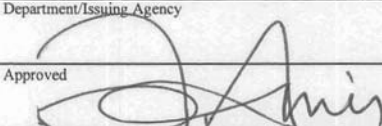





King County
Administrative Policies and Procedures

Executive Orders,
Policies & Procedures

Title Executive Order on Land Use Strategies for Global Warming Preparedness	Document Code No PUT 7-8 (AED)
Department/Issuing Agency 	Effective Date 4-1-06
Approved  3-22-06	

This Order requires that King County Departments employ coordinated strategies of land use to mitigate and adapt to global warming.

WHEREAS, this Order requires that King County Departments employ coordinated strategies of land use and transportation to mitigate regional contribution to global warming; and

WHEREAS, in its role as a regional government, King County has demonstrated significant corporate citizenship and public leadership in ways that are supportive of global warming adaptation and mitigation by employing critical policy levers of 1) land use, 2) public transit provision, 3) environmental management, and 4) economic development directed towards stimulating climate-friendly fuel and technology markets; and

WHEREAS, toward the goal of mitigating global warming, reduction of fossil fuel consumption resulting from vehicle miles traveled, especially vehicle miles traveled by single-occupancy automobiles, is important in that it is directly linked to reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, while scientific evaluations of forests and open space for “carbon sequestration” value are still being analyzed worldwide, it is generally accepted that preservation of open space, forests and agricultural land are important regional ecological assets helping to mitigate global warming; and

WHEREAS, work on land use policies in King County should be coordinated to achieve several primary goals related to global warming mitigation: reduction of fossil fuel consumption resulting from vehicle miles traveled; increase of public transit use, walking and biking as a percentage of average daily travel in King County; and “carbon sequestration,” which can be evaluated by measuring the acreage of protected important land resources that potentially sequester greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, King County’s nationally recognized Land Use, Transportation, Air Quality and Health (LUTAQH) study found that higher-density residential neighborhoods with mixed land uses and a connected street network are associated with: less automobile use, less air pollution, fewer greenhouse gas emissions and less energy consumption; and

WHEREAS, King County's LUTAQH study also found that toward this goal, the county must regionally coordinate and integrate its decisions in transportation, land use, environment and health to bring about approaches to community design that consider multiple environmental and health factors, including global warming mitigation; and

WHEREAS, keeping with the county's responsibility to fund and provide transit service to improve regional mobility and quality of life in the region, King County has already implemented land use-based transit policies and investments that mitigate the region's contribution to global warming by: reducing fossil fuel consumption resulting from public dependency on single-occupancy vehicles; increasing public transit ridership; and reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions, as recommended in the LUTAQH study; and

WHEREAS, the King County Metro Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 2002-2007 prioritizes areas for enhanced transit service when they encourage higher density development and pedestrian activity through adopted plans and policies, promote mixed-uses, establish minimum densities, and reduce parking requirements, all of which studies have shown are associated with fewer greenhouse gas emissions and less energy consumption; and

WHEREAS, the King County Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) has joined the King County Department of Transportation in implementing land use policies of "transit-oriented development" with the same aims of reducing public dependency on single-occupancy vehicles, reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating regional contribution to global warming; and

WHEREAS, King County has been working with local businesses for more than a decade on aggressive incentive-based programs aimed at getting commuters out of their cars and into alternative forms of transportation, with initiatives including: Commute Trip Reduction services, vanpool and ridesharing services, pass subsidy and FlexPass programs, tax benefits, Home Free Guarantee, Commuter Bonus, Rideshare Plus, and Flexcar support; and

WHEREAS, in October 2000, King County's Commute Partnerships Program was honored as a winner of the prestigious Innovations in American Government Award from the Ford Foundation and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, though still being analyzed worldwide, certain land resources such as extensive forestland are particularly important to mitigation of global warming as potential carbon "sinks" that absorb greenhouse gas emissions of carbon dioxide, and other land resources are important as potential ecological buffers for non-human species threatened by the environmental impacts of global warming; and

WHEREAS, the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) has invested in preservation of important areas within the Cedar River Watershed, Lake Washington basin and other climate-vulnerable areas;

WHEREAS, forest acres and watershed areas protected represent potential “carbon sequestration” assets in a future carbon market and protection of important areas in the face of global warming threats; and

WHEREAS, over the past ten years King County has protected over 125,000 acres of forestland, including the Snoqualmie Tree Farm, via acquisition, purchase of development rights, conservation easements and other means; and

WHEREAS, King County has protected 340,000 acres of forestry lands in the Forest Production District through land use regulations and policies, and is promoting healthy forests in rural areas through the King County Forestry Program and the Rural Economic Strategies; and

