



The wastewater system is vital to our community because it collects and cleans the water that people send down the drain, and protects public health and our rivers, lakes, and Puget Sound.

Creating the Clean Water Plan:

An Exploratory Process

King County has tough decisions to make about the future of our regional wastewater system. We have a long and growing to-do list that could cost billions of dollars in the coming decades. In making these investments, we need to consider things like our aging system of pipes, pumps and tanks, population growth, regulations, equity, and climate change.

King County takes these decisions seriously, and is working on a Clean Water Plan to guide our investments. The process of making the plan will allow us to do a thoughtful and transparent evaluation, so we make the right investments at the right time.

An Exploratory Process

The Clean Water Plan is working on interrelated, complex problems. We are looking at new and different approaches to a whole range of decisions together, including the ones down the road. To find the best solutions, we need to explore as we go.

The Clean Water Plan will:

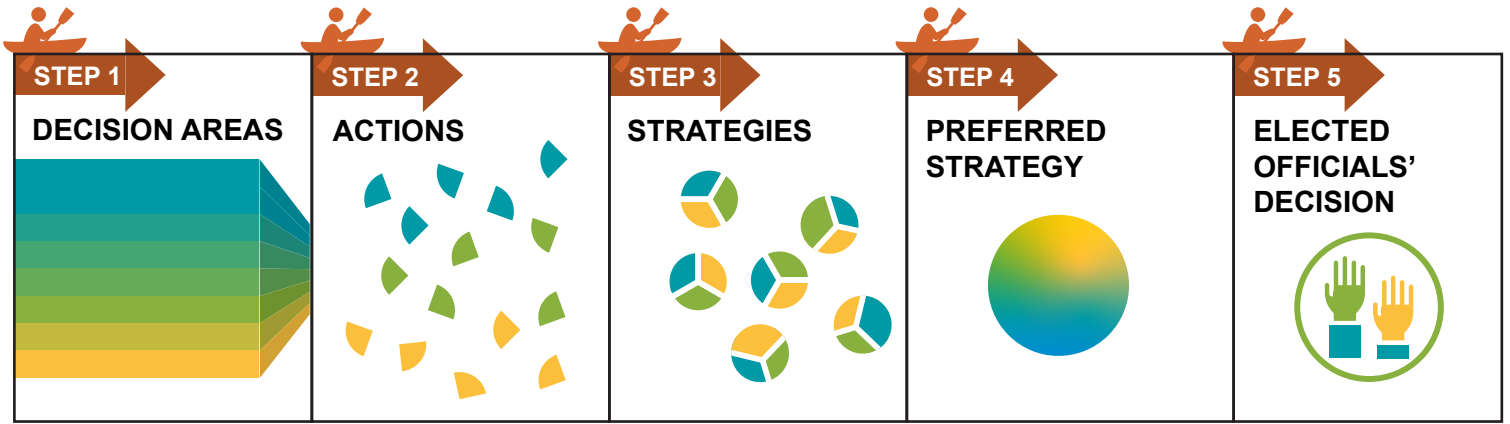
- Guide King County investments that protect our local waterways, the environment, and public health for decades to come
- Consider how to distribute the benefits and burdens of these investments equitably
- Determine how to use money from your sewer bills for the best water quality outcomes

CLEAN WATER PLAN DECISION AREAS

- Wastewater treatment plants capacity and level of treatment
- Capacity in sewer pipes and pumps
- Aging sewer systems, natural disasters and climate change
- Recycling resources from wastewater
- Stormwater and combined sewer overflows
- Preventing pollution at the source
- Pollution from historical activities



Here's how the process works:



STEP 1 → Navigate the Decision Areas

King County is navigating a number of different choices and opportunities as we develop an effective and equitable Clean Water Plan to address the seven Decision Areas (see page 1).

STEP 2 → Develop Actions for Each Decision Area

To build the Clean Water Plan, King County is exploring a range of Actions for each of the Decision Areas. We are exploring some Actions that would require significant changes in how we do things, and others that are consistent with past practices. As we move through the planning process, we are evolving and fine-tuning the Actions based on what we learn, and on what we hear from the community and County leaders. After evaluation, some Actions will become part of a strategy and others will not.

STEP 3 → Explore Strategies for the Issues

Understanding the individual Actions is a start. To create the Clean Water Plan, we need to look at how the Actions interact with each other over decades, and how they affect water quality. So the next step in the Clean Water Plan process is to put individual actions together into "Strategies."

