



Downtown Office Space Consolidation

In an effort to reduce costs while preserving services and jobs, Executive Dow Constantine is proposing to consolidate downtown Seattle office space in the 2021-2022 budget, including closing the Administration Building and co-locating a number of customer-facing services at King Street Center.

Consolidating King County's footprint into fewer buildings will:

- Lower utility, building maintenance, and lease costs.
- Make it easier for residents to access a variety of County services.
- Reduce the County's carbon footprint.
- Support the desire of many employees to continue teleworking after the pandemic.

KEY CHANGES

Administration Building

King County will close the aging Administration Building to most operations in early 2021. The closure is part of a comprehensive effort to re-envision how King County can best use its downtown Seattle properties to provide regional services and will produce significant cost savings by lowering utility and building maintenance costs.

In 2021-2022, the closure will save \$5 million. In the longer term, the closure will allow the County to avoid \$40 million in deferred maintenance on the aging, inefficient building.

While details are still being worked out, the majority of staff currently working in the Administration Building will be relocated to King Street Center and the Chinook Building when it is safe for employees to return to work. Many will continue to telework in some capacity. The tunnels connecting the Goat Hill Garage, the Chinook Building, and the King County Courthouse will remain open, but the rest of the Administration Building will be closed.

The County is developing long-term plans for its downtown civic campus that will include recommendations for repurposing the property.

Customer Service Counters

To support our core value of focusing on the customer, King County will co-locate many of our customer-facing services in a storefront in King Street Center, where residents will be able to access services from elections, records, licensing, property tax assessment and payments, birth certificates, restaurant licenses, and the King County Council. This change will make it easier for residents to access services while providing cost savings on office space.

IMPACTS TO EMPLOYEES

One of the primary goals of consolidating space is to save jobs during a budget crisis, and that includes building maintenance, building security, and customer service jobs. Staffing savings will be realized primarily through attrition.



King County

2021-2022 Proposed Budget

Employees' positive response to working remotely makes the space consolidation possible. A survey of employees shows that many employees want to continue teleworking and that the overall experience of work has improved while working from home. Two-thirds of employees surveyed said they would like to continue teleworking at least three days a week after the pandemic.

The Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) has already begun to implement a long-term teleworking plan. Of its 1,800 employees, 800 will transition to permanent teleworking, allowing the department to vacate 2.5 floors in King Street Center. As part of the consolidation effort, there will be a reshuffling of space within King Street Center, which will include relocating staff from the Administration Building to space previously occupied by DNRP.

Planning is underway to allow some form of long-term teleworking for other office-based staff.