, recycling and take-back programs for products for which improper disposal is likely to result in hazardous waste or water quality contamination, including pharmaceuticals and medicines, computers and other electronics, carpet and fluorescent lighting. We support resources to reduce and **regulate toxics in the environment**, as well as the ability to exercise local authority over toxics in alignment with other laws and standards.

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We support policies that would prohibit the export of electronic waste to developing nations that lack the capacity to recycle these products in an environmentally sound manner, such as the ***Responsible Electronics Recycling Act***. To reduce exposure of children, consumers, and workers to toxic chemicals used in consumer products and manufacturing processes, King County supports improved regulation of toxic chemicals and reform of the ***Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)***.

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