



SCA Public Issues Committee

AGENDA

February 11, 2015 – 7:00 PM

Renton City Hall

1. **Welcome and Roll Call** – Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, Chair 2 minutes
2. **Public Comment** – Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, Chair 10 minutes
3. [Approval of minutes – January 14, 2015 meeting](#) 2 minutes
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4. **Chair’s Report** – Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, Chair 5 minutes
5. **Executive Director’s Report** – Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director 10 minutes
6. [Support for Flexibility in Investment of Hotel/Motel Taxes for Affordable Housing](#) 15 minutes
POTENTIAL ACTION ITEM
Page 16
Doreen Booth, Policy Analyst
(5 minute update, 10 minute discussion)
7. [Committee to End Homelessness – Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2018](#) 15 minutes
POTENTIAL FUTURE ACTION ITEM
Page 21
Doreen Booth, Policy Analyst
(5 minute update, 10 minute discussion)
8. [Environmental Health Services – Farmers Markets and Temporary Events](#) 15 minutes
DISCUSSION ITEM
Page 43
Doreen Booth, Policy Analyst
(5 minute update, 10 minute discussion)
9. [2015 Legislative Session Update](#) 10 minutes
DISCUSSION ITEM
Page 81
Lyset Cadena, Senior Policy Analyst
(5 minute update, 5 minute discussion)

10. [2014 Membership Survey Results](#)

DISCUSSION ITEM

15 minutes

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Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director
(10 minute update, 5 minute discussion)

11. [SCA Potential Issues for 2015](#)

DISCUSSION ITEM

10 minutes

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Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director
(5 minute update, 5 minute discussion)

12. Informational Items

a. [Service Guidelines Task Force](#)

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b. [PSRC Regional Food Policy Council Blueprints](#)

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13. Upcoming Events

- a. SCA Training from Ann Macfarlane of Jurassic Parliament – Wednesday, February 11, 2015 – 6:00 PM – Renton City Hall
- b. AWC City Action Days – February 18 – 19, 2015 – Olympia
- c. SCA Networking Dinner – Wednesday, February 25, 2015 – 5:30 PM – Renton Pavilion Event Center
- d. SCA Caucus Chair Training – Wednesday, March 4, 2015 – 6:00-8:00 PM - Renton City Hall
- e. SCA Public Issues Committee Meeting – Wednesday, March 11, 2015 – 7:00 PM – Renton City Hall

14. For the Good of the Order

15. Adjourn

Did You Know?

Did you know that the King County Homeless population grew by 21 percent over 2014?

Several SCA members participated in the One Night Count of homeless people in King County on Friday, January 23, 2015. The King County Coalition on Homelessness organized more than 800 volunteers who fanned out across the county to count the number of men, women and children who were homeless and sleeping outdoors without shelter between 2:00 and 5:00 a.m. They counted people trying to survive in cars and tents, riding late night buses, or curled up in blankets under bridges or in doorways.

At least 3,772 men, women, and children were without shelter during the three hour street count. This number is an increase of 21% over the 3,123 people found without shelter last year. This number is always assumed to be an undercount, because the coalition does not count everywhere, and because many people take great care not to be visible.

In 2014, volunteers counted a total of 3,117 unsheltered people on the streets, in parked cars or in other places. The 2014 One Night Count saw a 14% increase over the 2013 count.

To find out more about the One Night Count, go to:

[http://www.homelessinfo.org/what we do/one night count/2015 results.php](http://www.homelessinfo.org/what_we_do/one_night_count/2015_results.php)

Sound Cities Association

Mission

To provide leadership through advocacy, education, mutual support and networking to cities in King County as they act locally and partner regionally to create livable vital communities.

Vision

To be the most influential advocate for cities, effectively collaborating to create regional solutions.

Values

SCA aspires to create an environment that fosters mutual support, respect, trust, fairness and integrity for the greater good of the association and its membership.

SCA operates in a consistent, inclusive, and transparent manner that respects the diversity of our members and encourages open discussion and risk-taking.



SCA Public Issues Committee

DRAFT MINUTES

January 14, 2015 – 7:00 PM

Renton City Hall

1055 S Grady Way, Renton WA 98057

1. Welcome and Roll Call

PIC Chair Mayor Bernie Talmas, Woodinville, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. 27 cities had representation ([Attachment A](#)). Guests present included Matt Larson, Snoqualmie Mayor; Bill Peloza, Auburn Council; Lydia Assefa-Dawson, Federal Way Council; Don Gerend, Sammamish Council; Michael Hursh, City of Auburn; Rachel Bianchi, City of Tukwila; Kelly Rider, Housing Development Consortium.

2. Public Comment

Chair Talmas asked if any member of the public had any public comment. Seeing none, Chair Talmas closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

3. Approval of the December 10, 2014 Minutes

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Councilmember Bill Boyce, Kent, to approve the December 10, 2014 meeting minutes.

There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Chair's Report

Chair Talmas reported that SCA leadership met with the Executive and discussed the Youth and Children services levy. Chair Talmas stated that the Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network (PSERN) ordinance has been introduced and is before the King County Council Budget Committee. The total project cost is \$273 million and would be a \$0.07 per \$1,000 assessed property value. Chair Talmas noted that the Executive would like for the PSERN ordinance to be on the April ballot but it looks like August is more realistic. The Youth and Children Service levy would be on the November ballot.

Chair Talmas reported that the Executive had previously announced a plan to reduce the average daily population at the county jail as a cost saving measure. The average daily population is not projected to affect cities since it will only impact county inmates. The next couple of months will determine how this cap will be enforced. Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, clarified that the jail population cap would not impact misdemeanor cases for contracting cities but would impact felony cases. The City of Auburn has prepared a memo expressing concerns with this proposal, which was shared with the Executive. Dawson noted that the Executive has postponed implementation of the proposal based on concerns raised by cities and others, and has asked for city assistance in working with elected officials to find other efficiencies. Cities

agreed that the proposed “catch and release” program was a major concern for cities. They asked that a policy position on this matter be brought back to a future PIC meeting.

5. Executive Director’s Report

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, elaborated on the PSERN project.

Dawson reported that the King County lobbyist, Rachel Smith, joined in SCA’s meeting with the Executive earlier that day. Rachel reported that the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) and Washington Association of Counties (WSAC) are working hard on the 1% property tax cap issue as supported by SCA last month. She advised that a position on raising the 1% property tax should be broad, like the one adopted by SCA. Cities and counties in eastern Washington are now increasingly supportive of raising the 1% property tax cap.

Dawson reported that Senator Fain has expressed public support for a gas tax increase to fund transportation. Dawson mentioned that Representative Clibborn asked representatives to submit the transportation priorities for their regions and Representative Gregerson submitted the report from the October 31, 2014 SCA meeting on transportation priorities.

Dawson reported on the early learning forum, which was co-sponsored by SCA. Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie, attended on behalf of SCA and spoke eloquently about his personal experiences. Mayor Larson noted that there is compelling information about the importance of brain development among newborns that is linked to high school dropout rates, criminal issues and social services. He mentioned that the symposium was beneficial but that there was much work to be done on clarifying the scope of and source of funding for a children’s levy. Councilmember Janie Edelman, Black Diamond, noted that a representative from the White House was present at the early learning forum and the luncheon following the forum was beneficial.

Dawson noted the new appointee orientation taking place on January 28, 2015 and that this would be a topic covered on the agenda. She noted other attendees who would be presenting. Dawson reported that the caucus chair orientation would take place on February 4, 2015.

Dawson reported that the new policy analyst position has been posted.

6. Welcome New PIC Members and Introduction to PIC

Chair Talmas welcomed recurring and new PIC members and asked members to introduce themselves.

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, asked members to note any issues they would like PIC to tackle in 2015.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, noted the jail management plan. Members agreed this should come back to PIC next month.

Chair Talmas noted the youth action levy by the Executive. Dawson mentioned a possible pre-PIC workshop on this issue could be arranged, and members agreed.

Councilmember Nancy Tosta, Burien, mentioned the Regional Food Policy Council at PSRC. Tosta noted that SCA does not appoint to this committee but she represents the City of Burien and other cities and towns. The food policy council is working on their action plan, economic viability of food programs, and access to healthy foods and welcomes any input from cities on these issues. Dawson noted that Nancy Tosta serves on the King Conservation District which has a great nexus to the work on the food policy council.

Dawson stated that several Senators have sponsored a bill to bring ST3 forward. She noted this was an issue that has been raised by many cities and inquired as to whether members would like to see this come back to PIC. Councilmember Dini Duclos, Federal Way, noted Federal Way has many issues and concerns with Sound Transit. Dawson mentioned that the lack of representation on the Sound Transit board has been an issue of concern for many cities in the north and south.

Councilmember Bill Boyce, Kent, noted homelessness issues. Dawson noted Doreen Marchione wanted members to take a position on the four-year plan to end homelessness and the issue would possibly come back to PIC next month.

Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie, noted the early learning symposium and children's levy.

Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, noted that the Board of Health will be reviewing marijuana edibles since poison control has received many calls related to children ingesting edibles. Most of the edibles are coming from medical shops and not recreational shops. The county is looking at the issue and will act if the legislature fails to act.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, asked whether committees could present what they are doing so PIC gains a better idea of the issues.

7. 2015 PIC Meeting Schedule

Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, stated that this item is on the agenda in order to ensure that all members and the public are aware of SCA's meeting schedule, and to be as transparent as possible. Dawson passed out the 2015 Public Issues Committee Schedule and asked PIC members to respond to questions about meeting location and preferences.

Dawson asked about attendance on March 11, 2015 as it is the same date as the NLC Conference in Washington and attendance on November 11, 2015 as it is the same date as Veteran's Day. The November 11, 2015 PIC meeting could be moved to November 4 or November 12.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, moved, seconded by Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, to move the November 11, 2015 PIC meeting to November 12, 2015.

Discussion ensued: Deputy Mayor Nancy Tosta, Burien, noted that WRIA9 meets that day. Councilmember Janie Edelman, Black Diamond, noted that the Black Diamond council meets that day. Councilmember Kruller mentioned she would be sending an alternate to the March

11, 2015 meeting and others could possibly do the same for potential November conflicts as no date would be perfect for everyone.

The motion to change the date of the November meeting to November 12 passed.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Councilmember Ross Loudenback, North Bend, to adopt resolution 2015-1 Public Issues Committee Schedule as amended.

The motion passed unanimously.

Members next discussed whether to rotate the location of meetings in 2015. Chair Talmas mentioned that PIC would be held in Renton unless members picked an alternate location. Dawson noted that some cities in the south end had requested that a meeting be held further south, rather than just having one meeting in the north, as had occurred in past years.

Councilmember Dini Duclos, Federal Way, noted that many PIC members may not be able to attend if the meeting location is rotated. She suggested that perhaps PIC should simply hold all its meetings in Renton, which is a central location.

Councilmember Toby Nixon, Kirkland, mentioned that Kirkland City hall will be under construction due to remodeling but the PIC meeting could be hosted at the Kirkland Justice Center if there was a desire to hold a meeting in an alternate location.

The PIC agreed to hold meetings in Renton for 2015, unless amended by a motion at a subsequent meeting.

8. EMAC and KCD Advisory Committee Appointments

Redmond Council President Hank Margeson, PIC Nominating Committee Chair, reported that the PIC Nominating Committee met prior to the PIC meeting to review and discuss the nominees for vacancies on the Emergency Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) and the King Conservation District (KCD) Advisory Committee. Chair Margeson continued that an appointee to each committee has stepped down.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, moved, seconded by Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, to appoint Councilmember Marianne Klaas, Clyde Hill, to the Emergency Management Advisory Committee, and to move Deputy Mayor Nancy Tosta, Burien, from alternate to member, and appoint Councilmember Erika Morgan, Black Diamond, as alternate to the King Conservation District Advisory Committee.

Chair Margeson mentioned that the number of outstanding applicants made it a hard decision and thanked Deanna Dawson, SCA Executive Director, and SCA staff for reaching out to members. He also thanked members for being interested in serving on committees. Deanna Dawson reiterated that there were a number of good candidates for the open seats and stated that Clyde Hill had its first member appointed to a committee. She noted that in terms of the

King Conservation District Advisory Committee, the appointment of Councilmember Morgan would result in representation from each of the 4 SCA caucuses.

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Talmas thanked the PIC Nominating Committee for their work on these appointments.

9. Support for Flexibility in Investment of Hotel/Motel Taxes for Affordable Housing

Chair Talmas reported that this item is being brought before the PIC for the first reading and it may be brought back to the next meeting of the PIC for action.

Lyset Cadena, SCA Senior Policy Analyst, reported that in 2011, the legislature set aside 37.5% of King County's lodging tax to be used for affordable workforce housing near transit once the debt on Seahawks stadium has been paid off in 2021. Future monies can only be used for affordable workforce housing and an additional 37.5% is set aside for arts and heritage and the remaining 25% is set aside for tourism. The proposal would extend King County's authority to allow the County to bond against a portion of future revenues set aside for affordable housing that will be received beginning in 2021. This would allow \$45 million in future revenues to be used beginning in 2015 to fund affordable housing. Zero coupon bonds would be issued to finance affordable housing. This would not impact future tourism or arts funding even if revenues were less than projected as the legislation limits use of the monies to 50% of projected revenues. Representative Springer is sponsoring legislation in the House – HB 1223 and Senator Miloscia is sponsoring legislation in the Senate – SB 5208. This was recommended by JRC and CEH members.

Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, stated that there is a shortage of affordable workforce housing in King County and there is a tremendous need for housing. Baker asked for the definition of transit. Staff responded that transit was defined very broadly and could include a variety of forms of transit.

Chair Talmas asked what would happen if revenues did not come in as anticipated. Kelly Rider, Housing Development Consortium staff, responded that only 50% of projected revenues would be bonded against.

Mayor Dave Hill, Algona, stated that Washington State has a tendency to bond against revenue sources and is concerned that in 20 years the revenue will not be available. He mentioned that this policy would allow spending of future money today without any guarantee that the money will be there in the future.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, questioned the notation in the staff memo that Tukwila was supportive of the policy. She was not aware of her city taking a position.

Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz, Mercer Island, noted Mercer Island has not reviewed the policy position and agreed with Mayor Dave Hill. He stated that this is very similar to the current issues with transportation not being able to fund new projects. This option cannot be the only

option to pay for affordable housing; local governments should be given additional revenue tools to pay for affordable housing.

Councilmember Dini Duclos, Federal Way, noted Federal Way has not reviewed the policy position and may have some concerns.

Councilmember Kingston Wall, Snoqualmie, on behalf of Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie, asked whether this is the same as LTAC funds.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, asked whether the Joint Recommendation Committee (JRC) had taken a position on this issue. Dawson answered that the Joint Recommendation Committee and the Committee to End Homelessness have included this issue as part of their legislative agenda. Councilmember Marts mentioned he would take this issue to the Issaquah council.

Dawson asked Rider if she could answer some of the questions.

Rider stated that King County is pursuing additional revenue streams for affordable housing. Housing prices in King County are increasing and affordable housing that can be built today will last 50 years. Rider noted that building now would result in savings since the cost of land near transit will only increase over time. The cost of bonding now is outweighed by the savings over the next 7 years. Homeless families cannot wait.

Dawson stated further information would be provided to PIC members.

Councilmember Toby Nixon, Kirkland, mentioned that he serves as chair of the lodging tax advisory committee. He stated that lodging tax funds are divided between cities and the county and the policy position will only impact the county portion of lodging taxes while leaving the cities portion intact.

Councilmember Barry Ladenburg, SeaTac, mentioned this issue would be going before the SeaTac council.

Councilmember Ross Loudonback, North Bend, asked how much would be available to rural communities. Rider answered that JRC has a process for how money is divided and this would follow the current process.

Chair Talmas asked whether money would be allocated to unincorporated areas of King County or cities. Rider answered that JRC allocates money to all areas of the county but it would still have to follow the current process at JRC. Baker also noted the competitive process for affordable housing revenue.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, stated that the money is currently being collected and will continue to be collected even after the stadium is paid off. The county is asking to bond against 50% of projected revenue over the next six-years. Margeson mentioned the pre-PIC workshop and the issue of homelessness. No new taxes will be authorized by the legislature.

Hill asked how long it would take to pay off the debt and clarification on the 8-10M/year in 2021.

Councilmember Henry Sladek, Skykomish, noted that this position would allow for borrowing from future revenue to pay for capital costs and is not similar to the transportation situation. Sladek stated either we pay to build it now or later.

Councilmember Nixon mentioned that the nexus to hotel/motels and tourism development is that the workers in those industries would be the ones benefitting from affordable housing.

Councilmember Toby Nixon, Kirkland, moved, seconded by Councilmember Kingston Wall, Snoqualmie, to bring the following potential policy position back to the next meeting of the PIC:

The Sound Cities Association supports legislation to allow King County to bond against future hotel/motel tax revenue reserved for housing beginning in 2021. To accomplish this, RCW 67.28.180 (3)(i) will need to be amended with a technical fix that specifically authorizes bonding for affordable housing. Such legislation would allow King County to bond against future revenue and allow up to \$45 million in new housing funds to be released over the next six years to create and preserve affordable workforce housing in coordination with transit investments.

There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Sub-Regional Transportation Funding Draft Principles

Lyset Cadena, SCA Senior Policy Analyst, stated that the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) adopts recommendations to the Legislature. In October and November 2014 the PSRC Transportation Policy Board (TPB) reviewed the 2014 recommendations and provided guidance to PSRC on drafting a set of recommendations for the 2015 legislature. Cadena mentioned that during these discussions TPB members discussed the possibility of a sub-regional alternative. A sub-regional work group was created and Councilmember Don Gerend, Sammamish, was selected to chair the group. Cadena mentioned that the work group sought advice from an attorney on whether the region could proceed with a sub-regional transportation package, the revenue resources available, and if there were limitations to a sub-regional approach. The attorney from the Cascadia law group stated in a memo that yes the region could proceed with a sub-state funding package but only if the region had authority from the legislature. The working group drafted principles and they would like feedback from PIC in regards to whether the working group should continue down this path or let the legislature act first.

Councilmember Don Gerend, Sammamish, stated that for the last 2 years the legislature has not acted on a statewide package and the region has been frustrated with the inaction from the Legislature. The working group met one time and discussed whether the region could raise taxes and next steps. Last year the House passed a statewide package and Representative Clibborn worked on reaching agreement with Senator King. Gerend mentioned the caucuses in the legislature could not reach agreement on reforms and taxes and came to an impasse. He reviewed Elway poll results stating that more citizens support raising taxes for transportation compared to 2013. PIC members were encouraged to look at the PSRC TPB November packet to

review the transportation proposals from Senator Hobbs and the Senate Majority Coalition Caucus (MCC). The Governor released a transportation package totaling \$12 billion and the legislature is now beginning to talk about increasing the gas tax by \$0.11 or \$0.12. Gerend mentioned that the time to act on a transportation package is now since the price of gas had been decreasing.

Chair Talmas asked whether it was worth reviewing the draft principles if the Legislature has stated a sub-regional package has no support. Gerend answered that yes, it is beneficial to review and provide feedback since the TPB has not reviewed the principles but the PSRC Executive Board will.

Dawson noted that that PSRC is seeking feedback on whether they are headed in the right direction and now is the time to weigh-in.

Councilmember Marlla Mhoon, Covington, mentioned that at the South King County Chamber of Commerce breakfast, Senator Fain stated his support for a gas tax increase but not for a sub-regional approach.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, reiterated that anything other than a statewide package is not supported.

