

II. Cultural Resources

Cultural resources make a significant contribution to the quality of life in King County. Arts and heritage organizations, public art and historic and archaeological properties contribute to the region's economic vitality, play an essential role in cultural tourism, and contribute significantly to the county's overall quality of life. As King County grows, the need to protect, support and enhance cultural opportunities and resources is essential in order to sustain livability.

King County plays an important role in supporting the region's cultural life.

4Culture, a County-chartered Public Development Authority serves as the county's cultural services agency. Created by the county as a county-chartered Public Development Authority, 4Culture has operational responsibility for advancing the work of the cultural community in King County by advocating for, supporting, promoting, and enhancing:

- arts;
- heritage;
- preservation; and
- public art.

4Culture's historic preservation program provides funding, advocacy, assistance and support in preserving and conserving the county's historical and archeological resources through projects and programs including: interpretation, community education and outreach, cultural tourism, and rehabilitation of historical resources. The King County Historic Preservation Program (HPP), housed in the County's Department of Parks and Natural Resources, also plays an important role ensuring that historic properties throughout King County are protected and enhanced.

King County government can lead by example through stewardship and wise management of its own cultural resources. Historic public buildings and facilities, such as bridges and roads, can be preserved and continue to be used; other historic resources can be converted to public use. As set by policy ED-106, found in Chapter 9, in order to enhance the region's quality of life and economic vitality, the county will engage in programs and projects to protect cultural resources and promote expanded cultural opportunities for the county's residents and visitors.

P-201 King County shall be a steward of cultural resources under its control. It shall identify and evaluate cultural resources, preserve public art works and significant historic properties, and interpret and provide public access to them whenever appropriate. County departments and divisions shall collaborate with the Historic Preservation Program to nominate eligible properties for landmark designation.

P-202 King County shall consider equity and social and environmental justice in its promotion and protection of cultural resources.

P-203 King County shall encourage preserving, reusing and recycling historic buildings in its facilities planning and other relevant actions.

A. Relationships

County residents need arts and heritage opportunities. These include both attendance-driven programs and projects, as well as more localized, community-orientated opportunities of hands-on participation and education. The county's cultural system is comprised of regional and local arts and heritage organizations, individuals and venues. It also involves relationships with both public and private entities to preserve the region's history, as well as to enhance placement of art in public places. As such, cultural resource management crosses jurisdictional boundaries and involves countless public and private entities and artists throughout the region. The range and complexity of cultural activity in the region requires

coordination and cooperation. King County, through its creation of 4Culture, provides this regional coordination and leadership.

While 4Culture is not a county department, the county and 4Culture maintain a unique cooperative relationship. Historically over 95% of 4Culture's budget has been funded by King County resources from either dedicated tax revenue or capital improvement project budgets. The council approves the executive's nominations for membership on 4Culture's board. Three councilmembers serve on 4Culture's board. The council annually receives briefings from 4Culture on its work program and to discuss plans for the coming year. Therefore, it is through 4Culture that King County maintains its regional role with regard to cultural resource management.

- P-204 King County shall support the retention and promotion of the region's cultural legacy, promote cultural education, and encourage the preservation and celebration of cultural diversity and creativity.**
- P-205 King County shall support and encourage development of regional cultural organizations, facilities, and services that address a countywide audience or are dedicated to unique and significant cultural themes or disciplines.**
- P-206 King County shall support and encourage community cultural organizations, facilities, and services to provide opportunities for local access and participation by all residents throughout the county.**
- P-207 King County shall encourage excellence and vitality in the arts by supporting opportunities for attendance at and participation in diverse arts and cultural activities throughout the county.**
- P-208 King County shall pursue its cultural resource goals by working with residents, property owners, cultural organizations, public agencies, tribes, schools and school districts, and others.**
- P-209 King County shall provide leadership in pursuing its cultural resource goals by actively advancing the protection, enhancement, and ongoing use of county owned and other cultural resources, and by promoting intergovernmental cooperation and partnerships for the preservation and use of cultural resources.**
- P-210 King County shall partner with cities to protect and enhance historic resources and public art located within city boundaries and annexation areas.**

B. Arts, Heritage and Public Art

The region's artistic environment parallels its natural features in variety and richness. Its arts organizations, artists and opportunities are widely known and valued for their diversity and excellence in music, theater, dance, literary activity, and visual arts.

