

2020 King County Comprehensive Plan Update
Amendment Concept – For inclusion in Public Hearing Notice

COUNCILMEMBER: Zahilay

Problem Statement/Issue: King County regularly completes land use redesignations and zoning reclassifications on properties in unincorporated King County. Changes to a property's land use designation and zoning classification to permit a greater intensity of allowed uses or allowed density carry the potential for displacement of residents because they provide a greater economic incentive for redevelopment of existing units. This redevelopment can result in displacement of existing residents, loss of affordable market rate units, and other equity impacts. The Councilmember is interested in requiring analysis of the equity impacts of such map amendments.

Property Information:

- N/A: This would apply countywide.

Background Information:

One of the six guiding principles of the King County Comprehensive Plan is Addressing Health, Equity and Social and Environmental Justice. The principle is mirrored in policy RP-205:

RP-205	Seek to reduce health inequities and proactively address issues of equity, social and environmental justice when evaluating and implementing its land use policies, programs and practices.
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In 2010, King County adopted Ordinance 16948, which established the "Fair and Just" principle in the County's strategic plan, and defined the "Determinants of Equity" – the social, economic, geographic, political and physical environment conditions that lead to a just and thriving society.

The King County Comprehensive Plan notes a "clear relationship" between land use decisions made at the county level and how equitable the communities of King County are, stating:

King County will identify and address the conditions at the root of disparities, engage communities to have a strong voice in shaping their future, and raise and sustain the visibility of Equity and Social Justice. The goal is to start by focusing on prevention and addressing the fundamental causes of the inequities in order to have a greater overall impact.

King County's land use authority covers unincorporated portions of King County. Several policies address equity in land use decision making for unincorporated King County, including the following:

U-201a	In all urban unincorporated areas, King County shall consider equity and social justice in its planning, project development, and service delivery approach.
H-124	King County shall work with partners to reduce and prevent displacement of very-low to moderate-income households from transit-oriented locations, to the extent possible; and shall strive to align affordable housing investments and transit investments in order to increase the quality of life of disinvested communities as measured by the Determinants of Equity.

King County's method of evaluating these impacts is an Equity Impact Review (EIR) tool, developed to "Ensure that equity impacts are rigorously and holistically considered and advanced in the design and

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implementation of the proposed action (plan/policy/program development, operations modification, capital programs/projects, etc.)."

The tool has five steps, to be guided by community priorities and informed by current equity conditions. The five steps are:

- Phase 1: Scope. Identify who will be affected.
- Phase 2: Assess equity and community context.
- Phase 3: Analysis and decision process.
- Phase 4: Implement.
- Phase 5: Ongoing learning.

For the 2020 update to the Comprehensive Plan, as required by the Scoping Motion, the Executive provided an equity impact analysis addressing the proposed changes. However, the process did not involve community engagement in all aspects of the Comprehensive Plan update. Additionally, the EIR tool was not used for the Skyway-West Hill Subarea Plan update until most outreach had already been completed.

The County may initiate land use redesignations and zoning reclassifications as part of a Comprehensive Plan update or subarea plan adoption. In addition to County-initiated changes, property owners can also make site-specific zone reclassification requests to allow additional residential density or development intensity. These site-specific zone reclassifications can carry the same displacement risk as County-initiated ones.

The King County Comprehensive Plan contains the following guidance on zoning policies generally and zone reclassifications specifically:

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| U-122a | King County shall work with partners to reduce and prevent displacement of very-low to moderate-income households from transit-oriented locations, to the extent possible; and shall strive to align affordable housing investments and transit investments in order to increase the quality of life of disinvested communities as measured by the Determinants of Equity. |
| U-125 | King County should support proposed zoning changes to increase density within the unincorporated urban area when consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and when the following conditions are present: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The development will be compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood;b. Urban public facilities and services are adequate, consistent with adopted levels of service and meet Growth Management Act concurrency |

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requirements, including King County transportation concurrency standards;

- c. The proposed density change will not increase unmitigated adverse impacts on environmentally critical areas, either on site or in the vicinity of the proposed development;
- d. The proposed density increase will be consistent with or contribute to achieving the goals and policies of this comprehensive plan, and subarea plan or subarea study, if applicable; or
- e. The development is within walking distance of transit corridors or transit activity centers, retail and commercial activities, and is accessible to parks and other recreation opportunities.

AMENDMENT CONCEPT: Amend the King County Comprehensive Plan and King County code to:

- 1. Require an equity impact analysis using the County's Equity Impact Review Tool as part of land use redesignation and zoning reclassification processes.