Councilmember Bob Keller, Sammamish, mentioned that he noticed some conflict in the principles such as “no increase in bureaucracy”. Keller asked whether the draft principles were measured against peer metro regions that have been successful in funding transportation.

Gerend answered that the draft principles were 10 years old and need revision.

Councilmember Kate Krueller, Tukwila, also attended the South King County Chamber of Commerce and heard that if a state package is to move forward, it needs to include projects from eastern Washington. Krueller referenced pages 52 and 53 of the PIC packet and asked whether a sub-regional transportation package would impact local revenues sources such as a Transportation Benefit District. Gerend answered that it depends on what the legislature authorizes.

Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, stated that PSRC needs to keep pressure on the Legislature and having the sub-regional funding as option B holds merit; the region should not place all their eggs in one basket. He mentioned that the draft principles need to be refined to make them more robust.

Dawson reiterated that a sub-regional funding package would require legislative authorization.

Margeson stated that PSRC should apply pressure on the legislature and if the legislature does not act, the region should ask for options to allow the region to tax itself.

Mayor Backus agreed with Margeson and mentioned that Senator Fain has publicly come out against a regional transportation package. If the Legislature does not act, the region should ask

to shift the burden from the Legislature to cities. This option may look more attractive as session continues.

Councilmember Barry Ladenburg, SeaTac, asked whether a sub-regional approach was a good idea and whether it let the State off the hook on transportation projects such as I-405 and SR 167. Ladenburg asked whether the constituents of the sub-region would be responsible for cost overruns or other liabilities and asked if the region wanted to tackle such issues.

Chair Talmas thanked the members for a great discussion.

11. Property Tax Cap Update

Lyset Cadena, SCA Senior Policy Analyst, stated that this item was a follow-up to the discussion at the December 10, 2014 PIC meeting. Several councils had not had time to meet and discuss the position to support raising the 1% property tax cap. Additionally, there was some discussion as to whether SCA should adopt a more specific policy position.

Councilmember Tom French, Lake Forest Park, mentioned that Lake Forest Park has not taken a position on this issue. The citizens of Lake Forest Park do not support increasing the property tax and the city council would face backlash if they did support increasing the property tax.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, stated that Tukwila has not reviewed the policy position.

Councilmember Dini Duclos, Federal Way, stated that Federal Way does not have an issue with supporting the policy position since it is up to individual cities to increase property taxes.

Councilmember Barry Ladenburg, SeaTac, mentioned that SeaTac supports raising the 1% property tax cap and asked whether raising the property tax would involve a percentage increase or if the tax would be pegged to inflation or population growth.

Chair Talmas reiterated that SCA has received feedback recommending that SCA keep the policy position broad and letting the legislature decide the mechanism.

Staff will continue to update members on this item.

12. Informational Items

Chair Talmas reported that there are two information items in the packet. The first item is on the future levies and ballot measures. Talmas asked PIC members to review the item and compare to their cities' ballot initiatives.

Chair Talmas noted that the second informational item is an update on Regional Policy Committee activities from 2014. Council President Hank Margeson, Redmond, stated that the item qualifies as the Regional Policy Committee's report for the year. Dawson mentioned that Chair Talmas was elected as chair of the SCA RPC caucus and vice-chair of the Regional Policy Committee and Councilmember Bill Peloza, Auburn, was elected SCA RPC caucus vice-chair.

13. Upcoming Events

The 2015 SCA Appointee Orientation will be held on Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at 6:00 PM at SeaTac City Hall.

The SCA Caucus Chair Training will be held on Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at Renton City Hall

The next Public Issues Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 11, 2015, at 7:00 PM at Renton City Hall.

AWC City Action Days will be held on February 18 – 19, 2015 in Olympia.

The upcoming SCA Networking Dinner will be held on Wednesday, February 25, 2015 at 5:30 PM at the Renton Pavilion Event Center. The keynote speaker will be King County Executive Dow Constantine.

The next SCA Networking Dinner will be held on Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at 5:30 PM at Renton Pavilion Event Center. The guest speaker will be Maud Daudon from the Seattle Chamber, which is a new Partner of SCA.

14. For the Good of the Order

Chair Talmas asked if any member had comments for the good of the order and encourage members to fill out the SCA 2014 membership survey.

Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, mentioned that February 9, 2015 is the 5th Anniversary of Let's Move and encouraged cities to commemorate the event within their cities.

Councilmember Barry Ladenburg, SeaTac, noted the Highline School District bond and levy as a possible upcoming ballot measure.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, mentioned attending Dr. Michael Eric Dyson's forum at Foster High School on how to overcome personal and institutional barriers to help children and community members succeed.

15. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM.

**2014 Roll Call – Public Issues Committee Meeting
December 10, 2014**

City	Representative	Alternate	Other	Staff
Algona	Dave Hill	Dawn Dofelmire		
Auburn	Nancy Backus	Bill Peloza		Michael Hursh
Beaux Arts	Tom Stowe	Richard Leider		
Black Diamond	Janie Edelman	Tamie Deady		
Bothell	Andy Rheaume	Tom Agnew		
Burien	Nancy Tosta	Stephen Armstrong		
Carnation	Jim Berger	Kim Lisk		
Clyde Hill	Barre Seibert	George Martin		
Covington	Marlla Mhoon	Margaret Harto/Jeff Wagner		
Des Moines	Melissa Musser	Jeanette Burrage		
Duvall	Amy Ockerlander	Scott Thomas		
Enumclaw	Mike Sando	Liz Reynolds		
Federal Way	Dini Duclos	Jeanne Burbidge	Lydia Assefa-Dawson	
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey			
Issaquah	Tola Marts	Eileen Barber		
Kenmore	David Baker			
Kent	Bill Boyce	Dennis Higgins		
Kirkland	Toby Nixon	Shelley Kloba		
Lake Forest Park	Catherine Stanford	Tom French		
Maple Valley	Erin Weaver	Layne Barnes		
Medina	Michael Luis			
Mercer Island	Dan Grausz	Benson Wong		
Milton	Debra Perry			
Newcastle	Lisa Jensen	John Drescher		
Normandy Park	Shawn McEvoy	Susan West		
North Bend	Ross Loudenback	Ken Hearing		
Pacific	Leanne Guier	Vic Kave		
Redmond	Hank Margeson	John Stilin		
Renton	Ed Prince	Armondo Pavone		
Sammamish	Tom Odell	Bob Keller	Don Gerend	
SeaTac	Barry Ladenburg	Mia Gregerson		
Shoreline	Chris Roberts	Chris Eggen		
Skykomish	Henry Sladek			
Snoqualmie	Kingston Wall	Matt Larson		
Tukwila	Kate Kruller	Verna Seal		Rachel Bianchi
Woodinville	Bernie Talmas	Susan Boundy-Sanders		
SCA				Deanna Dawson Kristy Burwell Lyset Cadena Doreen Booth

Electeds present are highlighted in gray. Cities represented are **bolded**.



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 6:

Support for Flexibility in Investment of Hotel/Motel Taxes for Affordable Housing
POTENTIAL ACTION ITEM

SCA Staff Contact

Doreen Booth, Policy Analyst, doreen@soundcities.org, 206-433-7147

Joint Recommendations Committee (JRC) SCA Members:

Mayor Ken Hearing, North Bend, (caucus chair); Councilmember Pam Fernald, SeaTac; Council President Paul Winterstein, Issaquah; Councilmember Jerry Robison, Burien

Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) Governing Board SCA Members:

Councilmember Doreen Marchione, Redmond; Councilmember Lydia Assefa-Dawson

Potential Action Item:

To recommend the following policy position to the SCA Board of Directors:

The Sound Cities Association supports legislation to allow King County to bond against future hotel/motel tax revenues for affordable housing as follows:

The Sound Cities Association supports legislation to allow King County to bond against future hotel/motel tax revenue reserved for housing beginning in 2021. To accomplish this, RCW 67.28.180 (3)(i) will need to be amended with a technical fix that specifically authorizes bonding for affordable housing. Such legislation would allow King County to bond against future revenue and allow up to \$45 million in new housing funds to be released over the next six years to create and preserve affordable workforce housing in coordination with transit investments.

Summary

The proposed policy position supports [HB 1223](#) / [SSB 5208](#) which would amend RCW 67.28 to allow King County to bond against their portion of future lodging tax revenues reserved for affordable workforce housing beginning in 2021. Bonding against future lodging tax revenues will not affect cities' hotel/motel tax revenues. Bonding against future lodging tax revenues will not encumber all of the anticipated future revenue for affordable housing; the legislation limits bonding to 50% of the anticipated revenues beginning in 2021. Allowing King County to bond against future lodging tax revenues allows affordable housing providers and housing authorities to access funds in earlier years when land is available and when the cost of land and construction is anticipated to be lower than in future years.

Background

The Public Issues Committee (PIC) voted unanimously on January 14, 2015 to bring the following position to the February PIC meeting for potential action:

The Sound Cities Association supports legislation to allow King County to bond against future hotel/motel tax revenue reserved for housing beginning in 2021. To accomplish this, RCW 67.28.180 (3)(i) will need to be amended with a technical fix that specifically authorizes bonding for affordable housing. Such legislation would allow King County to bond against future revenue and allow up to \$45 million in new housing funds to be released over the next six years to create and preserve affordable workforce housing in coordination with transit investments.

At the January 14 meeting, members raised a number of questions about the proposed position. Members asked about future revenues, including the amount of revenue anticipated, what would happen if revenues did not come in as anticipated and how long it would take to pay off the debt issued for affordable housing bonds. Revenues are projected at about \$14 million per year, beginning in 2021. Bonding would be limited to 50% of anticipated revenues, or about \$7 million per year. If revenues do not come in as anticipated, there would be sufficient revenue to pay off the bonds, but less money available for additional affordable housing after the year 2021 or until the bonds are paid off in the year 2045.

Members questioned how the housing funds would be used and where they could be used. State law limits the use of funds for affordable workforce housing. Affordable workforce housing is defined as housing for a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together whose income is between 30% and 80% of the median income, adjusted for household size. King County's area median income is \$88,200 for a family of four and \$61,800 for an individual. Housing built with these bonds would, for example, house a family of four making \$26,450-\$70,560 or an individual making \$18,550 to \$49,440.

Workers in tourism industries, including people working at hotels, restaurants, at recreational venues, etc., are expected to benefit from affordable workforce housing.

The enabling legislation directs affordable housing to be built within one-half mile of a transit station; transit stations are not defined. Areas of King County that are within ½ mile of a bus stop, light rail stop, or park and ride lot (either through bus or light rail access) would potentially be eligible. This could be in unincorporated areas or in cities. King County's Joint Recommendations Committee (JRC), with representation from across King County, will ultimately be responsible for determining which proposals are funded. Non-profit agencies in rural communities could apply for funds in appropriate areas, where transit exists and households are making 30%-80% of the area median income (AMI).

A question was raised at the last PIC meeting about whether this legislation would have an impact on cities' municipal hotel/motel taxes and their Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) program. There would be no impact on cities' lodging tax revenues or on cities' LTAC processes.

King County collects a 2% lodging tax; this tax is the subject of the proposed legislation. In accordance with RCW 67.28, cities that have hotels and/or motels have the option of imposing a maximum of an additional 2% lodging tax used for tourism promotion. The city 2% lodging tax used for tourism promotions is not impacted by the proposed legislation.

Responses to questions raised at the January 14, 2015 PIC meeting are included as [Attachment A](#) for your information.

Next Steps

If the PIC approves the proposed position, it will be forwarded to the SCA Board of Directors for action at their February 25, 2015 meeting. HB 1223, legislation that would allow King County to bond against future hotel/motel tax revenue reserved for housing beginning in 2021, sponsored by Representative Larry Springer (D-Kirkland), is scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Community Development and Housing & Tribal Affairs at 8:00 AM on February 12, 2015. The companion bill, SB 5208, sponsored by Senator Mark Miloscia (R-Federal Way) was passed to the rules committee of the Human Services, Mental Health & Housing for second reading on January 23, 2015.

Attachment:

A. [King County Affordable Housing Bonds, Response to Questions Raised at 1-14-15 PIC Meeting](#)

King County Affordable Housing Bonds

Response to Questions Raised at 1-14-15 PIC Meeting

Below are responses to questions raised by SCA Public Issues Committee (PIC) members at the January 14, 2015 PIC meeting. Responses were prepared by Kelly Rider, Housing Development Consortium and Doreen Booth, SCA, with input from King County's Community Services Division.

What does this legislation do?

King County's county lodging taxes are currently being used to pay off sports stadiums, but when that is finished (in 2021), the Legislature has determined that this revenue will be divided to fund arts & heritage (37.5%), tourism (25%), and affordable housing near transit (37.5%).

HB 1223/SB 5208 would clarify King County's ability to bond against half of the portion of King County's lodging taxes directed toward affordable housing now in order to build affordable workforce housing. The legislation does not add a new tax or renew an existing tax.

Affordable workforce housing means housing for a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together whose income is between thirty percent and eighty percent of the median income, adjusted for household size, for King County. King County's area median income is \$88,200 for a family of four and \$61,800 for an individual.

What will happen if revenues do not come in as anticipated?

The proposed legislation would limit bonding to 50% of estimated future revenues. If future revenues do not come in as projected, less money would be available for additional affordable housing after 2021.

How long will it take to pay off the debt?

There are two bond issues anticipated. The first issue of \$25 million would be paid off over 20 years – with payments of interest and principal in the years 2022-2042 and the second issue of \$20 million paid off over 20 years with payments of interest and principal in the years 2025-2045.

How much money would be generated annually?

Approximately \$7.5 million would be generated annually for affordable housing starting in 2015. Starting in 2021, an additional \$7.5-15 million in unobligated revenues would be available. After the bonds are paid back (in approximately 2045), the portion of the lodging tax dedicated for housing is projected to generate \$10-\$20 million per year in total.

Would this interfere with cities' hotel/motel taxes or Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) process or revenues?

There would be no impact on cities' lodging tax revenues or on cities' LTAC processes. King County collects a 2% lodging tax. That tax is the subject of the proposed legislation. In accordance with RCW 67.28, cities that have hotels and/or motels have the option of imposing a maximum of an additional 2% lodging tax used for tourism promotion. That city tax is not impacted by the proposed legislation.

What is the link between affordable workforce housing and lodging taxes?

Workers in tourism industries, including people working at hotels, restaurants, at recreational venues, etc. are expected to benefit from affordable workforce housing.

Where will this affordable workforce housing be built? Would it be built in unincorporated or incorporated areas? How much of the money would go to rural areas?

The enabling legislation directs this housing to be built within one-half mile of a transit station. Transit stations are not defined. The broadest definition would be that every bus stop and park and ride lot is a transit station. All areas of King County that are within ½ mile of a bus stop or park and ride lot (either through bus or light rail access) would potentially be eligible. This could be in unincorporated areas or in cities. King County's Joint Recommendations Committee (JRC), with representation from across King County, will ultimately be responsible for determining which proposals are funded.

Some of the money might go to rural communities. Non-profit agencies in rural communities could apply for such funds in appropriate areas, where transit exists and for households making 30%-80% of the area median income (AMI).

Why not wait until 2021 for the revenue? Are bonds really the answer?

By bonding against this revenue now, affordable housing can be developed while land near transit is more available and the cost of land and construction is less expensive than in 2021. As light rail expands and bus rapid transit is implemented, land near station areas will rapidly increase in cost. These savings are estimated to balance out the cost of the interest rate paid for the bonds. (See additional savings calculations from King County, 6 Year Benefit of Immediate Investing – Attachment A to this memo.) In addition, the affordable housing that will be created with this revenue will remain affordable for at least 50 years.

Since only half of the revenue dedicated to affordable housing (based on conservative revenue projections) will be committed to bond repayment, additional revenue will still be available in 2021 and beyond to fund additional affordable workforce housing.



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 7:

Committee to End Homelessness (CEH)

Draft Strategic Plan – 2015-2018

POTENTIAL FUTURE ACTION ITEM

SCA Staff Contact

Doreen Booth, Policy Analyst, Doreen@soundcities.org, 206-433-7147.

CEH Members:

Councilmember Doreen Marchione, Kirkland; Councilmember Lydia Assefa-Dawson, Federal Way

Interagency Council (IAC) Members:

Michael Hursh, Auburn; Colleen Kelly, Redmond; Jennifer Henning, Renton

On April 22, 2015 the Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) Governing Board is scheduled to take action on the 2015-2018 draft Committee to End Homelessness’s Strategic Plan. The PIC will be asked take a position on this draft plan prior to the April CEH meeting. In order to provide SCA cities with adequate time to consider the item, this item is on for preliminary discussion in February. PIC members are asked to take this item back to their staff and councils to begin the discussion this month. An initial policy position will come to PIC based on this feedback in March. Final action by PIC and the SCA Board would come in April.

Summary

The Committee to End Homelessness’s Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness was adopted in 2005. Although there were some successes in building affordable housing and exiting people from homelessness over the past ten years, homelessness remains a crisis in King County. The Committee to End Homelessness is proposing a draft [2015-2018 Strategic Plan](#) to address homelessness over the next four years. The Plan’s main goals are to make homelessness “Rare, Brief and One-Time” and to build a community to end homelessness. SCA’s representatives on the Committee to End Homelessness’s Governing Board have asked for direction from the Public Issues Committee (PIC) on the draft Strategic Plan. The PIC will begin considering the draft plan in February 2015. City comments on the draft strategic plan are being solicited in order for SCA staff to provide a potential policy position on the draft strategic plan for the March 11, 2015 PIC meeting.

Background

In 2005, the King County community set the ambitious goal of ending homelessness in ten years, and adopted a “[Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness - A Roof Over Every Bed](#)”. There were a number of successes over the ten years, including the addition of 5,700 new housing

units, more than 36,000 people exiting from homelessness, the inclusion of new funders for housing and the collection of data to improve system targeting. However, homelessness remains a crisis in King County. The [2015 One Night Count encountered](#) at least 3,772 men, women, and children without shelter; an increase of 21% over those found without shelter last year. The total homeless population is not yet known but in 2014, the total was 9,294 people (3,123 outside; 3,265 in transitional housing; 2,906 in shelters). Cities in King County, including SCA member cities, are facing an increasing number of homeless people on their streets, in parks and natural areas and yet many cities have few social services available for the homeless population, and little, if any, state or federal funding for homeless services.

The Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) is a broad coalition of government, business, faith communities, nonprofits, and homeless advocates working together to end homelessness in King County and the Governing Board oversees the work of the Committee. After the Governing Board approves the new strategic plan, local governments (including cities) and non-profit partners will be asked to approve resolutions endorsing/supporting the plan. We should note that CEH staff finds the current structure of the Committee to End Homelessness (four separate groups, a Governing Board, an Interagency Advisory Council, a Funders Group and a Consumer Advisory Council) to be overly complicated. The future decision-making structure of the Committee to End Homelessness will be discussed over the next few months with structural changes tentatively scheduled to be presented to and possibly approved by the Governing Board as early as April 2015.

Draft Strategic Plan

The [Draft Strategic Plan](#) has three goals: to make homelessness rare, to make homelessness brief and one time, and to build a community to end homelessness. The first two goals, to make homelessness rare, brief and one-time are consistent with Federal Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) requirements and progress towards those goals is required by HUD for maximized HUD funding. The third goal recognizes that the goals will only be met by a wide variety of stakeholders working together to achieve success.

There are a number of strategies proposed to achieve each of the three goals.