WHEREAS, policies that protect rural areas and conserve agricultural lands, forestry and open space are important to stopping urban sprawl and to fostering viable and climate-friendly networks of rural communities; and

WHEREAS, King County has protected approximately 12,800 acres of farmland through the purchase of development rights in accordance with the Farmland Preservation Program, and these areas are valuable as an important ecological buffer against global warming; and

WHEREAS, on farmlands, collecting and converting animal manure into energy will reduce emissions of methane, which is a potent greenhouse gas, and will potentially lead to additional energy production; and

WHEREAS, protecting farmland and supporting farmers economically can also keep our agricultural lands in food production, thereby increasing the percentage of local food consumed in the region, and in turn reducing the amount of energy needed to transport food long distances; and

WHEREAS, the county is undertaking additional study and review of how to apply the principles of LUTAQH within King County through LUTAQH Phase II, which is funded through a \$300,000 grant from the Federal Transit Administration, that will produce a ranking system and a list of projects within the county for implementation that will maximize long term transportation, global warming, air quality, and health benefits; and

WHEREAS, such land use strategies supportive of mitigating and adapting to global warming are consistent with the responsibilities of King County as a land use authority, and should be further funded based on their value as regional solutions to problems of global warming;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ron Sims, King County Executive do hereby order and direct:

- (1) King County to use land use and transportation plans, policies and regulations as primary means by which King County and the region can: increase efficiency of regional land use; reduce urban sprawl and vehicle miles of travel; keep rural areas rural; conserve natural resource lands; and protect environmentally sensitive areas, in ways that are coordinated, equitable and supportive of global warming mitigation and adaptation;
- (2) To achieve compliance with this Order, the following Actions, among others that will be developed over time, will be taken:
 - a) The county shall set as its goal the acquisition of land or development rights for an additional 100,000 acres of forestlands by 2010, as both a possible means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions via "carbon sequestration" and as a important asset against global warming impacts.
 - b) The county shall use coordinated land use and transit policies to work toward a goal of reducing fossil fuel-consumption resulting from vehicle miles traveled and encouraging transportation alternatives such biking and walking, as intermediate measures of global warming mitigation.
 - c) Concurrent with the above action, the county will design and implement a measurement program quantifying the progress of such coordinated strategies on increasing public transit ridership, biking and walking as a percentage of average King County daily travel.
 - d) The county will seek to quantify the positive impact of these protections in context of global warming adaptation and mitigation.
 - e) The county will seek to engage local and regional partners via public education and action on stewarding natural resources and critical non-human habitats for the sake of global warming preparedness and mitigation.
 - f) The county shall work with other governments and businesses to advance awareness and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
 - g) The county shall engage the public through a series of workshops, meetings, and other outreach tools.
 - h) The county shall take actions necessary to keep rural areas rural and to promote the establishment of a sustainable rural economy, such that rural and agricultural areas will be protected in perpetuity.
- (3) A detailed approach to carrying out these Actions and achieving compliance with this Order will be included in a land use element of a King County Global Warming Preparedness and Mitigation Plan, which is to be completed by January 1, 2007.
- (4) The land use element in the Global Warming Preparedness and Mitigation Plan will be consistent with all related plans and policies. The land use element will be updated at least every three years to ensure that the county is taking appropriate steps to achieve compliance with this Order. The county shall in its 2008 update to the Comprehensive Plan identify and evaluate policies that must be updated or changed to prepare for global warming adaptation and mitigation.


Division

Effective Date: Apr 1, 2006

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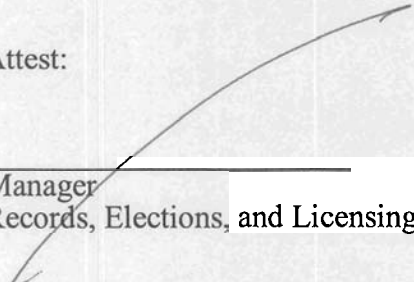
- (5) The county's overall compliance with this Order will be monitored, and an annual Global Warming Report will be issued to the Executive detailing progress on: reduction, capture and sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions in context of both county land use and transportation strategies and outside trends, understanding that the county is not solely responsible for achievement of that goal. The Report will also advise the Executive on planning and measures being undertaken to improve the county's strategies for mitigating regional contribution to global warming. A portion of this annual report will include: a survey of innovations and best practices in land use and transportation strategies worldwide; an evaluation of whether the county is demonstrating innovation and meeting those best practices; and an outline of opportunities for the County to ~~apply~~ further innovative approaches.

Dated this 22nd day of March, 2006.

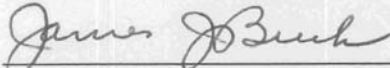


Ron Sims
King County Executive

Attest:



Manager
Records, Elections, and Licensing



Interim Director
Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division