King County is using technical analyses and community input to develop several Strategies. The Strategies show different, complete approaches to investing in the regional wastewater system and regional water quality. They allow us to see big-picture financial and water quality outcomes from a range of potential approaches. The range of Strategies allows the region to explore the choices and opportunities among different water quality, financial, and other outcomes.


STEP 4 → Assemble a Preferred Strategy


King County invites the community and partner organizations to explore the choices, opportunities, challenges, and outcomes that come with each Strategy. By exploring different Strategies before proposing one preferred Strategy, King County gives everyone a chance to say what they think about each approach. King County then uses what we learn from the technical analysis and the community to develop a single preferred Strategy and financial plan for the King County Executive and Council to consider.


STEP 5 → Decision-making

The King County Executive proposes a plan to the King County Council. The Council considers this plan in a series of public meetings, with time for public comment, and then decides on the final plan.

Some definitions:

 **DECISION AREAS** – Existing and emerging issues that the King County Wastewater Treatment Division needs to consider in order to make choices and to plan for the future. The Clean Water Plan focuses on seven Decision Areas.

 **ACTIONS** – A specific program or set of projects that addresses one of the Decision Areas. Actions are not standalone solutions, but building blocks that will be shaped and combined in different ways throughout the planning process.

 **STRATEGY** – A group of multiple Actions. Each Strategy reflects a complete investment approach the County could take for water quality and the regional wastewater system.

Clean Water Plan Public Engagement Timeline

Community input is a vital ingredient at every stage of the Clean Water Plan. As we move forward, we invite continued public input through workshops, surveys, public comments, and participation at every step of Plan development.



STEP 1



2018 - We need a plan: King County decides it needs a Clean Water Plan. The existing and emerging issues will require investments in the billions of dollars. The complex and interrelated issues cannot be solved individually. We need to explore new and different approaches along with traditional ones.

2019-2020 - Laying the foundation: King County documents existing conditions and issues that must be addressed and gathers community priorities.

2020 - Scoping: King County opens a State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) scoping comment period to gather formal public comments on what should be considered in the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Clean Water Plan.

STEP 2



2020-2021 - Actions: King County develops a range of options, called "Actions" that the County could take for each of the issues we face. People's priorities help shape the Actions and how they are evaluated. Community-based organizations provide input on equity considerations for the Plan. Local governments and partner agencies also have an opportunity to review and discuss the Actions and their potential impacts.

STEP 3



2021 - Strategies: King County groups the Actions into bundles, called "Strategies," to explore a range of water quality investment approaches. King County analyzes the environmental, social, and financial outcomes of each Strategy. Input from regional partners, community organizations, and ratepayers help shape the analyses.

2021 - Strategies exploration: King County shares Strategies with the public. Local governments, community organizations, ratepayers, and other interested parties provide input and preferences on the Strategies as part of the regional discussion. Community members and groups may also choose to make formal public comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

STEP 4



Preferred Strategy: The County uses technical analysis and public input to develop a single preferred Strategy and a recommended Clean Water Plan.

STEP 5



Elected officials vote: The King County Executive proposes a plan to the King County Council. The Council holds public meetings with time for public comment, before making a decision about whether to adopt the plan.



People shared these priorities for the Clean Water Plan

Since the 2018 decision to begin a clean water planning process, King County has been asking for and incorporating public input on community priorities and equity considerations.



Avoid sewer system failures



Prepare and fight climate change



Equity



Increase collaboration



Prioritize best water quality outcomes



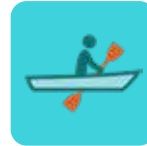
Maintain effective wastewater workforce



Keep rates affordable



Healthy habitats for fish and wildlife



Protect and restore rivers, lakes, and Puget Sound



Protect public health



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Stay up-to-date on the Clean Water Plan:

- We will continue to inform and consult with the community to shape the Plan, and to hear new and diverse perspectives.
- Visit our website for more information at www.kingcounty.gov/CleanWaterPlan.
- Sign up for our newsletter at https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAKING/subscriber/new?topic_id=WAKING_1275. You'll get all the latest, detailed information on engagement opportunities here.
- Email cleanwaterplan@kingcounty.gov.
- Share this topic sheet with others in your community; visit our website for an electronic or print version to share.



Alternate formats available upon request.

206-477-5525 or TTY: 711.

Clean Water Plan

Making the right investments at the right time



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division