Goal 1 – Make Homelessness Rare

The draft strategies focus on:

- People that are leaving other systems, including foster care, mental health, chemical dependency, and criminal justice, and then entering homelessness
- repealing or mitigating policies that criminalize living on the streets;
- access to mainstream supports;
- the need for more affordable housing; and
- preventing people from becoming homeless.

Goal 2 – Make Homelessness Brief and One-Time

The draft strategies focus on:

- addressing crisis as quickly as possible;
- assessing, prioritizing and matching homeless individuals with housing and support services;

- realigning housing and support services to meet needs of people experiencing homelessness in our community; and
- creating employment and education opportunities to support stability.

Goal 3 – Building a Community to End Homelessness

The draft strategies to accomplish the goal are to:

- establish an effective decision-making body and formal agreements to guide collective action among all partners;
- formalize roles for business leaders and faith community leaders;
- strengthen engagement of King County residents, including those housed and those experiencing homelessness; and
- solidify and sustain infrastructure to operate the system, including advocacy, data analysis, capacity building, planning and coordination.

Next Steps

SCA staff is looking for city input on the goals and strategies that will make it possible for cities to implement the plan and be part of the solution in addressing homelessness.

For example, Redmond city staff reported to SCA that Eastside cities' human service staff and police agencies are working together to develop common strategies to address homelessness in their communities. Redmond staff further noted that the specific strategy in the draft Strategic Plan to "Repeal or mitigate local ordinances that criminalize people for being homeless or impose harsh penalties" will likely not be supported as written by Redmond. They suggested a revision like the following might be better received: "Engage and partner with local law enforcement to develop proactive strategies for working with homeless individuals that focus on survival and stability. Ordinances against camping in parks, loitering on sidewalks etc. should only be adopted and enforced as a last resort." Eastside city staff has also suggested that language should be added to address how to respond to individuals living outdoors who repeatedly decline services.

SCA staff is requesting that PIC members take the Committee to End Homelessness's Draft Strategic Plan back to their cities and discuss with their councils and staff. PIC members should provide potential changes to the draft plan to SCA staff by Friday, February 27, 2015 so that they can be included in the March 11 PIC packet and draft position. It is anticipated that a draft position will be proposed to the PIC in March with action on the policy in April.

On March 16, 2015, the Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) is having an all day workshop focusing on two items, the Draft Strategic Plan and the future governance structure of the CEH. The Interagency Advisory Council (IAC) members noted above have all been invited to attend. The information that comes out of that workshop may also inform SCA's discussion and potential position at the PIC meeting on April 8.

Attachment

- A. [Committee to End Homelessness's 2015-2018 Draft Strategic Plan](#)

GOAL 1: Make Homelessness Rare

Address the causes of homelessness by ensuring accountability of cities, county, state and federal government to address community-level determinants of homelessness.

OVERVIEW

Making Homelessness Rare requires the rigorous use of data to understand, and make transparent, the causes and remedies to homelessness.

Making Homelessness Rare requires clarity on the role of partner systems in reducing homelessness, and changes needed in policy and investments to stem the flow of people who become homeless.

Making Homelessness Rare requires an unwavering commitment to work across system boundaries, and to hold ourselves and partners accountable for making lasting changes.

Iain de Jong with OrgCode published a [blog](#) in October 2014, *The Homeless Service System Was Never Intended to Solve All Housing Problems*. De Jong makes the case that the causes of homelessness are complex, and the solutions to homelessness (making it rare) must be shared. Rising poverty and unemployment, reductions in state and federal funding and the fraying of the safety net, racism and the effects of disproportionality, lack of affordable housing and criminalization of people who are homeless, all contribute to increased rates of homelessness.

The Journal of Public Affairs published *New Perspectives on Community-Level Determinants of Homelessness*, a 2012 [study](#) of predictive factors for community's rates of homelessness. (An overview of the findings is available to non-subscribers [here](#).) Addressing these determinants, by their nature, requires commitment from cross-system partners. Findings include:

- **Housing Market Factors:** An increase in rent of \$100 correlates with a 15% increase in metropolitan homelessness. Local Trend: Seattle rents fastest rising in the nation, per [Seattle Times](#), Sept 2014.
- **Economic Conditions:** Poverty and unemployment rates are positively associated (correlate) with rates of homelessness. Local Trend: Poverty in King County on the rise per [Seattle Times](#), May 2013.
- **Safety Net:** The extent to which social safety net programs (with specific reference to mental health funding) provide adequate assistance can impact the chances that households will experience homelessness. Local Trend: Washington State ranks 47 out of 50 in per capita access to psychiatric beds per [Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2009](#).
- **Transience:** While in-migration may be positively associated with strong labor markets, it may also increase the vulnerability of homelessness of those less well-suited to compete in these arenas. Local Trend: Seattle is a city of newcomers, per [Seattle Times](#) October, 2014.

All partners will be needed to these local determinants of homelessness.

OUTCOMES

- ➔ Fewer people exit institutions directly to homelessness
- ➔ No cities have policies that criminalize homelessness
- ➔ Our community creates more housing affordable to those making 30% of AMI
- ➔ More people are prevented from becoming homeless overall

STRATEGIES

- 1.1 [Stop exiting](#) people to homelessness from other systems, including foster care, mental health, chemical dependency, and criminal justice.
- 1.2 [Change policies](#) that criminalize living on the streets
- 1.3 [Increase access](#) to mainstream supports
- 1.4 [Create](#) more affordable housing
- 1.5 [Prevent](#) people from becoming homeless

Strategy 1.1: Stop Exiting people to homelessness from other systems, including foster care, mental health, chemical dependency, and criminal justice.

Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness

Housing problems, including homelessness, are common among individuals leaving institutions such as jails, foster care, treatment programs and hospitals. One in five people who leave prison become homeless soon thereafter, if not immediately ([NAEH Re-Entry.](#)) More than one in five youth who arrive at a youth shelter come directly from [foster care](#). Participants tend to have limited or low incomes, and, often due to criminal or credit history, lack the ability to obtain housing through the channels that are open to other low-income people.

Addressing discharge policies that exit people into homelessness, particularly those that affect single adults would drive down homelessness in King County. Non-chronically homeless single adults comprise the great majority of people who are homeless in King County (~9,200 annually.) Research by Dennis Culhane indicates that 24.4% of single adults become homeless upon [discharge](#) from an institution, with nearly 70% of those exiting jails or treatment facilities. Halving the number of single adults discharged into homelessness by jails or treatment facilities could reduce the number of homeless single adults in King County by 800 each year. $(9,200 \times .25 \times .70 \times .50 = \sim 800)$

A proven discharge strategy is provision of subsidized housing with associated support services. Washington State initiated the Earned Release Date ([ERD](#)), Housing Voucher Program which pays \$500 per month for up to three months in rent assistance for individuals exiting corrections. A recent [study](#) conducted by Washington State University found that offenders who receive housing vouchers commit fewer and less-violent crimes than offenders who don't, and cost savings are more than double what was projected. More examples of prisoner re-entry programs are described by the [NAEH](#).

Refugees are also at risk of homelessness upon termination of supports. Refugees resettled in the United States under the Refugee Act of are eligible for cash assistance (up to eight months through [DSHS](#)), case management (three months, provided by Voluntary Agencies, or VOLAGS) and English language training. The original duration of benefits under the Refugee Act was 36 months, which more closely matches the time-frame necessary for a majority of refugees to obtain economic self-sufficiency and social stability. As noted in a 2009 report on [Refugee Resettlement in Washington](#), significant numbers of refugees are passing the time period for assistance without obtaining self-sufficiency.

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STOP EXITING PEOPLE TO HOMELESSNESS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$\$\$	Effort + + +	Impact ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
1.1.A	<p>Stop exiting people into homelessness or otherwise extend program supports. Expand and enhance local programs, and advocate for necessary funding. Examples of 2015 efforts:</p> <p>Local:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance local re-entry programs, such as King County's Criminal Justice Initiative (CJI) and Familiar Faces Enhance and expand evidence-based programs (Drug, Mental Health, Veterans Courts). Explore options to recapture a portion cost savings, to support participants' housing & re-entry supports Actively support City of Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs five point action plan, particularly items One (Strengthen Language Access) and Two (Expand Access to ESL Programs). <p>State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand state discharge programs such as the Earned Release Date (ERD) Housing Voucher Program Fund Peer-to-Peer supports within Medicaid-funded substance abuse programs, emphasizing a Recovery Model to supports Pass the Homeless Youth Act (2015) Expand Foster Care to 21 (youth with documented medical needs) End Midnight Release from jails and prisons. <p>Federal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the length of time and resettlement resources for refugees, particularly ESL learning and employment services Advocate with DOL for increased funding for employment among young adults exiting from the foster care system. 		2016	\$	+	★ ★	Funding status for this portion (RARE) is based on CEH staff knowledge of cross-system partners
			2015	\$	+ + +	★ ★	Funding partially available through Communities of Opportunity. CJI and alternative courts reliant on renewal of MIDD
			2015	\$	+ + +	★	Uncertain
			2016	\$	+ + +	★ ★	Uncertain
			2015	\$	+	★ ★	On 2015 Legislative Priority
			2015	\$	+	★ ★	On 2015 Legislative Priority
			2015	\$	+	★ ★	Uncertain
			2016	\$	+ +	★ ★	On 2015 Legislative Priority
	2017	\$	+ + +	★ ★	Uncertain		
	2017	\$	+ + +	★ ★	Uncertain		
1.1.B	Complete planning for Youth at Risk of Homelessness (YARH) planning grant, apply for funding, and implement policy recommendation.	UWKC, WACHYA	2015	\$ \$	+	★ ★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new funding
1.1.C	Establish a Secure Detox Facility. Support King County Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MHCADSD) efforts to establish a Secure Detox facility to engage individuals in recovery services.	KC MHCADSD	2015	\$	+ +	★ ★	Capital funds needed
1.1.D	Provide professional development / cross-training to partner systems. Establish role and protocol for conducting housing assessment as part of discharge policies.	CEH	2015	\$	+	★ ★	Major resources needed Time and Political Will
1.1.E	Influence the workplan(s) of the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) and Washington State Department of Commerce Affordable Housing Advisory Board's (AHAB) on discharge planning, criminalization and affordable housing development.	ICH AHAB	2015	\$	+ +	★ ★	Major resources needed Time and Political Will

Strategy 1.2: Change policies that criminalize living on the streets**Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness**

Policies that criminalize homelessness are costly and rarely result in housing stability or decrease in homelessness in the community. Penalizing people experiencing homelessness tends only to exacerbate mental and physical health problems, create or increase criminal records, and result in the loss of key personal documents that make it even harder for people to exit homelessness.

A 2013 report, [Factors Associated with Adult Homelessness in Washington State](#) delivered to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, reflects that Individuals with a history of incarceration were 7.6 times more likely to report experiencing adult homelessness. Significant research documents that those with criminal history are also more likely to be unemployed, the second highest predictor of homelessness. Reducing criminalization, and policies that unnecessarily create a criminal history, is an important step in making homelessness rare.

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CHANGE POLICIES THAT CRIMINALIZE LIVING ON THE STREETS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$\$\$	Effort +++	Impact ***	FUNDING STATUS
1.2.A	Repeal or mitigate local ordinances that criminalize people for being homeless or impose harsh penalties. Examples include ordinances against Camping / Loitering / Trespassing on public property; Body odor or bathing in public places; Incurring excessive parking tickets.	TBD	2015	\$ \$	++	★★	Policy development. Investment within local system requires time and political will
1.2.B	Implement key strategies from the United States Interagency Council report on criminalization, Searching Out Solutions: Constructive Alternatives to the Criminalization of Homelessness particularly expansion or establishment of alternative sentencing options . Replicate or enhance models such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County and Seattle Mental Health Courts • King County Drug Diversion and Family Treatment Court • King County and Seattle Veterans Court • King County Crisis Diversion Center. 	King County and Seattle Courts	2015	\$ \$	++	★★	Retention of existing programs reliant on renewal of MIDD Expansion cannot be achieved without new funding.
1.2.C	Establish and advance local, state and federal agenda items to reduce criminalization or the effects of criminalization : Local: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively support the renewal of the Mental Illness Drug Dependency Sales Tax, the proceeds of which support interventions that divert people from jails, hospitals and courts and other expensive systems. State: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban the Box – Adopt Fair Hiring Policies to Reduce Unfair Barriers to Employment of People with Criminal Records • Establish Certificate of Restoration. Federal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify criminalization regulations that impede housing options. 	TBD	2015	\$	++	★★★	Policy development. Investment within local system requires time and political will

Strategy 1.3: Increase access to mainstream supports

Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness

Beginning in 2000, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has targeted its McKinney-Vento Act funding more exclusively to housing-focused activities (as opposed to supportive services.) This policy decision presumed that mainstream programs such as Medicaid, TANF and General Assistance could cover the gap resulting from the change. In 2010, HUD Office of Policy Development and Research commissioned a study by national experts on [Strategies for Improving Homeless People's Access to Mainstream Benefits and Services](#).

The study identified three groups of barriers to accessing mainstream services and three categories of mechanisms communities could use to reduce these barriers.

1. **Structural barriers** affect homeless individuals and families who face unique structural obstacles because, by definition or circumstance, they do not have the ready means of communication, transportation, regular address, and documentation that most mainstream programs require. **Smoothing mechanisms** such as street outreach, transportation, coordinated entry or co-location of services reduce structural barriers and address problems at the street level.
2. **Capacity barriers** result from the inadequacy of available resources; funding may be finite or capped. While harder to address, **Expanding mechanisms**, typically through additional resources, can increase overall capacity, and many communities found that a heightened awareness of capacity barriers, and joint messaging of the need for increased capacity, helped to expand resources at the local level.
3. **Eligibility barriers** are program rules that establish criteria and time limits for who may receive the benefit. Many eligibility restrictions are embedded in federal policy and cannot easily be influenced at the local level. **Changing mechanisms** alter eligibility but not overall capacity, while prioritization can help to target services towards those most vulnerable.

It is not surprising that people who are homeless in King County experience each of these types of barriers. Examples:

1. **Structural Barriers:**
 - King County is one of the largest counties in the nation, with 39 incorporated cities, 2,307 square miles (twice the size of Rhode Island), making coordination and transportation across the region challenging.
2. **Capacity Barriers**
 - Washington ranks 47th in the nation in psychiatric beds per capita. Source: ([Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2009](#))
 - Statewide, flexible non-Medicaid mental health funding from the state general fund has been reduced by \$33.2 million (27%) since 2009. exacerbated by concurrent elimination of state hospital beds. Source: [King County MHCADSD/Behavioral Health](#).
3. **Eligibility Barriers:**
 - The US Department of Veterans Affairs and King County are to be commended for allocating millions of dollars in new resources through its VASH and SSVF programs and Veterans and Human Service Levy respectively. However, receipt of these important resources can be dependent on a veteran's discharge status, length of time spent on active duty, and VA-determined disability.

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INCREASE ACCESS TO MAINSTREAM SYSTEMS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$\$\$	Effort + + +	Impact ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
1.3.A	<p>Reduce Structure Barriers Establish Memorandum of Agreement with cross-system partners*, setting goals to provide cross-training, reduce barriers, increase co-enrollment, and otherwise increase access to services across systems. See example strategies below.</p> <p>* those systems most needed / typically accessed by people who are homeless, including employment, criminal justice, healthcare/behavioral health, education</p>	Employment Behavioral Health Criminal Justice Education DSHS, DVR, Others	2015	\$	+ + +	★ ★ ★	Realignment of existing funds, prioritization for services
1.3.A (example)	<p>Reduce Structure Barriers example: Implement Employment-Based Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a part of planning for the roll out of WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) at the state and local level • Establish cross-system leadership (e.g., CEH Director on WIOA Board, WDC Director on CEH Interagency Council) • Provide training and professional development to cross-system staff • Target enrollment within WIOA-funded programs cohort groups who are often disproportionality homelessness. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Single Adults: recently disabled ○ Families: young parents with young children, immigrants & refugees ○ YYA: recently exited foster care, couch surfing, non-engaged youth ○ Vets: non-VA eligible veterans with disabilities. 	Seattle/KC WDC KC Employment Programs All King County WorkSource programs WA State DSHS and DVR	2015	\$	+ + +	★ ★ ★	Realignment of existing funds, prioritization for services
1.3.B	<p>Increase Capacity: Assure availability of critical services frequently needed by a homeless cohort, such as treatment on demand for individuals with acute mental health and behavioral health needs. Actively support 2015 King County MHCADSD Behavioral Health legislative priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support King County efforts to open two new evaluation and treatment (E&T) facilities in 2015 for people with mental health disabilities • Restore to fiscal year 2014 levels the major cuts to state flexible non-Medicaid funding for mental health (\$20.4 million statewide) and state non-Medicaid substance abuse funds (\$10.8 million statewide), to avoid further degradation of the behavioral health system of care • Revise the Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion rule to exempt acute-care stays of 30 days or less as it relates to facility-bed size. • Increase availability of medically-assisted opiate treatment services (\$2M annually). 	King County MHCADSD	2015	\$	+ + +	★ ★	Unfunded (Mostly Medicaid funds)

Strategy 1.4: Create More Affordable Housing

Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness

Rising Rents

Erosion in renter incomes over the past decade coupled with a surge in demand for rental housing has pushed the number of households paying excessive shares of income for housing to record levels. (Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, Source: [America's Rental Housing: Evolving Markets and Needs, 2013](#). These trends are mirrored in the Puget Sound, as shown in the chart to the right.

A 2012 review of multiple studies found that a median rent increase of \$100 was associated with a 15% increase in homelessness among adults. Source: Journal of Urban Affairs, [New Perspectives on Community-Level Determinants of Homelessness](#). An overview of the findings is available for non-subscribers of the Journal [here](#).

Availability of affordable housing

In January 2015, the State of Washington will release a report titled the State of Washington Housing Needs Assessment, which will evaluate the changing relationship between housing supply and demand across the State including King County. In particular the report will document the lack of affordable housing for lower-income households and how lower-income renters are cost burdened. CEH will use this upcoming report to inform our affordable housing strategies in the final strategic plan. Similarly, staff to the King County Growth Management Planning Council identified a countywide need for affordable housing of:

- 30% and below (very low) 12% of total housing supply
- 30-50% AMI (low) 12% of total housing supply
- 50-80% of AMI (moderate) 16% of total housing supply

Loss of existing affordable housing stock

CEH will also use the upcoming State of Washington report to inform our strategies regarding the loss of existing affordable housing in King County.

Policy Changes Needed

The provision of housing affordable to very-low income households will only be fulfilled with inter-jurisdictional cooperation and public subsidies, as noted by the multiple planning councils and initiatives identified in the strategies below.

It will be critically important to engage the federal government. As reported by the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), federal housing spending is poorly matched to need, and tilted toward well-off homeowners, leaving struggling low-income renters without help. In fact, renters received less than one-fourth of federal housing supports, and only about one in four low-income families eligible for rental assistance receives it.

