



King County 2019 State Legislative Agenda



TOP PRIORITIES

- **FIX THE TAX SYSTEM**
- **PROTECT THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SAFETY NET**
- **ADDRESS AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS CRISIS**
- **INVEST IN CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**
- **INCREASE GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENCY**
- **IMPROVE THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

State and local tax system

- Reform tax policies to implement a more fair, sustainable, and reliable tax system for taxpayers, businesses, and local governments.
- Replace arbitrary local cap with a growth limit directly tied to inflation plus population growth.
- Eliminate non-supplant restriction on voter-approved levies.
- Increase access to existing property tax exemption for seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities by indexing the limit to county median income.
- Equitably reduce property taxes by adopting a homestead exemption tied to regional home values.

Housing

- Support recommendations of the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force and One Table to increase the supply of affordable housing by 17,600 homes in the next two years and address root causes of homelessness.
- Provide new tools to local government to help preserve and expand affordable housing, behavioral health facilities, and homelessness services, including allowing local bonding against state sales tax.
- Invest at least \$200 million in the Housing Trust Fund to increase affordable housing supply.
- Enact condominium liability reform that better balances homeowner protections and developer risk to increase access to affordable homeownership options.
- Reduce barriers to building more housing inside cities.

King County seeks to partner with Washington State in the following ways:

Health and human services

- Stabilize local foundational public health programs that protect Washington residents against the spread of disease.
- Invest in local behavioral health crisis systems, leverage state Medicaid plan to secure additional federal behavioral health funding, and increase community capacity for behavioral health.
- Provide additional resources to combat the opioid crisis and increase the availability of medication assisted treatment programs.
- Prohibit the sale of tobacco and vapor products to persons under the age of 21.
- Continue to ensure access to affordable health care coverage for low-income Washingtonians.
- Increase investments in Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) and Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD) programs to prevent new people from becoming homeless in King County.
- Support county-based, other regional, or statewide health coverage programs as a new approach to providing comprehensive health coverage to uninsured individuals across Washington State.

Mobility and infrastructure

- Address underfunded county regional and local road projects and provide countywide tools to fund county regional roads as the unincorporated population decreases over time.
- Increase investments to speed up local and regional transit, and connect bicycle and pedestrian trails, including the Eastside Rail Corridor and Wilburton Trestle.
- Preserve existing managed lane programs and allow excess toll revenue to be reinvested in transit service on the corridor.
- Invest in the Fall City sewer system to protect public health and the environment.
- Fund the Floodplains by Design grant program for critical floodplain management projects.
- Enhance dam safety and emergency planning and preparedness.
- Improve transit efficiency by allowing local jurisdictions to use traffic camera enforcement of transit-only lanes.
- Clarify and affirm that Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability funds can be used to construct facilities.
- Fully support the Public Works Trust Fund as a way to help local governments build critical infrastructure projects.

Energy and environment

- Support policies and investments to improve building energy efficiency, accelerate transition to clean electricity supplies and transportation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthen Washington's clean energy economy.
- Invest in retrofits of culverts and other infrastructure to restore fish passage and habitat.
- Support efforts for Orca and salmon recovery, including improving water quality and reducing toxins in wastewater effluent.

Good government

- Maintain public records transparency and consistency across all levels of government, and ensure that funding is provided commensurate to expenses incurred in complying with obligations of the Public Records Act.
- Increase cultural access program flexibility.
- Update All Payers Claim Database to deliver a better functioning database to provide greater transparency for health care costs.
- Focus on ensuring the fair treatment of underserved groups in public employment, education, and contracting.

Public safety system

- Allow earlier intervention by authorizing juvenile courts to use existing state diversion funding pre-adjudication.
- Enable convicted youth to stay in state juvenile rehabilitation facilities up to the age of 25.
- Support efforts to reduce youth interaction with the juvenile legal system.
- Ensure adequate resources to provide local criminal justice services, including state funding for indigent defense, increasing daily rates paid by the Department of Corrections, and adding academy classes for Corrections Officers and Sheriff Deputy training.
- Reduce disproportionality in the adult and juvenile criminal justice systems.

King County Government Relations Contacts

April Putney, Government Relations Director, Executive
206-519-9766, april.putney@kingcounty.gov

Mac Nicholson, Government Relations Director, Council
206-218-7510, mac.nicholson@kingcounty.gov