Museums, historical societies, heritage groups, historians, archivists, folklorists and other heritage specialists enrich community life and provide rich cultural experiences for county residents and visitors. Without preservation and stewardship of local history by these groups, the county's rich history would be lost.

- P-211 King County shall support, preserve and enhance its heritage by encouraging opportunities for public attendance and participation in diverse heritage activities throughout the county.**

- P-212 The King County executive and the King County council shall regularly seek advice from 4Culture on programs, policies and regulations that support, enrich and increase access to the arts, public art and King County’s heritage.**

Public art means art for shared public space in King County, including King County buildings and infrastructure. King County's public art collection includes portable, permanently sited and architecturally integrated artworks that help define county buildings as cultural spaces. Public art also includes art installed or incorporated in places developed by others, but accessible to the public. Public art enhances community character and diversity, sparks imagination, and provides a direct cultural experience for county residents and visitors every day. For new or changing communities, public art is a powerful contributor to local character, sense of place and belonging. Public art can also help mitigate the adverse effects of new development.

- P-213 King County shall incorporate public art in its construction and mitigation projects, as well as its undertakings involving public-private partnerships, and development authorities that include public funds or resources or have publicly accessible components.**

- P-214 Maintenance and conservation shall be a consideration in the development and management of public art.**

C. Historic Preservation

Preservation of historic properties provides multiple benefits. Historic properties maintain a tangible connection with the past and contribute to community understanding, character, and diversity.

Preservation saves energy, conserves existing housing and commercial buildings, and retains historically significant open space. Historic properties also play a major role in attracting tourists.

The mission of the King County Historic Preservation Program (HPP), housed in the County's Department of Parks and Natural Resources, is to conserve existing historic housing, commercial buildings and other significant properties and foster heritage tourism throughout county. It provides technical and other assistance to cities lacking preservation programs. It also supports the work of the King County Landmarks Commission.

- P-215 The King County executive and the King County council shall regularly seek advice from the Landmarks Commission on programs, policies and regulations that support and enhance preservation and protection of significant historic properties.**

Many municipalities do not have sufficient resources to administer an historic preservation program. As a result, the history of the region is endangered. Comprehensive and coordinated protection of significant historic properties is necessary in order to ensure that King County’s history is preserved.

- P-216 King County shall administer a historic preservation program to identify, protect and enhance historic properties throughout the region.**

Historic preservation is an ongoing process that requires identification, evaluation, designation and protection of significant properties, and attention to long-term enhancement and interpretation. Historic properties are often destroyed through neglect. Regular maintenance and other management practices that protect historic properties are critical to long-term preservation. King County government can lead by example through stewardship and wise management of its own historic properties.

- P-217 King County shall acquire and preserve historic properties for use by county and other public agencies and shall give priority to occupying historic buildings whenever feasible.**

Review of development proposals and other actions affecting historic properties resources is necessary in order to eliminate or minimize adverse effects of development or changing land use. Archaeological sites are particularly sensitive and endangered because they are not visible and may be unexpectedly encountered. King County government can also protect historic properties through careful planning and review of its own undertakings, both directly and in partnerships with private parties and other agencies.

- P-218 King County shall establish comprehensive review and protection procedures for historic properties affected by public and private projects.**
- P-219 King County may condition public and private projects in order to protect historic properties. King County agencies shall coordinate with the Historic Preservation Program to provide consistent review and mitigation for their projects and undertakings throughout the county.**
- P-220 King County shall encourage land uses and development that retain and enhance significant historic properties and sustain historic community character. County building and zoning codes and other regulations and standards should provide flexibility to accommodate preservation and reuse of historic properties. Zoning actions should take into account the effects of zoning on historic properties.**
- P-221 King County shall maintain an inventory of historic properties in order to guide its historic preservation decision making.**

Preservation requires active support by governments and cooperation with property owners. Incentives such as tax reduction, revolving loans, transfer of development rights, expedited permitting, reduced permit fees, zoning flexibility, technical assistance and other measures can be used to encourage preservation. As set by policy ED-208, found in Chapter 9, the county shall assist businesses, property owners, and other jurisdictions in preserving and enhancing historic properties, including historic business districts, through a variety of incentives and economic development measures.