CREATE MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$ \$ \$	Effort + + +	Impact ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
1.4A	<p>Close the gap of XX,000 housing units in King County available to households below 30% AMI. Advocate for aggressive affordable housing goals, creative policy and land use regulations. Identify liaisons to track, influence, support and monitor regional plans and initiatives. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County Urban Consortium and the Consortium's Strategic Plan • Local cities' Comprehensive Plans (due summer 2015) • Seattle Mayor's Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (due 2015) • VISION 2040, Puget Sound Regional Council's Growth Management Plan • Other as identified. 	King County Consortium City Councils KC DCHS Seattle OH ARCH, PSRC, Others	2015	\$ \$ \$	+ + +	★ ★ ★	New Resources needed to expand rate of development
1.4.B	<p>Each year, establish and advance a federal, state and local agenda aimed at increasing affordable housing. Example of opportunities:</p> <p>Local</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seattle Linkage Feeds, Seattle Housing Levy • Incentive Zoning in Suburban Cities • Seattle and King County each have reports due in 2015 to their respective Council on Housing Affordability <p>State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund the Washington State Housing Trust Fund • Preserve and Strengthen the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Program • Make Housing Bonds Effective Now • Influence the state-level roll-out of the National Housing Trust <p>Federal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAEH states that changes in federal policy and funding are needed to end homelessness, including provision of 37,000 PSH vouchers to end homelessness among chronically homeless single adults by 2016. 	City and County Councils WA State Legislature, Commerce Federal Gov't: HUD, VA, HHS Others	2015 and beyond	\$ \$ \$	+ + +	★ ★ ★	New Resources needed to expand rate of development
1.4.C	<p>Sustain ___ units of affordable housing, whose affordability is set to expire by 2017. (State Needs Assessment report to be complete Jan 2015, from which we can determine King County numbers.)</p>	TBD For profit and non-profit developers	2015	\$ \$ \$	+ + +	★ ★ ★	New Resources Needed
1.4.D	<p>Increase access among vulnerable populations to existing affordable housing projects. Secure agreements for access within publicly funded affordable housing and market rate housing to households placed through Landlord Liaison Program (LLP), or otherwise reduce screening criteria to remove all but regulatory -required screening criteria.</p>	TBD For profit and non-profit developers	2015	\$	+ + +	★ ★ ★	New Resources needed to expand development

Strategy 1.5: Prevent people from becoming homeless

Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness

Homelessness prevention strategies such as financial or legal assistance, housing stabilization or other interventions can help households resolve a housing crisis that would otherwise lead to homelessness. The USICH reports that [innovative practices](#) are emerging that target and coordinate stabilization and prevention supports towards those most likely to become homeless without assistance. Examples include:

- Providing diversion assistance to households seeking shelter. Some communities have found they can help many households who would otherwise enter shelter maintain their current housing situation or, when that is not possible, quickly relocate to an alternate housing option.
- Using shelter data to match prevention targeting to the profiles of people who are actually experiencing homelessness. Communities have analyzed HMIS data and adjusted prevention program targeting criteria to mirror the profile of shelter residents.
 - Philadelphia - Researchers learned that families living in certain neighborhoods were at much higher risk of entering homeless shelters, and used this data to target outreach and assistance strategies to reach households living in these neighborhoods.
 - Alameda County (CA) targeted resources to those who 'look like' a typical shelter resident – those staying with friends and family, staying in hotels and motels, receiving TANF, or losing their housing subsidies, or people with other risk factors in addition to rent arrears.
- Discharge planning: Many communities work with hospitals, treatment facilities, foster care, VA Medical Centers, jails, and prisons to connect people exiting institutions are at high risk of homelessness with housing stabilization services. (See CEH Strategic Plan 2.0, Strategy 1.1)

Based on a critical review of local combined with national research, King County should target prevention resources based on the following:

Assure an active focus on disproportionality

- People of color make up 31% of King County general population, while comprising 64% of people who are homeless. (Source: 2010 US Census, and Seattle/King County One Night Count)
- Target Young Adult services to LGBTQ and Youth of Color acknowledging that ~40% homeless youth in identify as LGBTQ. Source: YYA Comprehensive Plan, 2013)

Strategically time and/or locate interventions

- Most youth who run away from home return home relatively quickly. Prevention supports that connect a young adult to friends, family or other stable situation can make that return safe and sustainable. (Source: YYA Comprehensive Plan, 2013)
- The Health and Human Services Transformation Initiative includes place-based strategies, located in [Communities of Opportunity](#), neighborhoods in King County that rank lowest on an index of the social determinants of health (including housing), where targeted investments will have the greatest impact.

Target services towards those that mirror a shelter population

- Risk factors for homelessness among veterans is associated with vets who are younger, enlisted with lower pay grades, diagnosed with mental illness, TBI, MST or other disability. Source: [Homeless Incidence and Risk Factors for Becoming Homeless in Veterans, May 2012](#)

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PREVENT PEOPLE FROM BECOMING HOMELESS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$\$\$	Effort +++	Impact ★★★	FUNDING STATUS
1.5.A	Support investment of local resources in communities where the need and opportunity for gain is greatest , working with the Health and Human Services Transformation Initiative, Communities of Opportunity.	King County Communities of Opportunity	2015	\$\$\$	++	★★	Unfunded Best Starts for Kids Levy on the ballot 2015
1.5.B	Direct each CEH initiative to research (as necessary) and integrate prevention strategies , recognizing that strategies can be highly dependent on client typology. Strategies must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an explicit focus on addressing disproportionality. • Be based on data and emerging research specific to the variances of each population and initiative • Incorporate rigorous data and analysis as part of implementation to test and refine targeting efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YYA Initiative • FHI Initiative • SA AG • KC RVI 	2016	\$	++	★★	Realignment of existing funds, prioritization for services
1.5.C	Actively share identified prevention strategies with regional partners to influence and target prevention and stabilization efforts towards those most likely to become homeless.	CEH Data & Evaluation Advisory Group Suburban Cities	2016	\$	++	★★	Realignment of existing funds, prioritization for services

GOAL 2: Make Homelessness Brief and One-Time

To make homelessness **Brief** and **One-time**, we must align funding and programs to support the strengths and address the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

OVERVIEW

Making Homelessness Brief requires ensuring that for those who do become homeless it is a brief episode. Shortening the length of time families and individuals are homeless reduces trauma and also creates capacity in our crisis response system for others in need. In 2013, households spent an average of 141 days in our crisis response system, far above CEH’s goal of 20 days. For this reason we must realign housing and services to prioritize connecting people with housing as rapidly as possible.

Making Homelessness One-Time requires ensuring that homelessness is a one-time occurrence, and those we support to move to permanent housing do not become homeless again and return to our crisis response system. Currently 85 percent do not return to homelessness within two years, while 15 percent return to homeless. CEH’s goal is that only 5 percent return to homelessness.

A well-functioning ‘system’ is essential to making homelessness a brief and one-time occurrence. King County needs a clear, consistent, and targeted approach that quickly and compassionately assesses household’s needs and provides tailored resources to people experiencing a housing crisis.

Through research and experience we now know which intervention types are needed in our continuum to address homelessness. Our understanding of the needs and strengths of people experiencing homelessness, combined with our understanding of the housing and services that work, must now be applied to realign our housing and services into an effective system. This requires the entire funder and provider community to embrace an approach that focuses on safety, matching, immediate placement into permanent housing, and supporting stability.

OUTCOMES

- ➔ People experiencing homelessness get the right service strategy with the right intensity of services
- ➔ More people are served by existing programs
- ➔ People are homeless for shorter periods of time
- ➔ Housing measures are improved (obtain/maintain permanent housing)

STRATEGIES

Work with all CEH partners (funders and providers) to:

- 2.1 [Address crisis](#) as quickly as possible.
- 2.2 [Assess, prioritize and match](#) with housing and supports
- 2.3 [Realign housing and supports](#) to meet needs of people experiencing homelessness in our community
- 2.4 [Create employment and education](#) opportunities to support stability

Goal 2: Brief and One-Time

Strategy 2.1: Address crisis as quickly as possible

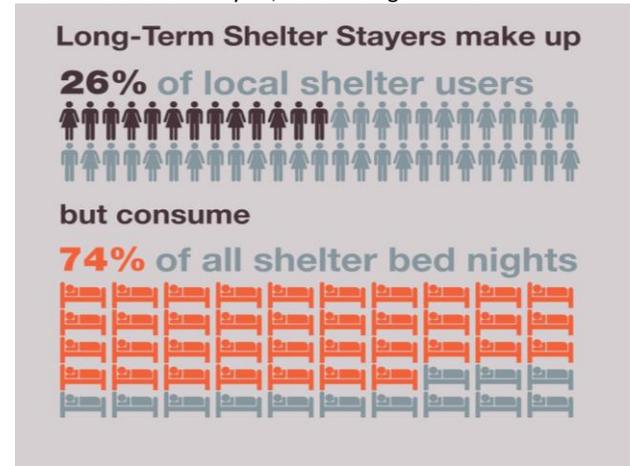
Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness

In a well-functioning crisis response system, we would not expect to be able to prevent all crises that lead to homelessness - there will always be a need to provide short-term support to people experiencing crisis and living unsheltered in our community. People need a safe and secure place to stay during their crisis so they can focus on the pressing need at hand: locating permanent housing.

Traditionally emergency shelter, as well as non-traditional interim survival mechanisms such as car camping and tent encampments, has played an important role in our community. However despite our current capacity of over 2,000 shelter beds and the high level of funding towards these interventions, it's not enough.

We expect to see increased performance through the realignment of our homelessness response system through efficiencies that move people out of homelessness as quickly as possible. In the short-term, however, we simply need more options for those who are living on the streets. Interim survival mechanisms (such as legal encampments and car camping) provide an option for some, and should be linked to service provision focused on moving people quickly into shelter or long-term housing.

A strategy we have employed to make the experience of homelessness brief in King County is prioritizing those that had been "stuck" in shelter the longest for permanent housing placement. Mostly men with a median age of 56, "Long-Term Shelter Stayers" used a majority of our emergency system's capacity while only making up about a quarter of the total shelter population. Now we are moving these "Long-Term Shelter Stayers" to permanent housing, while freeing up capacity in our shelters for others. In [2013](#), 85 people who were staying 180 days or more in shelter the year before moved to permanent housing. This frees up at least 15,300 "bed nights" for new shelter users.



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STOP EXITING PEOPLE TO HOMELESSNESS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$\$\$	Effort + + +	Impact ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
2.1.A	Ensure shelter capacity to meet the needs of the community, including the preservation of existing shelter and increasing capacity to meet specific needs by population and region.		2015	\$ \$	+	★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new revenue
2.1.B	Support non-traditional shelter models that create pathways to housing, including interim survival mechanisms and community-based strategies such as host homes.		Ongoing	\$	+	★	Available/Existing funding & partnerships with faith community
2.1.C	Create a flexible financial assistance fund for outreach and shelter staff that can be used to emphasize a creative "what will it take" approach to get people on a pathway into housing.		2016	\$	+	★ ★	Sources of revenue not identified
2.1.D	Support long-term shelter stayers to move to more stable housing through access to permanent housing with supports to transition into housing and onto mainstream services.		Ongoing	\$	+	★ ★	Utilize existing stock as possible. Resources may be needed for private market subsidies and transition services
2.1.E	Increase support and public education for crisis response needs , including interim survival mechanisms to create pathways to housing that bring people out of the elements.		2016	\$	+	★ ★	Could be accomplished with little new cost

Strategy 2.2: Assess, prioritize and match with housing and supports

Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness

If a person does become homeless, we must work to make their experience brief. Entering the crisis response system is traumatic for families, and costly for the overall system. For this reason, we are adapting services to prioritize connecting people with housing quickly.

Realigning our homeless assistance services into an effective crisis response system requires a network of providers who have embraced the approach that focuses on immediate placement into permanent housing. [USICH](#) provides the following framework to shift from a program-centered to a client-centered system. The three “A’s”: 1) Access; 2) Assessment; and 3) Assignment of Intervention.

- **Accesses to a Community-Wide Response System** When a housing crisis occurs, how do people access help? Can assistance be provided to avert (or minimize) trauma associated with housing loss? Locally we have developed coordinated entry/engagement systems for families and youth/young adults, we are continuing to refine those models and implement new ones for single adults.
- **Assessment** Exactly how much help each household actually requires can be difficult to determine. While the process may be a bit different for highly vulnerable unsheltered individuals than it is for families and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, effective communities still use a common tool to assess needs and prioritize placement into housing often in the form of a vulnerability index or other prioritization tool.
- **Assignment of Intervention** While much of the new approach is focused on permanent housing, interventions may vary, and the goal remains to provide the least expensive intervention that solves homelessness for each household. Some households may need only a short-term intervention (using the rapid re-housing model, or a lighter-touch diversion intervention), while others may require an ongoing subsidy to remain stably housed (coordinated through local housing authorities or affordable housing partners). Still others will need an ongoing subsidy with wraparound services in permanent supportive housing. Services are associated with each type of intervention, but the level and duration will vary for each household.

One way we have begun testing this new “least expensive” approach is through a shelter [diversion](#) project for families. By diverting entry to shelter, we increase the availability of shelter and housing for those who are most vulnerable. This model works for those who can find an alternative option with minimal support, short-term assistance is offered, such as conflict resolution with landlords, shared housing options, and financial assistance. In the first nine months of the [Family Shelter Diversion Project](#) 33% of families were successfully diverting from shelter or were still in progress of exploring options outside of shelter.



This approach is also being adapted locally to serve specialized populations. LifeWire’s [Housing Stability Program](#) tested the approach that some survivors of domestic violence could avoid homelessness and shelter stays with assistance to stay in their existing housing or find new housing. During the first year, their shelter turn-away rate dropped from 1:30 to 1:8, 50% were able to stay in their own housing and 31% successfully moved into long-term housing without having to go to shelter. Youth and young adults often return home to parents or relatives quickly. New and ongoing programs are providing in-home support to families and youths to prevent or quickly end their episode of homelessness.

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ASSESS, PRIORITIZE AND MATCH WITH HOUSING AND SUPPORTS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$\$\$	EFFORT +++	IMPACT ***	FUNDING STATUS
2.2.A	Ensure there is a coordinated assessment system which can assist in appropriately identifying and prioritizing candidates for the right housing intervention. Access to housing should be consolidated, while access points and approaches may vary by subpopulation. The system shall be client focused and shall: (i) be easily accessible, (ii) utilize a standardized assessment tool, (iii) include community supported prioritization of the most vulnerable, and (iv) allow for re-assessment and movement within the system to accommodate changing needs.		2015	\$\$	++	★★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new funding
2.2.B	Determine best practices in providing housing focused case management services during the interim period between assessment and housing placement, including the opportunity to provide diversion type services and connections for homeless youth and young adults with family where safe and appropriate.		2016	\$	+	★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new funding
2.2.C	Adopt Housing First practices (admission criteria doesn't exclude based on income, disability, treatment compliance, criminal histories, etc.) while ensuring capacity to provide adequate level and type of services to the target population.		2015	\$	++	★★	Changes in policy could be accomplished with little new cost; reallocating existing resources

Strategy 2.3: Realign housing and supports to meet needs of people experiencing homelessness in our community

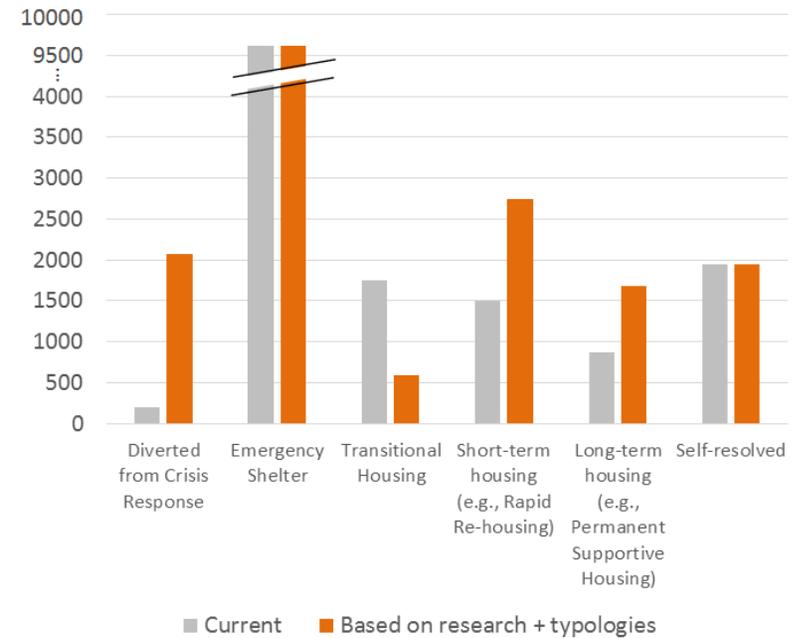
Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness

We have learned a great deal about what programs work best for each of the homeless populations (typology). We now need to take a system level approach to realign our resources to create the right mix to meet the needs of families and individuals, move them into permanent housing faster, and connect them to community supports to maintain housing stability. Perhaps the most significant systems shift will be retooling the existing homeless system to one that provides an array of homeless interventions that best match the needs of people experiencing homelessness. This will result in freeing up more intensive (and expensive) interventions for individuals that need them, while also allowing us to serve many times more people, more quickly.

The potential is great. Based on national data and typical costs, there is the potential to successfully rehouse up to five times as many people with a rapid re-housing type approach compared to transitional housing, with equal or better housing retention outcomes. For example, one study in Georgia ([Georgia State Housing Trust Fund, 2013](#)) indicates families are less likely to return to homelessness if they receive rapid re-housing assistance than if they stay in transitional housing.

Our family initiative has already begun a system realignment process and the youth / young adult system is developing the framework to scope the ideal housing continuum for young people. Having the right mix of housing and services is the first step, a well-functioning system also requires:

- A housing pathway is offered as quickly as possible for individuals and families experiencing homelessness
 - Rapid re-housing resources
 - Permanent Support Housing available for those that need it
- Supportive services and connections to the community-based supports people need to keep their housing and avoid returning to homelessness
 - Services should be client-centered and focus on promoting housing stability (intensity and duration of services are tailored to the individual)
 - Ensuring equitable access and outcomes for those vulnerable individuals and families that are disproportionately impacted by homelessness by offering services which are culturally appropriate, tailored and responsive to their needs. For example, the Youth and Young Adult system is currently building a framework to address the needs of disproportionality of youth of color and youth that identify as LGBTQ
- Increased affordable housing opportunities
 - Landlord engagement in the private market
 - Access to subsidized public housing and nonprofit housing that is not set-aside for homeless
 - Creative alternative (less expensive) housing options such as shared housing, boarding houses, host homes, traditional SROs, etc.



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REALIGN HOUSING AND SUPPORTS TO MEET NEEDS OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$\$\$	EFFORT +++	IMPACT ★★★	FUNDING STATUS
2.3.A	Realign homeless housing stock and services based on typology and needs throughout the system; funders in partnership with providers to determine (i) if we have the right mix of housing and services and identify need for new/expanded efforts.		2015-2016	\$	++	★★★	Reallocate existing resources
2.3.B	Increase rapid re-housing opportunities to enable households to locate housing and exit homelessness quickly. Utilize data and best practices to refine existing models and define the model for young adults.		2015-2016	\$	+	★★	Available via reallocation of existing resources or by obtaining new funding
2.3.C	Continue One Home campaign , a coordinated, countywide, landlord outreach strategy to recruit new rental partners.		Ongoing	\$	+	★★	Little or no ongoing funding needed besides support from partners
2.3.D	Provide/secure training and technical assistance to build the capacity of providers to implement tailored services and Housing First practices that are flexible and responsive to the needs and priorities of the families and individuals. Develop mobile services models not attached to specific housing units/projects to ensure housing stability (e.g. aftercare models, peer support, etc.)		2016	\$	++	★★	Leverage existing funding for training; reallocate existing resources for services
2.3.E	Expand capacity building efforts to ensure culturally appropriate and responsive services.		2015	\$	++	★★	Sources of revenue not identified
2.3.F	Create a Move-Up strategy that assists people who have achieved stability in PSH -who no longer need or desire to live there- to move into affordable housing to free up units for other highly vulnerable individuals that need it.		2015	\$	++	★★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new funding; leverage unit/vouchers through turnover
2.3.G	Retain existing Permanent Supportive Housing and prioritize admission to chronically homeless persons ahead of other populations. Identify appropriate and sufficient services resources to ensure housing stability in PSH (e.g. Medicaid).		Ongoing	\$\$	+++	★★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new funding (Medicaid, etc.)
2.3.H	Expand access to low income multi-family housing by decreasing tenant screening barriers and implementing homeless preferences in low income multi-family housing.		2015	\$	+	★★	Changes in policy could be accomplished with little new cost incurred
2.3.I	Explore alternative housing models that are less expensive permanent housing options, such as shared housing, host homes, boarding houses, and SROs.		2016	\$\$	+	★★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new funding

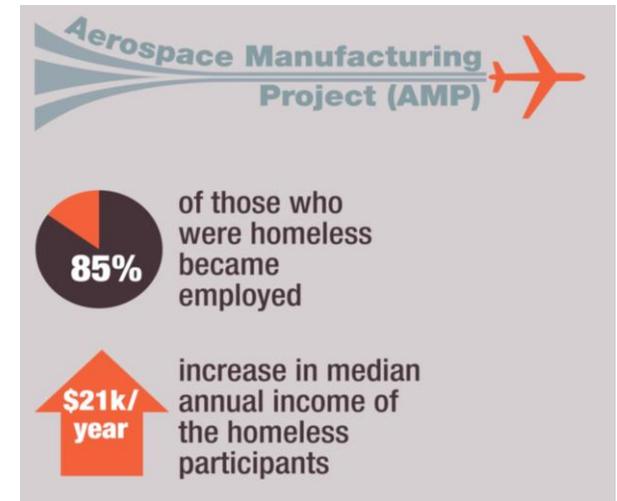
Goal 2: Brief and One-Time

Strategy 2.4: Create employment and education opportunities to support stability**Basis: Need, Data and Effectiveness**

Creating employment and education opportunities is an obvious approach to stabilizing people in housing and ensures that they do not return to our homeless system. Unemployment, underemployment, and low wages relative to rent burden put millions of families at risk of homelessness nationally and are frequent causes of homelessness. For many individuals experiencing homelessness, finding living wage employment is an essential part of moving on from homelessness –and usually is one of the biggest challenges.

Many individuals experiencing homelessness face obstacles to finding and maintaining employment. As a result, connecting people with job training and placement programs is critical to ensuring they have the tools they need for long-term stability and success. Further, added coordination and access to work supports like childcare subsidies and transportation assistance can help increase the likelihood that individuals will be able to retain employment.

Through employment programs, people who are or have been homeless can access job-training programs that increase their individual skill set and enhance their ability to find gainful employment. For example eighty-seven percent of the homeless individuals served by King County Community Employment Services found employment, with 70% earning enough to be self-sufficient.



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STOP EXITING PEOPLE TO HOMELESSNESS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$ \$ \$	Effort + + +	Impact ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
2.4.A	Expand the Employment Navigator role to scale and increase capacity to build stronger employer relationships.		2015	\$\$	+	★★	Partially available, cannot be achieved without new revenue/leveraging resources
2.4.B	Integrate financial empowerment strategies into housing services to improve financial stability (e.g. money-management advice and coaching).		2016	\$	+	★	Available
2.4.C	Develop internship/employment programs that are specifically designed to connect YYA to identified living-wage employment.		2016	\$\$	+	★★	Sources of revenue not identified' leverage mainstream services
2.4.D	Convene employment and educational organizations with the intent to (i) create a more coordinated system across the region for all populations and (ii) structure programs to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness.		2015	\$	++	★★	Can be accomplished with little new cost incurred
2.4.E	Collaborate with homeless liaisons in Public Schools to provide resource's needed for homeless youth to access schools and other educational facilities in an immediate and uncomplicated manner.		2015	\$	+	★	Can be accomplished with little new cost incurred
2.4.F	Improve data collection on the employment needs and outcomes of people experiencing homelessness.		2015	\$	+	★★	Can be accomplished with little new cost incurred

GOAL 3: A Community to End Homelessness

Solving homelessness will take more than a Committee, it will take the entire Community to End Homelessness and provide a home for all.

OVERVIEW

The 2005-2015 Ten-Year Plan brought together key leaders from multiple sectors to build political and public will to end homelessness in King County. This strong level of public and private engagement led to successes such as the Campaign to End Chronic Homelessness, through which partners developed nearly 2,400 new units of housing for chronically homeless individuals, by funding in a coordinated way to maximize our results. We have also successfully aligned funding to support strategies for addressing youth and family homelessness.

The governance and decision-making of the Committee to End Homelessness has become overly complicated and diffuse. For example, the Governing Board has authority to set strategic direction, yet does not as a body have the authority to increase revenue, change policy, or make funding decisions. The Interagency Council has the authority to recommend policy and investment priorities. The Funders Group are not aligning funding as seamlessly as envisioned, as they must balance the recommendations of the Interagency Council with their trustees or elected officials. The Consumer Advisory Council plays an important role in providing input, and is represented on the Governing Board and Interagency Council, and is a strength of the current governance structure.

All partners must be aligned if we are to meet the goals of this plan, and a new level of engagement and accountability among all sectors is needed. Formal agreements must be established among funders and providers to clarify roles and accountability for community-level, not funding stream or program-level, results. Elected officials must be presented with clear policy recommendations and investment opportunities that lead to regional, community-level results. Business and faith leaders should be presented with concrete opportunities to provide resources, financial and in-kind, to support the plan's goals. Awareness and engagement of residents of King County, including those housed and those experiencing homelessness, is a huge potential resource that efforts such as Facing Homelessness are only beginning to explore.

Staffing for CEH is necessary to provide support the success of the plan. Clear roles for CEH staff and partners must be developed and formalized.

OUTCOMES

- ➔ Goals 1 and 2 are achieved
- ➔ Accountability across sectors

STRATEGIES

Work with all CEH partners (funders and providers) to:

- 3.1 [Establish effective decision-making body](#) and formal agreements to guide collective action among all partners
- 3.2 [Formalize roles for business leaders](#) and faith community leaders
- 3.3 [Strengthen engagement of King County residents](#), including those housed and those experiencing homelessness
- 3.4 [Solidify and sustain infrastructure to operate system](#), including advocacy, data analysis, capacity building, planning and coordination

ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE DECISION-MAKING BODY AND FORMAL AGREEMENTS TO GUIDE COLLECTION ACTION AMONG ALL PARTNERS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$ \$ \$	EFFORT + + +	IMPACT ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
3.1.A	Establish a single, consolidated, inclusive leadership committee , with strong working Executive Committee, to replace existing diffuse decision-making structure (consolidation of existing Governing Board, Interagency Council, and Funders Group).		2015		+++	★★★	
3.1.B	Establish MOUs among local governments, philanthropy and funders to align funding and commit to community-level outcomes.		2015		+++	★★★	
FORMALIZE ROLES FOR BUSINESS LEADERS AND FAITH COMMUNITY LEADERS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$ \$ \$	EFFORT + + +	IMPACT ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
3.2.A	Create a business leaders task force , such as the Home for Good model in Los Angeles, to support the State and Federal advocacy activities and to support implantation of the plan with resources.		2015		+++	★★★	
3.2.B	Expand existing successful initiatives that engage faith institutions and individual congregants, particularly around advocacy, recruitment of landlords, and provision of day centers, meals and shelter space.	One or more faith coalitions	2015	\$ \$	+++	★★★	
STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT OF KING COUNTY RESIDENTS, INCLUDING THOSE HOUSED AND THOSE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$ \$ \$	EFFORT + + +	IMPACT ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
3.3.A	Launch a community-wide public awareness and engagement campaign to support goals of plan, focusing on humanizing people experiencing homelessness and finding ways for all residents to engage in the solution.		2015	\$ \$	++	★★	
SOLIDIFY AND SUSTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE		LEAD PARTNERS	TIME FRAME	COST \$ \$ \$	EFFORT + + +	IMPACT ★ ★ ★	FUNDING STATUS
3.4.A	Release an annual consolidated funding round for homeless services and housing, aligned towards outcomes of this plan, including local, state, and Federal funding.	[at a minimum] King County, City of Seattle, and United Way	2016		+++	★★★	
3.4.B	Unify funding for Continuum of Care in a single entity (apply to HUD to be a “unified funding agency”).	King County, City of Seattle, or CEH itself	2016	\$	++	★★	
3.4.C	Increase and consolidate infrastructure for staffing of key functions, including HMIS, data analysis, funding applications, advocacy, capacity building, and planning and coordination; OR Create matrixed management system for staffing of key functions , including HMIS, data analysis, funding applications, advocacy, capacity building, and planning and coordination.	One of the funding partners	2015	\$ \$	++	★★	
3.4.D	Increase funding for or leverage existing advocacy staffing functions (this must occur outside of local government).	philanthropic, business, faith or nonprofit partners	2015	\$ \$	++	★★	
3.4.E	Consolidate coordinate entry oversight.	One of the funding partners	2015	\$	++	★★	



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 8:

Environmental Health Services – Farmers Markets and Temporary Events

Discussion Item

SCA Staff Contact

Doreen Booth, Policy Analyst, doreen@soundcities.org, 206-433-7147

Board of Health SCA Members:

Environmental Health Fees Committee Chair, Auburn Councilmember Largo Wales; Kenmore Mayor David Baker (caucus chair); Federal Way Councilmember Susan Honda (alternate)

The Public Issues Committee will have a discussion about the rate restructuring for the Environmental Health Services (EHS) Division of the Public Health Department, specifically as it relates to permit fees for Farmers Markets and Temporary Events. Proposed rate increases for 2015 remain substantial and SCA's Board of Health members do not support the rate and subsequent permit increase for Farmers Markets and Temporary Events. At the February 19 Board of Health meeting, the EHS Committee will be recommending a 2015 rate structure. SCA's member on that committee is supporting the continuation of 2014 rates for Farmers Market and Temporary Event permits and the adoption of new rates for other EHS permits.

Summary

An Environmental Health Services (EHS) committee of the Board of Health has been working on developing a new rate structure for permits in the EHS division. In accordance with a [Board of Health Resolution 08-07](#), the EHS division employs a full cost recovery model for division activities. More detail about the rate structure and the drivers for the rate restructure can be found in the Environmental Health Services Fees Staff Report, [Attachment A](#), which was presented to the PIC on September 10, 2014.

Environmental Health Services permit fees apply to restaurants, pet stores, wastewater facilities, pools, and other facilities/providers which require an annual fee and inspection, including vendors selling prepared food at farmers markets and at temporary events. Permit fees are a function of the hourly rate for a permit type multiplied by the average amount of time spent on each permit type. The hourly rate for permits consists of direct program costs (inspections, processing permits, education, communication, etc.), indirect program costs (foodborne illness investigation, public information & customer service, complaint investigation, etc.), and overhead costs (program & department administration, capital costs, King County Administration).

The first draft of hourly rates developed by the EHS division, after a series of consultant studies detailing what is included in rates and how rates are applied to individual permit types, would have resulted in fee increases of 42% - 264% for food vendors at farmers markets and

temporary events (from \$55/\$281 up to \$200/\$400), with a 923% increase for the 19 recurring temporary food coordinator permits (\$502 up to \$1,162).

SCA's Board of Directors sent a letter to the King County Council on October 28, 2014 expressing concerns about the proposal to raise the cost of inspections for farmers markets and vendors at community festivals. The letter noted that the proposal would be a hardship to small vendors, and would stifle efforts to support local farms and create healthier communities through providing fresh, local, healthy food to our residents. It would also place an undue burden on local community festivals and events throughout the County.

Subsequently, King County Council adopted the biennial budget with provisos related to the EHS division and Farmers Market/Temporary Event fees. The purposes of the provisos were to lower fees for Farmers Markets and Temporary Event permits in 2015, to look at longer term options to lower food program rates and fees and to ensure the auditor's recommendations were addressed. The King County Council's decision not to add additional positions in the EHS division resulted in a \$5/hour decrease in the rate. Other potential changes, including allowing vendors with multiple market / sales locations to purchase a permit for multiple markets, will result in a slight decrease for some vendors. However, the first report detailing implementation of the first proviso, "*Report in response to King County Ordinance 17941, Section 98, Environmental Health Proviso 1, King County 2015/16 Biennial Budget*", [Attachment B](#), shows responses only reduced the proposed fee increases by about 2-3%.

There is a second part to the proviso report with the same title that addresses additional activities, "*Report in response to King County Ordinance 17941, Section 98, Environmental Health Proviso 1, King County 2015/16 Biennial Budget*", [Attachment C](#), such as near-term and long-term actions for achieving a decrease in rates.

The second report, Attachment C, details mitigation strategies that will reduce the hourly rate for food permits. Two of the proposed strategies address reallocation of indirect costs to direct costs. One strategy addresses reducing an inspection for a specific permit to reduce costs. An additional mitigation strategy proposed is that the Board of Health maintains 2014 permit fees for Farmers Markets and Temporary Events for the 2015 permit year.

Given the stakeholder feedback related to the fee increases and input from the EHS committee, the EHS committee is likely going to recommend to the Board of Health (BOH) at their February 19, 2015 meeting that the BOH implement new rates for EHS permits for 2015, except that rates for Farmers Markets and Temporary Event permits will remain at 2014 levels pending additional work on the rate structure and mitigation strategies, including those listed above. A summary of the work and remaining issues at the EHS Committee, prepared by EHS committee member Seattle Councilmember Sally Clark, is included as [Attachment D](#) for your information.

Current and Proposed Farmers Market/Temporary Event Fees

Following are the 2014 fees and the proposed fees for Farmers Markets and Temporary Events in 2015. It is important to note that the fees are based on a full cost recovery model. Such a model does not take into account other benefits that may arise from the widespread provision of farmers markets, including providing market opportunities to local farmers, making healthy

food more available to a greater portion of King County residents, and raising awareness about King County’s local food economy.

The tables below are excerpted from the “*Report in response to King County Ordinance 17941, Section 98, Environmental Health Proviso 1, King County 2015/16 Biennial Budget*” included as [Attachment B](#) and set out the current and proposed permit fees for Farmers Markets, Temporary Events and mobile food trucks. The proposed 2015 fees reflect the fees calculated at the \$225 hourly rate. As noted in the summary, SCA’s member on the EHS committee of the Board of Health is recommending that 2014 fees stay in effect for 2015 while additional work on the rate structure is undertaken.

Farmers Market Permit Fees

Food Permit Category	2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee	Increase from 2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee w/ rate reduction	Mitigation Reduction to 2015 proposed
Farmers Market – Farmers, produce (no permit required)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Food Permit Category	2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee	Increase from 2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee w/ rate reduction	Mitigation Reduction to 2015 proposed
Farmers Market – Farmers, providing samples (no permit required)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Farmers Market – Food vendor per market, per location (225 permits)	\$281	\$400	\$119/42%	\$390	-\$10/3%
Farmers Market – Food vendor with limited types of food, per market, per location (317 permits)	\$55	\$200	\$145/264%	\$195	-\$5/3%
Farmers Market Recurring Coordinator (44 permits)	\$502	\$1,162	\$660/131%	\$1136	-\$26/2%

Temporary Event Food Permits Fees

Food Permit Category	2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee	Change		2015 Proposed Fees w/ rate reduction	Mitigation Reduction To 2015 proposed Fee	
Recurring Event Coordinator (18 permits)	\$100	\$1,023	\$923	923%	\$1000	-\$23	-2%
Temporary Food (1,345 permits)	\$281	\$400	\$119	42%	\$391	-\$9	-2%
Temporary Food – Limited types of food (1,474 permits)	\$55	\$200	\$145	264%	\$196	-\$4	-2%

Cost of Not Implementing 2015 Farmers Market/Temporary Event Fees

There will be an estimated \$500,000 shortfall in the EHS division for 2015 if Farmers Market and Temporary Event fees are not increased over 2014 levels. The EHS division will need to cover the estimated revenue shortfall. The EHS division has worked with the County Executive's office and the County's Office on Performance Strategy and Budget (PSB) and has reassessed the risks to the EHS program operation. This new analysis results in reducing the amount of funds held in reserve to cover adverse events in the Environmental Health fund. Essentially, the fund is willing to accept more risk. The funds released from reserves will offset the 2015 increase; one-time funds allowing the program to pursue restructuring and cost reduction opportunities.

Next Steps

The Board of Health will hear from the EHS committee on the committee's recommendation for 2015 rates on February 19 with action at the BOH scheduled for March 19. It is anticipated that the EHS committee's recommendation will be to implement new rates for EHS permits for 2015, except that rates for Farmers Markets and Temporary Event permits will remain at 2014 levels pending additional work on the rate structure and mitigation strategies. Staff will provide an update on the recommendation at the February 11 PIC meeting.

If there is a continuation of the 2014 Farmers Market and Temporary Event fees for 2015, it is a short term solution. The EHS division will continue to work on redesigning their service model in 2015 and implementing the proposed mitigation strategies. However, as noted in the provisos, the division also has to balance food safety needs and permit review.

SCA staff will continue to monitor the work of the EHS division and EHS committee in 2015. It is possible that future fee increases proposed by the EHS division will not be acceptable to Farmers Market and Temporary Event permit stakeholders. In that circumstance, there may be a need for King County to subsidize or otherwise fund part of the cost of Farmers Market and Temporary Event permits from the general fund, possibly through a grant program or other mechanism.

Attachments

- A. [SCA PIC Environmental Health Services Fees Staff Report dated September 10, 2014](#)
- B. [Report in response to King County Ordinance 17941, Section 98, Environmental Health Proviso 1, King County 2015/16 Biennial Budget](#)
- C. [Report in response to King County Ordinance 17941, Proviso 1](#)
- D. [Summary of the work and remaining issues at the EHS Committee, prepared by EHS committee member Seattle Councilmember Sally Clark](#)



September 10, 2014
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 12:

Environmental Health Services 2014 Rate Study

Environmental Health Fees Committee, Board of Health (BOH)

Discussion Item

SCA Staff Contact

Doreen Booth, Policy Analyst, doreen@soundcities.org, 206-433-7147

Board of Health SCA Members:

Environmental Health Fees Committee Chair, Auburn Councilmember Largo Wales; Kenmore Mayor David Baker (caucus chair); Shoreline Mayor Shari Winstead (alternate)

Recommended Action:

Discussion of the rate restructuring for the Environmental Health Services Division of the Public Health Department, with the discussion informing the Board of Health members' action on the item.

A committee of the Board of Health has been working on developing a new rate structure for permit fees for the Environmental Health Services division. These fees apply to restaurants, pet stores, and similar facilities which require an annual fee and inspection. The BOH committee considered three options originally, one of which, a unified rate, was determined to be infeasible. The committee is leaning towards recommending a section rate, a rate where permits in the same section of the division use the same hourly rate in calculating permit fees.

Background

The Environmental Health Services Division (EHS) is one of five divisions in the Public Health department. In accordance with direction from the King County Council and the Board of Health, the EHS division employs a full cost recovery model. In 2013, EHS had revenues of \$22,630,304 and expenditures of \$20,207,164. The majority of EHS activity, 91%, is fee-supported, 8% of the division is grant-supported and 1%, general fund-supported. The general fund support is for special projects of a countywide nature such as emergency management. The current budget shortfall in public health does not affect the EHS division.

The EHS division focuses on prevention of disease through planning healthy built environments, ensuring proper sanitation, safe food, proper disposal of waste and toxics, management of disease-carrying pests, and effective disaster response. The EHS division works in three major areas: Food and Facilities; Community Environmental Health; and Planning and the Built Environment / Code Enforcement / Emergency Preparedness. The rate structure currently under development directly affects the Food and Facilities and Community Environmental Health programs.

Food and Facilities Program

The Food Program inspectors inspect and issue permits for most of the 11,000 permitted food facilities in King County. Food and Facilities inspectors also monitor swimming beaches and shellfish for harmful levels of bacterial contamination or toxins and inspect public pools and spas for water disinfection, temperature, safety barriers and safety equipment. Staff also review plans for new pools, spas, spray pools, and children's wading pools to ensure safety and sanitary requirements are met. Permits issued under this program include those required for restaurants, school kitchens, temporary food service, and farmers' market vendors as well as those required for public swimming pools and spas.

Community Environmental Health

Community Environmental Health encompasses a wide range of environmental services that are essential to the health of King County residents and visitors. Permits issued under this program include those for landfills, compost facilities, transfer stations, and recycling facilities as well as permits for pet shops, pet daycares, commercial kennels, pet grooming services and animal shelters. Permits for gas piping and plumbing for new construction and remodels (for Seattle, unincorporated King County, Beaux Arts, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina and Yarrow Point) are also included.

In the recent recession, permits for gas piping and plumbing decreased substantially as new construction decreased. Although the division made staffing and other changes as a result of the decrease, the gas and piping program used all of the EHS division reserves to cover costs.

Environmental Health Fee Advisory Committee

In May of 2014, the Board of Health created an Environmental Health Fee Advisory Committee (Committee). SCA Board of Health member Largo Wales, Auburn Councilmember, chairs the committee. The committee has met three times to review the existing fee structure for the Environmental Health Services division and to make recommendations to the Board of Health on the following: 1) a proposed fee structure for the division, including a rate model; 2) the frequency of review and mode of reporting to the Board of Health; and 3) the methodology for addressing annual changes needed to ensure full cost recovery.

Information from a variety sources served as background information for use by the Advisory Committee. In a [2013 Performance Audit of Environmental Health Services](#), the King County Auditor's office made five recommendations to the EHS division; three recommendations focused on rates, one recommendation related to the division's financial plan and reserves, and one recommendation related to staffing methodologies. All five of these recommendations are being addressed by the Committee. The central question the Committee is addressing is the structure of the rate model that will be used to calculate fees; the development of a rate model is the primary focus of this staff report. The work of the Committee will also inform a reserve policy that will be developed administratively.

The EHS division hired the FCS Group to work with staff to address the recommendations of the performance audit. A substantial amount of work was done by the consultant to determine actual costs for each environmental health permit, including time studies; how much time it

takes to do certain services and a rate calculation, what it costs per hour to support the services necessary to run the program. The fee the customer pays for a permit is the hourly rate multiplied by the time it takes to do the service. EHS has to comply with state law that fees shall not exceed the cost of providing the service.

Analysis

Options for Rate Model

The three rate options considered by the Committee are: a Unified Rate, a Section Rate and a Program Rate. The Unified Rate would use the same rate for all permit fee calculations regardless of program type. The Section Rate would result in two different rates, one for Food and Facilities permits and one for Community Environmental Health permits. The third option, the Program Rate, would have individual rates for each of the programs' permits: Food; Pools, Spas, Water Recreation Facilities; Solid Waste; Pets; and Wastewater.

The current rate (set in 2012) is \$201/hour. The draft rates for each option, based on 2013 costs, are:

		FTE in program (full time equivalent)	# permits
<i>Unified Rate</i>	\$195		
<i>Section Rate</i>			
Food and Facilities	\$207		
Community Environmental Health	\$169		
<i>Program Rate</i>			
Food	\$207	50	~12,000
Pools, Spas, Water Rec. Facilities	\$210	4.5	~1,000
Solid Waste	\$171	8	~100
Pets	\$148	.75	~490
Wastewater	\$171	6	~600

The three rate models have been assessed in terms of three criteria: equity, ease of understanding and communication, and predictability and stability. The Unified Rate is the most efficient rate model as it is predictable, understandable and easy to communicate. A Unified Rate, however, does not take into account differences in sectional or program hourly rates and costs and could result in a program taking in too little or too much revenue. The model currently in place is a single unified rate that captures the costs across all permitted programs. Based on discussions with legal counsel and among advisory committee members, a unified rate model is not being proposed for consideration.

The Section Rate takes into account cost differences between EHS's two major sections, Food and Facilities and Community Environmental Health. Advantages of a section rate are that it takes into consideration the cost differences between the two major sections of EHS and it reflects the cost of the staff that works on both food and pools. The disadvantages are that it will take more time to determine the hourly rate and may be more difficult to administer due to having two hourly rates that are used to bill on an hourly basis.

The Program Rate matches the individual program costs with the fees, matches staff time and costs with rates and is the most direct, transparent approach. The Program Rate, however, has disadvantages; it requires the most time and effort to determine the hourly rate for each program and may be more difficult to administer due to several different hourly rates; and it may have more volatility in rates for small programs, resulting in fluctuating permit fees.

From the rate payer's perspective when comparing the rates types, the Unified Rate has the least equity across programs but is the easiest to understand and communicate and has the most predictability and stability. The Program Rate has the least predictability and stability from the rate payer's perspective, but is the most equitable and ranks in the middle in terms of ease of understanding and communication. The Section Rate ranks in the middle for all three criteria.

Environmental Health Fee Advisory Committee Recommendation

On July 31st, the Committee recommended the Section Rate be the preferred rate model due to the fact that it addresses the cost differences between the two major programs, is more transparent than the unified rate and provides a degree of stability to the rate payer.

Frequency of Rate Setting / Options for Reporting

The Committee considered how often the Board of Health would set the EHS rates and recommended rates be set every three years. The Committee also recommended a detailed evaluation of the rates be undertaken every three years. The Committee generally felt that annual monitoring of rates combined with annual reporting to the Board of Health was sufficient.

Annual Increases / Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund

The Committee proposed a maximum of 3.5% annual increases as needed to cover increased permit costs. Currently the maximum annual increase is 5%. The Committee will continue to discuss the need for a rate stabilization fund at their next meeting in late September.

Next Steps

The Environmental Health Fee Advisory Committee has one more meeting scheduled for September 30th. A series of stakeholder meetings are scheduled for August and September to discuss the proposed rate model. The Board of Health is scheduled to be briefed at its October 16th meeting with potential action scheduled before the end of 2014.

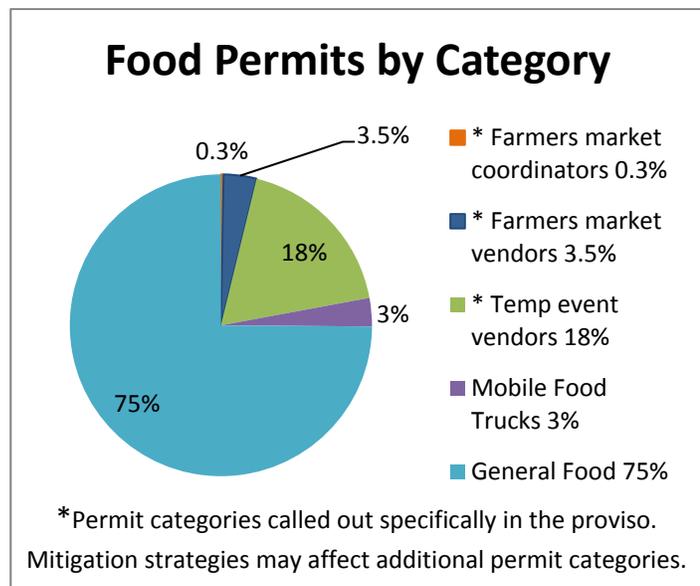
Report in response to King County Ordinance 17941, Section 98 Environmental Health Proviso 1, King County 2015/16 Biennial Budget

Near-term actions and timelines to lower permit costs while maintaining food safety

Overview

This proviso report includes background information on how the Food Program fees are calculated, the current permit model for these permits, and mitigation strategies to lower permit costs for farmers markets and temporary events while maintaining food safety. Near-term actions and timelines are associated with the identified mitigation strategies.

The Environmental Health Food Program protects the public's health by advancing food safety and reducing the risk of foodborne illness. The Program permits, educates and inspects over 11,500 permanent food businesses, 3,000 temporary food businesses*, 43 farmers markets* and issues approximately 80,000 food worker cards annually. The 55 employees of the Program are dedicated to the mission of public health protection, using an educational approach to ensure compliance with safe food handling practices and regulatory mandates.



Environmental Health Services fees, including those for the Food Program, are adopted by the King County Board of Health. Environmental Health is required to cover its costs through permit fees, including labor, rent, equipment, supplies and all other costs of doing business.

The last time fees were increased was in 2012. In 2014, Environmental Health engaged in a comprehensive rate and time study. An independent consultant reviewed the costs of permit related work, and fees for those services. In the course of the review, areas were identified where fees did not appropriately reflect the number of hours being spent by staff on permit-related activities versus the cost of the service. Farmers markets and vendors, temporary events, and mobile food trucks are permit categories where the time was significantly higher than accounted for in the current fee.

Based on study findings, Environmental Health proposed new rates and fees following the policy direction of the Board of Health Advisory Committee. The Division embarked on a thorough stakeholder engagement effort to communicate these changes, understand the impact of the

changes, and gather ideas on how to address the financial impact of the fee changes while ensuring good food safety oversight.

Fee calculation

The fee is determined as follows:

$$\text{Fee} = (\text{Rate} \times \text{Time}) + \text{Reserve Fund Charge}$$

The hourly rate and time required for the service are the two key factors that affect the fee change.

Rate – The cost per hour for doing direct services (e.g. plan reviews, inspection, and processing permit applications) as well as program indirect services (e.g. emergency response, foodborne illness investigation, planning and code updates, supervision, and department and county overhead).

Environmental Health currently uses one unified hourly rate of \$201 for services across the two sections of the division: Community Environmental Health and Food and Facilities Protection (where the Food Program resides). The Board of Health Advisory Committee working on the 2015 fees proposed two hourly rates, one specific to each section, based on the rate study. This is consistent with a 2013 King County Auditor report recommendation that the Board of Health review the use of a unified hourly rate. Costs previously allocated across the two sections are now allocated specific to each section. This change results in a higher rate for Food and Facilities permits and a lower rate for Community Environmental Health permits. The initial proposal for the hourly rate to be used to build 2015 fees was \$225 for Food and Facilities and \$190 for Community Environmental Health.

Time – The amount of time it takes to do permit related services.

Environmental Health tracks how much time each activity takes for each permit category. As systems have improved allowing staff to track their time more accurately, Environmental Health has moved from time estimates to actual time spent to calculate fees which have resulted in significantly higher fees for some permit categories. Permit categories experiencing the most significant changes are farmers market coordinators and vendors, temporary event vendors, and mobile food trucks.

Impact of adopted budget on the rate

In the course of Environmental Health's stakeholder outreach efforts, there were significant public comment and concerns regarding the proposed rates and fees for food permits, and for farmers markets in particular. These public comments continued into the fall during the King County Council budget process. During the budget deliberations, the Council expressed concern regarding the proposed fee changes. Although the Council does not approve the hourly rates or fee schedules, the Council's budget decisions can impact the costs and revenues of the program and therefore have an effect on rates and fees.

In the King County Executive's proposed budget, Environmental Health requested infrastructure positions that contributed to the increase in the proposed 2015 rate. The Council's adopted budget did not include three requested positions affecting food program rates, including the Food Program supervisor, accountant, and paralegal.

Table 1: Budget Proposals Not Accepted by Council

BUDGET PROPOSAL ADDITIONS	2015/2016 Proposed Budget	FTEs	Rate Impact
1. Food Program Supervisor (Local 17)	\$262,680	1.0	\$2.25
2. Accountant	\$201,961	1.0	\$1.75
3. Paralegal	\$190,771	1.0	\$0.95
Total			~\$5

The combined financial effect of not approving those positions was a reduction of approximately \$5 from Environmental Health's proposed Food Program hourly rate of \$225/hr to \$220. As noted above, the Council's action has a financial impact on Environmental Health's operating budget, but the fees are adopted by the Board of Health.

An hourly rate reduction would not necessarily result in a fee decrease for all vendors as other variables used in the fee calculation can change including the amount of time for each category of permits.

Current and proposed fees

The tables below demonstrate the current and proposed permit fees for farmers markets, temporary events and mobile food trucks. The proposed 2015 fees reflect the fees calculated at the \$225 hourly rate. Figure 1 (above) provides the number of permits in each category, and the percentage make up of all Food Program permits.

Table 2: Farmers Market Permit Fees

Food Permit Category	2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee	Increase from 2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee w/ rate reduction	Mitigation Reduction to 2015 proposed
Farmers Market – Farmers, produce (no permit required)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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Food Permit Category	2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee	Increase from 2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee w/ rate reduction	Mitigation Reduction to 2015 proposed
Farmers Market – Farmers, providing samples (no permit required)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Farmers Market – Food vendor per market, per location (225 permits)	\$281	\$400	\$119/42%	\$390	-\$10/3%
Farmers Market – Food vendor with limited types of food, per market, per location (317 permits)	\$55	\$200	\$145/264%	\$195	-\$5/3%
Farmers Market Recurring Coordinator (44 permits)	\$502	\$1,162	\$660/131%	\$1136	-\$26/2%

Table 3: History of farmers market coordinator fees

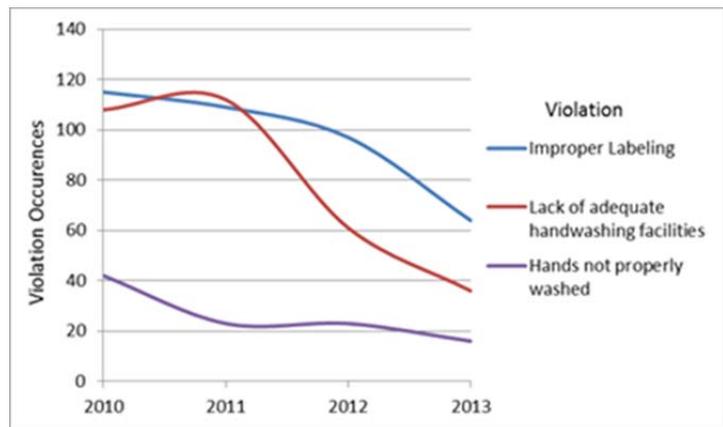
Permit Fee	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 proposed
Farmers Market Coordinatr	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$502	\$502	\$1136

- **Pre 2010** –nominal farmers market fee of \$100, not based on cost and time data; significant subsidy from the County general fund.
- **2010** – Fee revision across all Food Program permits. Stakeholders express concern about increase. Board of Health pulls farmers market fee and requests program to conduct analysis of farmers’ market services to inform permit cost.
- **2011** – Data collected and stakeholder engagement to determine the cost of this permit type. Board of Health adopts fee, keeping it artificially low (\$502) due to concern from farmers market coordinators (fee was basically subsidized by other food permit types).
- **2012** – New fee goes into effect June of 2012, though because of permit cycle, farmers markets pay new fee starting in 2013.
- **2014** – proposed fee of \$1,136 based on actual time multiplied by rate for the Food and Facilities Section

Noteworthy food safety improvements in those years

While there has been feedback from stakeholders about concern with the cost, many market coordinators and vendors also express the appreciation for the food safety expertise and partnership provided by the Food Program.

With direction from the Board of Health, the Food Program developed a farmers' market enforcement policy in 2012, providing outreach and education leading up to implementation. Data from these years indicates a reduction in the number of times that many violations were observed.



The Food Program focused on the following efforts during this time:

- Close working relationships and coordinated effort with market staff;
- Educational emphasis on hand washing, cold holding, and washing produce samples; and
- Increased enforcement.

Farmers market vendors who were found to have one or more imminent health hazards were closed. If the violations could be corrected prior to the inspector leaving the market, the vendor was allowed to remain open for the rest of that market day. Prior to returning to the market the next week, the vendor is required to provide a letter listing corrective actions, attend an office conference, and obtain a new farmers market temporary permit. There were six farmers market vendor closures in 2013. All of the closures were the result of a lack of hand washing facilities and the inability to wash hands prior to handling food. It is this additional effort in education, coaching, and partnership that has led to a reduction of violations thereby improving food safety.

Table 4: Temporary Event Food Permits Fees

Food Permit Category	2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee	Change		2015 Proposed Fees w/ rate reduction	Mitigation Reduction To 2015 proposed Fee	
Recurring Event Coordinator (18 permits)	\$100	\$1,023	\$923	923%	\$1000	-\$23	-2%
Temporary Food (1,345 permits)	\$281	\$400	\$119	42%	\$391	-\$9	-2%
Temporary Food – Limited types of food (1,474 permits)	\$55	\$200	\$145	264%	\$196	-\$4	-2%

Table 5: Mobile Food Trucks

Food Permit Category	2014 Fee	2015 Proposed Fee	Change		2015 Proposed Fees w/rate reduction	Mitigation Reduction To 2015 proposed Fee	
Mobile Food Service – Risk 1 (159 permits)	\$350	\$383	\$33	9%	\$374	-\$9	-2%
Mobile Food Service – Risk 2 (24 permits)	\$583	\$607	\$24	4%	\$594	-\$13	-2%
Mobile Food Service – Risk 3 (285 permits)	\$808	\$752	-\$56	-7%	\$735	-\$17	-2%
Commissary – Risk 1	\$151	\$302	\$151	100%	\$295	-\$9	-2%
Commissary – Risk 2 and 3	\$241	\$462	\$221	92%	\$452	-\$10	-2%

Stakeholder engagement and feedback

In support of the work of the Board of Health Advisory Committee on Environmental Health fees, the Food Program engaged in a comprehensive stakeholder effort for food permit holders from August through November, 2014 that included:

- Ten in-person meetings
 - 170 participants, made up mostly of vendors, and including representation from Farmers Market Association, Washington Restaurant Association, Seattle Food Truck Alliance, Chinatown International District Business Improvement Area, Kiwanis Club, and many community organizations.
- Meetings with the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks and the Seattle Office of Economic Development.
- Emails and mailings and phone calls.
- Over 200 comments received via website, email or voicemail.

Comments are generally critical of the increases. Most of the attention is on the increases for permits for farmers market coordinators and temporary event vendors with claims that the proposed increases are at odds with King County's goal to create better access to healthy food. Stakeholder feedback directly informed the mitigation strategies below.

Mitigation strategies

The tables below show near term mitigation strategies that Environmental Health developed with stakeholder feedback and staff input. The strategies developed are aimed to address the two

factors that create the fee – the hourly rate, and time spent on permits.

The principles the Food Program used for development of mitigation strategies, and will use to assess them in the future, include the following:

- Food safety standards are maintained;
- Services and associated fees are equitably distributed; and
- Maintaining a rate and fee structure that allows for full operational cost recovery.

Adjusting operations to reduce time or the hourly rate may have positive benefits and unintended consequences. As the proposed mitigation strategies become operationalized, the program will use the principals indicated to assess their effectiveness.

Table 6: Mobile Food Trucks – Mitigation Strategy to Reduce Time

Permit Category	Current Model and Concerns	Potential Solutions	Potential Impact
Mobile food service/commissary	Mobile vendors are required to have two permits – one for the mobile vehicle and one for the commissary where most of the food prep occurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure mobile and commissary permits to be one. • Require an inspection on the mobile unit and at the commissary, per year for Mobile Food Service permits. • This model would require evaluation of the food safety and cost implications before adopting long term. 	<p>~ 470 mobile food services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of 2015 proposed fees: \$685 - \$1256 for two permits. • Estimated cost with mitigation: 20% less, \$550 – \$1005 combined permit fee • Estimated savings with mitigation: 1 less inspection per permit

Table 7: Farmers Market and Temporary Event Vendors – Mitigation Strategy to Reduce Time

Permit Category	Current Model and Concerns	Potential Solutions	Potential Impact
<p>Farmers market vendors Note: These are vendors serving high risk foods, not farmers selling produce</p> <p>Temporary food vendors</p>	<p>Farmers selling/sampling produce pay no permit fee.</p> <p>Temporary event vendors who attend farmers markets must get a seasonal permit for each farmers' market location they participate in (not each market day).</p> <p>Temporary food vendors are currently required to get a permit for each event they attend.</p> <p>It is expensive to buy multiple permits. This is a deterrent from attending multiple events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new permit structure with a flat fee for vendors who participate in multiple events instead of per event permit fees. • Vendors eligible for the flat fee as long as violations do not exceed a certain level. • This model would require evaluation of the food safety and cost implications before adopting long term. • A flat fee may encourage vendors to attend more markets and events than they are currently. 	<p>~ 40-60 of 218 farmers market vendors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of 2015 proposed fees: \$200 (low risk permit) \$400 (high risk permit) Fees are per market season, per market location <p>~2700 temporary event permits, analysis needed regarding vendors with multiple permits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of 2015 proposed fees: \$200 - \$400 per event • Estimated fee with mitigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1: If 3 or more markets/events \$585 (low risk permits) or \$1170 (high risk permits) Option 2: If 4 or more markets/events \$780 (low risk permits) or \$1560 (high risk permits) Option 3: Additional options being explored • Estimated savings with mitigation: Fewer inspections

Table 8: All permit categories – Mitigation strategies to reduce hourly rate

Mitigation	Details	Estimated savings
Examine indirect costs to reduce hourly rate. Adjust direct service time to proportionately allocate costs by permit types (general food, temporary events and farmers markets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foodborne illness investigations – CD-Epi (approx. \$250,000) • Foodborne illness investigations • Complaint investigations • Wineries (1000 hours) 	<p>Reduce hourly rate by approximately \$5</p> <p>Will affect all permit types, including farmers market coordinators. Analysis needed to examine time allocation across permit types.</p>
Restructure staffing models to reduce overtime costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore alternative schedules for newly hired positions • Work with staff and labor to identify options for existing staff. 	Greater efficiency with current staffing

Timeline of next steps

At the December 18, 2014 meeting, the Board of Health will receive a high-level presentation of the Environmental Health Fee Advisory Committee’s work to date, an explanation of the King County Council budget decisions that impact the rate, a description of the Council’s budget provisos, and a conceptual description of the mitigation proposals for farmers markets and temporary events. At the January Board of Health meeting, a fee proposal including potential mitigation strategies will be brought forward for initial briefing to the full Board. A potential vote will occur at a future meeting, ideally before the end of the first quarter of 2015.

For the Section 98 Proviso 2 due on January 30, 2015, Environmental Health will have detailed action plans associated with each of the above mitigation plans. Additionally, Environmental Health will continue to identify mitigation strategies that can be developed and implemented over the long term. Environmental Health will work closely with stakeholders in this process.

**Report in response to King County Ordinance 17941, Section 98
Environmental Health Proviso 1, King County 2015/16 Biennial Budget**

“...Action Plan for Changes to the Food Program Permit Fee Structure, including, but not limited to, temporary and farmers market permits, that result in lower permit costs and encourage vendor participation while maintaining food safety, ...”

Introduction

This is the second proviso response, providing a continuation of identifying actions to lower permit fees while maintaining food safety.

As identified in the first proviso response, the principles the Food Program used for development of mitigation strategies, and to assess them in the future, include the following:

- Food safety standards are maintained;
- Services and associated fees are equitably distributed; and
- A rate and fee structure that allows for full operational cost recovery is maintained.

In this report, the Food Program identified near-term actions that can be achieved for the 2015 permit cycle with a timeline for implementation. Actions are identified as mitigation strategies. Strategies that include a decrease in services are specifically marked as service reductions.

The program also identified long-term actions that will require research, analysis and development in 2015 to be applied to the 2016 permit cycle, with a timeline for implementation.

All action options are presented with explanations of anticipated public health impacts and rate and other financial impacts. Options include work plans and evaluation analysis necessary for these efficiency and programmatic restructuring efforts.

Background

To provide context on critical issues for consideration, this proviso response begins with: 1) background information on food safety and foodborne illness; and 2) detailed information about the fee calculation and hourly rate.

Why we do what we do – prevalence and impacts of foodborne illness

Food safety is a priority for protecting the health of the public. Foodborne illness is common, dangerous, expensive, and preventable. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 1 in 6 people experience foodborne illness in the United States each year¹. Research indicates the estimated economic burden per case of foodborne illness averages \$1,600, with the aggregated annual cost of illness surpassing \$77 billion².

The Food Program aims to promote healthy people and healthy communities through education and regulation of food service establishments. Additionally, the program provides emergency response support when the food supply is compromised, and conducts foodborne illness investigations.

Public Health–Seattle & King County epidemiologists and food inspectors conduct foodborne illness surveillance with three main goals:

- to identify outbreaks;
- to identify and eliminate sources of transmission; and
- to identify unsafe food preparation and handling practices, specifically in commercial food establishments.

Four key facts to know about foodborne illness:

Foodborne illness can come from most any food type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent years show an upsurge of illnesses associated with fruits and vegetables • WA experienced outbreaks from products including: ice cream, sprouts, caramel apples and shellfish in 2014
Foodborne illness is dangerous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foodborne illness causes 120,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths in the US each year • In 2013, King County had 15 confirmed outbreaks, comprising 40% of outbreaks statewide
Foodborne illness is expensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing a single fatal case of E. coli O157 infection would save ~ \$7 million • The National Restaurant Association estimates an outbreak costs a business an average of \$75,000
Foodborne illness is preventable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple food safety actions - washing hands and keeping foods at correct temperatures - prevents spread of illness • Food safety must occur every day - in our homes and when we eat out

¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/winnablebattles/foodsafety/index.html>

² SCHARFF, R. L. (2012). Economic Burden from Health Losses Due to Foodborne Illness. *Journal of Food Protection*, Vol. 75, No. 1, Pages 123–131.

Fee calculation and breakdown of hourly rate

As identified in the first proviso response, Environmental Health (EH) is required to cover Food Program costs through permit fees including: labor, rent, equipment, supplies and all other costs of doing business to protect the public's health from foodborne illness.

Fees are calculated by multiplying an hourly rate by the average amount of time spent on each permit type.

$$\text{Fee} = (\text{Rate} \times \text{Time}) + \text{Reserve Fund Charge}^3$$

The hourly rate consists of three basic categories of costs: direct services, indirect support services, and overhead.

- **Direct services** are those that are directly linked to a specific permit, and could be thought of as billable time.
- **Indirect support services** are linked to permits and public health protection in general, but are not attributed to a specific permit.
- **Overhead** makes up administrative and capital costs.

Direct services make up the time portion of the fee equation. All overhead and indirect support service costs are integrated into the hourly rate, making up the rate portion of the fee equation.

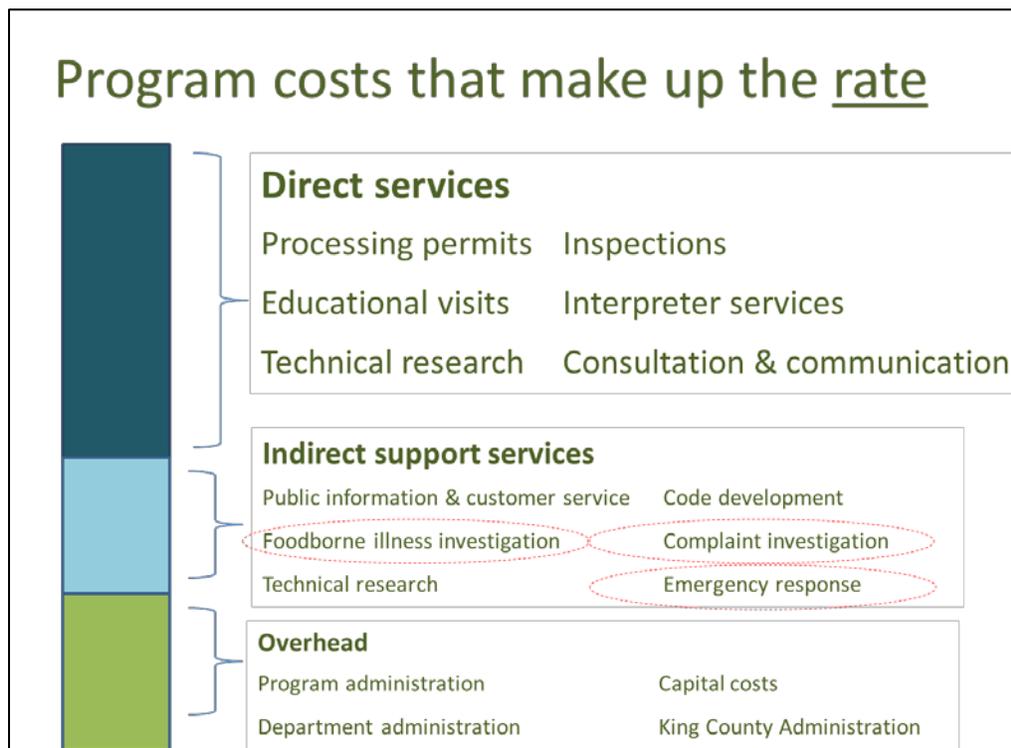


Figure 1 Examples of program costs by category

³ The Reserve Fund is required by King County financial policy to ensure financial sustainability in programs and appropriate planning for large periodic projects.

The three indirect support service items circled in Figure 1 – foodborne illness investigations, complaint investigations, and emergency response – are examples of work created by events that are beyond EH’s control. This work is central to protecting the public from foodborne illness and EH is expected to have the capacity to respond in instances when they occur. These services also represent work that is not attributed to an individual permit or permit type. Below are two recent examples of these indirect services critical to public health.

Snapshot – A Recent Foodborne illness Investigation of Listeriosis

On Wednesday, December 10th, the EH Food Program’s Foodborne Illness Investigation Team (FIIT) was notified of two cases of Listeriosis, triggering the need for an investigation to find the source and prevent further illness. *Listeria monocytogenes* is the third leading cause of death from foodborne illness – most people with the infection require hospital care and about 1 in 6 people with the infection die.

The Foodborne Illness Investigation Team quickly assembled a multi-jurisdictional investigation team, and an on-site investigation was begun the same day. Interviews with kitchen and facility staff were done and samples taken of both food products and equipment. Through the multi-day investigation, King County FIIT correctly identified the source of the contamination to a single food product, and worked with the Washington State Department of Agriculture to carry out an investigation of the food producer. By Monday, December 15th, King County FIIT instituted control measures at the kitchen to prevent any further illness exposures. The investigation led to a product recall affecting 13 states and the recall effort is ongoing.

Staff hours spent: 80 hours to date

Snapshot – Emergency Response: Mercer Island Water Source Contamination

In September and October of 2014, testing of the City of Mercer Island’s water showed the presence of *E. coli*. This activated a host of response activities by Public Health, and other local and state authorities. Public Health’s Environmental Health Services Division has regulatory responsibility for retail eating establishments in King County, which is accomplished through enforcing the state Food Code. The state Food Code generally prohibits restaurants from operating without potable water.

Food Program staff were pulled off of routine activities to focus on providing regulatory and educational assistance to restaurants; schools; preschools, long-term care and nursing facilities and others who provide food to the public. Twenty-nine Food Program staff were involved in the Mercer Island response, providing on-call and on-site support to establishments. They assured that all restaurants understood their obligations during a boil water order, and worked with them individually to create customized plans to enabling establishments to remain open throughout the boil advisory.

Staff hours spent: ~ 450 hours

Proposed Near-Term Actions

This section includes near term actions that will reduce the hourly rate and affect fees for the 2015 permit schedule.

Mitigation strategy 1: Reallocate indirect costs of foodborne illness and complaint investigations

Through this action, the Food Program is proposing to reallocate foodborne illness and complaint investigation time from indirect support services costs to direct service time, distributed proportionately to permit types.

Permit types affected: All

Foodborne illnesses can, and does, come from any food source just as complaints can and are made against all food permit types. Therefore it is reasonable that all permit types should pay a portion of this cost.

The costs of foodborne illness investigations and complaint investigations are currently integrated into the hourly rate, and therefore equally distributed across all permit types. However, investigations in King County, consistent with data from the Washington State Department of Health, show that the majority of outbreaks are traced back to restaurants. The proposal is to move this cost from the hourly rate and redistribute it as a direct service cost in the form of additional time to ‘brick and mortar’ permits categories.

This strategy will have an impact on all permit types – as the hourly rate will be lowered for all permits, and time will be added to certain permits times.

Timeline: Near term

This strategy can be applied to fees for the 2015 permit cycle pending adoption by the Board of Health

Financial impact: Reduces hourly rate by \$4, no impact to overall revenues

The redistribution of costs include \$250,000 to PHSKC Communicable Disease Prevention – Epidemiology, and Food Program staff time for foodborne illness and complaint investigations averaging 600 hours and 900 hours respectively in the 2013 - 2014 permit year. Reallocating these costs is estimated to reduce the hourly rate by \$4. This will result in a fee increase for general food service permits and fee decrease for farmers markets and temporary events. Net revenues will remain the same from this strategy.

Public health impact: No change

Service level remains the same; no public health impact is anticipated.

Equity impact: Improves Equity

This change will create a more equitable distribution of program costs across the program, benefitting farmers markets and temporary events. Farmers markets and temporary events operate between 1-21 days a year, and make up a minority of the investigation indirect service time. Therefore, it is more equitable that they pay a smaller percentage of these costs than other food establishments, rather than paying an equal amount. The permit types that most frequently receive these services – general food establishments – will pay a higher portion of the cost of these services whereas permits who receive these services the least – farmers markets and temporary events – will pay a lower portion of these costs.

Table 1: Table 1. Proposed Strategy 1 reduces program rate by \$4

Current Rate	Initial proposed 2015 rate	Proposed rate including 2015-2016 Adopted Budget Assumptions	Proposed savings on program rate from strategy 1
\$201	\$225	\$220	\$4

Mitigation strategy 2: Reallocate indirect costs of wineries and require permit

In King County, wineries are a food business group that has been granted the opportunity to be exempt from permit requirements upon approval of a variance request. The indirect time spent on wineries (1000 hours) is currently incorporated into the hourly rate and distributed across other permit types. This strategy would remove the ‘exempt from permit’ status and require that wineries obtain annual permits.

Food Programs in many local health departments throughout the state permit wineries and tasting rooms as general food establishments, including Yakima, Benton/Franklin and Walla Walla – those with the highest density of wineries.

Permit types affected: All, and wineries specifically

Of the 130 known active wineries operating in 2014, thirty-two obtained a permit for which the Food Program received permit fees. Approximately 61 wineries completed the variance request process, and a 37 are yet to be resolved (not yet completed requirements of variance, non-responsive to program contact, etc.). It is anticipated that this will affect approximately 100 wineries – those who have gone through the variance process or are yet to be resolved.

Timeline: Near term for the hourly rate

This strategy can be applied to fees for the 2015 permit cycle pending adoption from the Board of Health. The process for changing the requirement for wineries will require informing stakeholders of the change, and providing a year for the businesses to comply with the change.

Fiscal impact: Reduced hourly rate by \$1; estimated to generate additional \$48,000 in revenue. Wineries would pay fees according to the food permit type appropriate for their operation – estimated to range from \$385 – \$900.

Public health impact: Improves public health

Public health is anticipated to improve, as this change creates a process for establishments currently operating unregulated to receive food safety oversight.

Equity impact: Improves equity

Currently all other permitted eating establishments cover the cost of the public health work conducted with wineries and tasting rooms. In a full cost recovery model, the cost of exempting a single business type from permit increases the cost across other permit types. This change will distribute costs more equitably across all permit types.

Table 2: Proposed Strategy 2 reduces program rate by \$1

Current Rate	Initial proposed 2015 rate	Proposed rate including 2015-2016 Adopted Budget Assumptions	Proposed savings on program rate from strategy 2
\$201	\$225	\$220	\$1

Mitigation strategy 3: Maintain 2014 fees for the 2015 permit year for farmers markets and temporary events

A one-time near-term strategy to reduce fees for farmers markets and temporary events is to use the 2014 fee structure for the 2015 permit cycle.

Permit types affected: Farmers market and temporary event coordinators and vendors

Timeline: Near term

The timing of the Board of Health fee adoption determines the extent that Environmental Health collects revenue to cover the expenditures appropriated in the 2015 budget. General food permit renewals occur on April 1, and a decision on new fees may occur by that cycle. Farmers market and temporary event permits are obtained all throughout the year. Market and event coordinators and vendors have already begun to pay for their permits for 2015.

Fiscal impact: One year savings of fees ranging from 42-131% for permit holders – the difference between 2014 fees and proposed 2015 fees. The strategy creates an estimated \$500,000 gap in Environmental Health budget between budgeted revenue and actual revenue collections. Environmental Health is communicating with the Board of Health, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and PSB to develop strategies to cover this gap.

Public health impact: No change

Service level remains the same; no public health impact is anticipated.

Equity impact: Reduces equity

This strategy is inequitable across general food permits because it keeps the affected permit types at a lower cost for a year, while general food permit fees increase.

Service reduction 1: Restructure mobile and commissary permits

Mobile Food vendors are required to utilize a commissary facility where food prep is done off the mobile vehicle. Currently, the Mobile vendor is required to have a separate permit for the commissary, which increases operating costs for this type of food business. This service reduction strategy will include restructuring the permits into one, requiring that one inspection per year occurs at the commissary with the mobile unit.

Permit types affected: Mobile food vendors

Restructuring of this permit will affect all mobile food vendors, of which there are ~ 470. It is anticipated that this change will reduce services (and fees) by one inspection per permit.

Timeline: Near term

The Food Program is poised to implement this strategy in the near term due to previous work and analysis conducted by the food program. During the rapid increase in food trucks in King County between 2008-2012, the Food Program created a 'Mobile Team' of staff members to evaluate the process of overseeing mobile food permits. This strategy was identified by the Mobile Team as an efficiency with low health risk trade-offs.

Fiscal impact: Approximately 20% savings, roughly \$200 to each permit holder
An initial costs savings of roughly 20% is estimated for mobile food permits. Evaluation of implementation will be required to assess time spent on the permits, and the permit fee for future years.

Public health impact: low risk
Food Program staff anticipate low health risks are associated with this change. Staff have worked to create a new permit structure that creates efficiency while maintaining oversight for the full food production and operation for mobile units. Evaluation of implementation will be required to assess the health implications.

Equity impact: improves equity
Restructuring mobile and commissary permits creates a more affordable option for permit holders.

Potential Long-Term Actions

Long-term actions listed below include mitigation strategies and potential service reductions that could decrease permit fees. Mitigation strategy 4 is planned for implementation in the 2015 year. Service reductions strategies 2 and 3 will be developed through 2015 to be ready for implementation for the 2016 permit year. Service reductions 4 and 5 are potential reductions to reduce costs and are not currently planned for implementation.

Mitigation strategy 4: Restructure staffing model

The Food Program will restructure the staffing model to reduce overtime costs and achieve a more efficient use of staff time. As part of a King County Performance Audit of Environmental Health Services, the Food Program was assessed for productivity compared to other counties in the state (King County Auditor's Office, Kymber Waltmunson - King County Auditor, 2013). On average, King County Food Program inspectors conduct 870 inspections per year. The county with next highest rate of inspections per year is 687 per inspector.

Historically, overtime is a tradeoff for this efficiency, as the Food Program has incurred overtime costs averaging over \$200,000 annually for the past three years. The program is seeking ways to restuctre the staffing model to maintain the inspection rate while decreasing overtime.

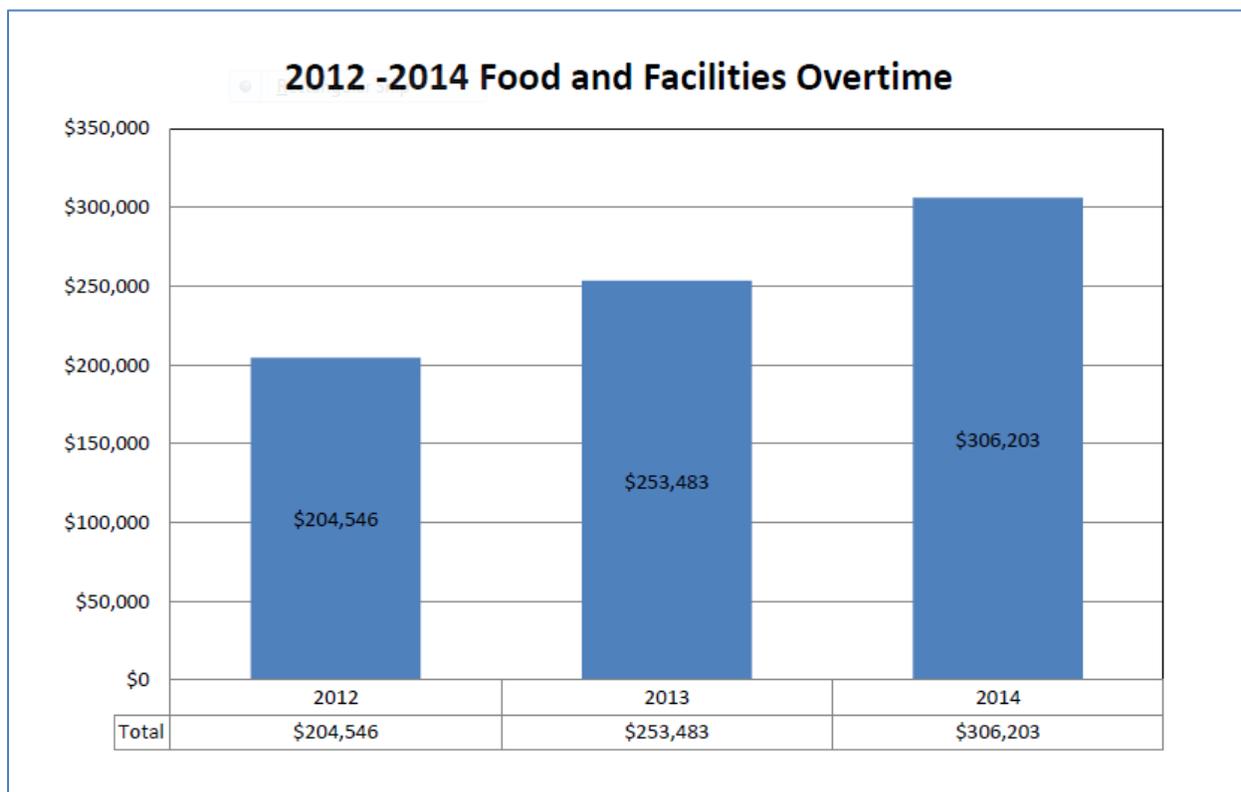


Figure 2: Recent history shows increase in overtime to cover Program service work

Permit types affected: All/none

This strategy is an internal change and will affect all permit holders equally. The Program anticipates that permit holders will likely experience no direct impact from this internal change.

Timeline: Long term

Restructuring the staffing model will require creating alternative schedules for newly hired positions, working with staff and labor to explore alternative schedule options for current staff.

Fiscal impact: Greater staff efficiency

In 2014, the Program identified this strategy as a process improvement to focus on in 2015. As part of this plan, the Program incorporated planned savings into the 2015-2016 biennium budgets. This strategy will not create any additional reduction in the hourly rate because the reduction was already accounted for.

Public health impact: No change

Service level remains that same; no public health impact is anticipated.

Equity impact: No change

Service levels remain the same; no community equity impact anticipated.

Service reduction 2: Create new permit structure for market and event coordinators

Farmers market coordinator permits are currently the same price regardless of the number of permitted vendors attending the market (note: permits are not required for farmers selling and sampling produce). Stakeholders provided feedback that they would like to see a permit structure that is scaled based on the size and structure of the markets being served. The Food Program will develop a new permit structure to meet this need, including identifying services to be associated with each permit type.

Permit types affected: Farmers market and temporary event coordinators

Based on 2014 permits, a new coordinator permit structure would affect roughly 65 permit holders. It is possible with the new structure that more or less event models will fit within the new category.

Timeline: Long term

This strategy can be applied to fees for the 2016 permit year. The Food Program will conduct stakeholder outreach with farmers market and temporary event coordinators regarding development of the new structure.

Fiscal impact: To be determined

Cost of the new permit scale will be determined upon further analysis.

Public health impact: Low risk

Food Program staff anticipate low health risks associated with this change. Coordinators provide a supportive role of added oversight for vendor food safety practices. Staff will develop a permit structure to maintain food safety oversight, and continue to work closely with coordinators to refine the roles and responsibilities associated with the coordinator permit. Evaluation of implementation will be required to assess the health implications.

Equity impact: Improves equity

Permit fees will be more affordable for markets and events smaller in size, resulting in permits costs being more equitably distributed across markets by scale.

Service reduction 3: Create new permit structure for market and event vendors

Temporary food vendors are currently required to get a permit for each event they attend. Vendors who attend farmers markets obtain a seasonal permit for each farmers' market location they participate in (not each market day). The new permit model will create a multiple permit structure that enables vendors to attend multiple temporary events for a lower price.

Permit types affected: Farmers markets and temporary event vendors

The Food Program oversees approximately 2,700 temporary event permits and 220 farmers market vendor permits annually. Single businesses are able to attend multiple events, meaning the total number of unique businesses affected by this change is expected to be less than 2,920, the sum of permits indicated above.

Timeline: Long term

Creating a new vendor permit model will require program redevelopment. In the early part of 2015, the Food Program will consult with neighboring counties and national public health colleagues to gather best practices for structuring and enforcing temporary event permits. The Food Program began this process by meeting with Tacoma-Pierce County in December of 2014 to learn how their farmers market and temporary event vendors are regulated. The Food Program will develop a model proposal and will conduct stakeholder outreach with farmers market and temporary event vendors regarding development of the new structure. The new permit structure will be ready for implementation for the 2016 permit year.

Fiscal impact: To be determined

Development and rollout of the new model will include analyzing and evaluating the financial implications to business owners and the Food Program.

Public health impact: Medium risk

Temporary events and farmers markets differ from general food establishments in that they occur in changing facilities, often without permanent sanitation facilities (plumbing for hand washing, produce washing, restroom access, etc.). Additionally, many event vendors are not full time food service professionals. The current temporary event structure is designed to provide food safety oversight for such varied food service landscapes, with inspections being conducted for the vast majority of permits. With this level of oversight and event coordinator support, 2014 showed an increase in market vendor violations and even closures. Figure 2 on the following page shows violation trends of farmers markets.

A new structure that provides multiple-event permits for a lower price will mean less food safety oversight and will require new and different food safety compliance assurances. Implementing this strategy poses a medium risk to public health. Evaluation of implementation will be required to assess the health implications. Figure 2 shows violation trends of farmers markets.

Equity impact: Improves equity

Stakeholders expressed concern that temporary event and farmers markets fees for events that operate only a few days a year cost as much or more than brick and mortar food establishments. Stakeholders also communicated that high permit fees limit community organizations from

creating fundraisers and community gatherings and small business’ ability to participate in the market place – both limiting food access. A new permit structure with lower fees creates more equity (in terms of vendor permit costs) among permit types, and may encourage vendors to attend more markets and events than they are currently.

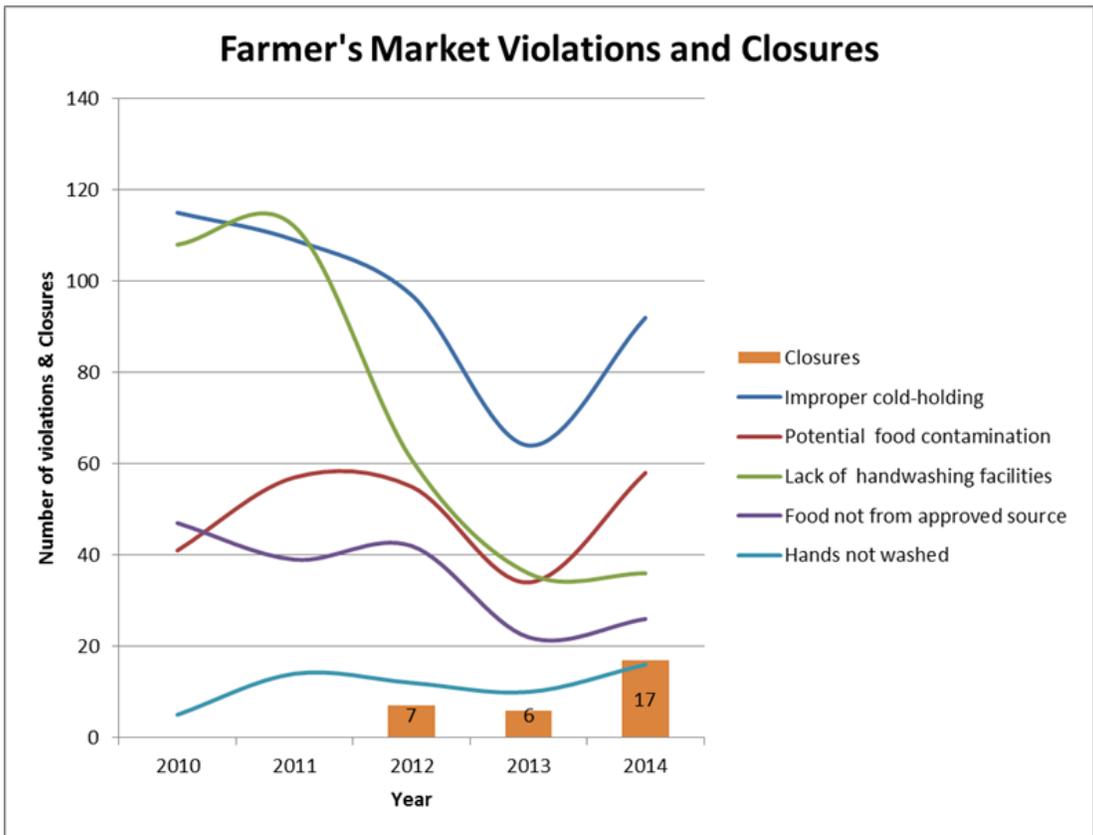


Table 3. Food safety violations and closures at farmers markets increased in 2014
 (Note: Farmers markets are inspected 2 times per year.)

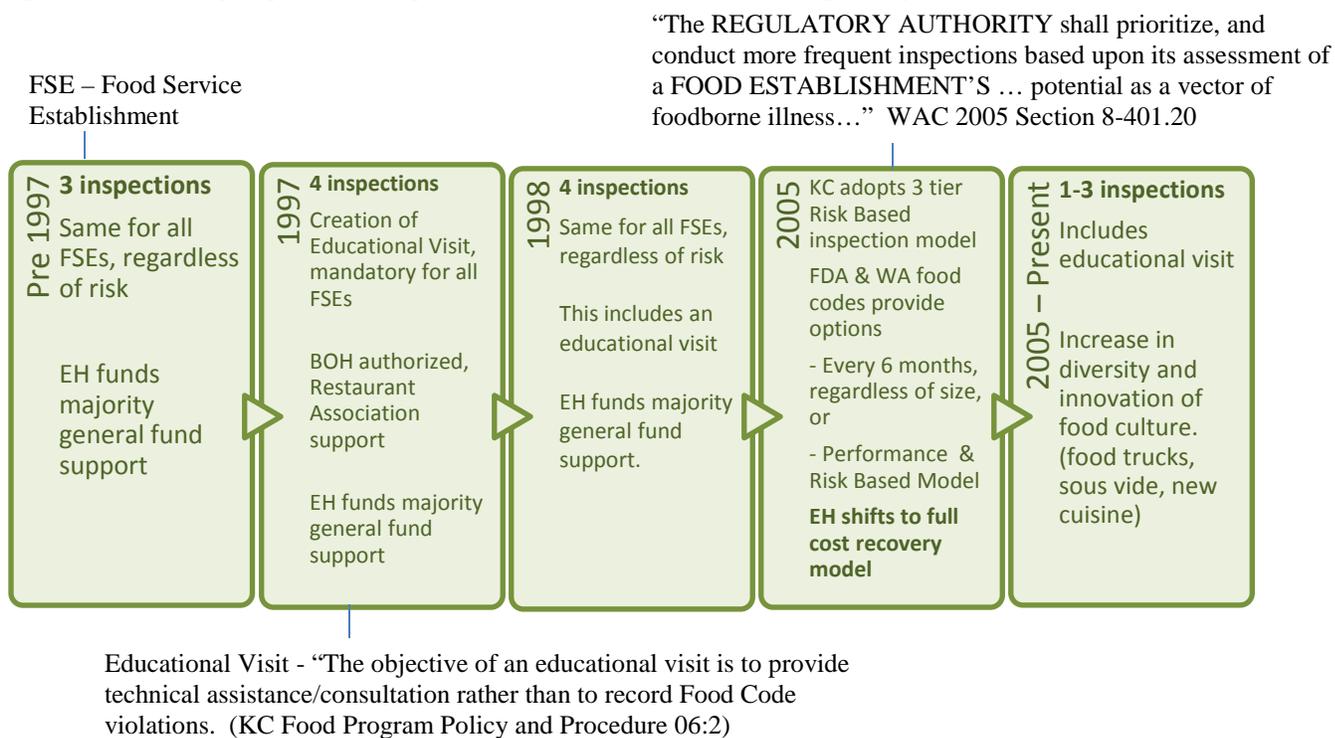
Service reduction 4: Eliminate educational visit

Permit types affected: All

Educational visits are not scored inspections – they are an opportunity for health inspectors to provide training and assistance to establishments regarding food safety best practices and health department expectations. All permits will be affected, as any customer/business may currently request educational inspections. Educational visits are built into the permit structure for food establishments in risk categories 2 and 3. These permits, of which there are approximately 9,000, will experience noticeable reduction in services they receive.

Educational visits in King County were authorized by the Board of Health in 1997 with support from the Restaurant Association. At that time, all establishments received 3 annual inspections and the additional educational visit. The Food Program maintained conducting 4 site visits (3 inspections and 1 educational) through 2005. During this time, Environmental Health received general funds. The Food Program shifted to fewer inspections per establishment, 1-3 including the educational visit in 2005, the same year Environmental Health shifted to a full cost recovery model.

Figure 3: Historical perspective of inspections and educational visits in King County



Timeline: Long term

Eliminating educational visits will require programmatic changes to occur throughout 2015 and 2016 for implementation in 2017. Changes would include revamping the inspection process, updates to all program outreach materials, and outreach to stakeholders.

Fiscal impact: To be determined

Elimination of the educational visit may result in an estimated 2,000 -3,000 fewer site visits (some categories of establishments may require more inspections in place of the educational visit). This would reduce staffing by 2-4 full time employees. While this may provide some savings, it is anticipated that costs would arise in other forms – through an increase in foodborne illness and complaint investigations, and less staff capacity to be available in emergency response efforts. Development and rollout of the new model will include analyzing and evaluating the financial implications to business owners and the Food Program.

Public health impact: Anticipated high risk
Evaluation of implementation will be required to assess the health implications.

In a 2013 survey of food establishments in King County, 73% reported that they “learn a lot from educational visits”.

Equity impact: Inequitable
Elimination of the educational visit would have a disproportionately negative impact on small businesses and non-English speaking business owners who value educational visits as part of their annual staff training.

Service reduction 5: Eliminate risk-based inspection model and shift to all establishments receiving 1 inspection per 6 months

The Washington State Retail Food Code specifies two options for structuring food inspections. One is to create a performance and risk based model and the other is to conduct an inspection every 6 months. King County currently operates with a risk-based inspection model, as do many local health jurisdictions throughout Washington including Benton/Franklin, Kitsap, Pierce, Skagit and Spokane counties.

Figure 4: Comparison of inspection models

Current model Performance & Risk Based WAC 2013 Section 8-401.20	Alternate WAC model 1 inspection every 6 months WAC 2013 Section 8-401.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocates time and resources according to food safety risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Risk 1 => one inspection (1,812 permits) – Risk 2 => 1 inspection, 1 educational (2,109 permits) – Risk 3 => 2 inspections, 1 educational (7,623 permits) • Provides equitable access to educational opportunity • 2013 stats (11,544 establishments, 28,899 inspections) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocates time and resources equally. Establishments receive same food safety oversight, regardless of risk • No educational visits included • Designed for local health districts with limited capacity • Projection of inspections based on 2013 stats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 23,088 Inspections, a reduction of 5,800 inspections

Permit types affected: All

All general food permits will be affected by this change – approximately 11,500 permit holders.

Timeline: Long term

Moving away from the risk-based inspection model will require programmatic changes to occur throughout 2015 and 2016 for implementation in 2017. Changes would include revamping the inspection process, creating new permit information, updating all program outreach materials, outreach to stakeholders and analyzing project change outcomes.

Fiscal impact: To be determined

Shifting from a risk-based model to two inspections a year for all establishments would reduce the number of inspections conducted by approximately 5,800 inspections. This would reduce staffing by 6-8 full time employees. While this may provide some savings, it is anticipated that costs would arise in other forms – through an increase in foodborne illness and complaint investigations, and less staff capacity to be available in emergency response efforts. Development and rollout of the new model will include analyzing and evaluating the financial implications to business owners and the Food Program.

Public health impact: High risk

The risk-based model is designed to enable local health jurisdictions to allocate resources according to risk. Shifting away from the risk-based model would mean that all establishments, regardless of complexity of operation and risk of food type, would receive the same amount of oversight. Low risk permit holders who currently receive one inspection will receive an additional inspection with this model. Conversely, high risk establishments who currently receive three inspections per year will receive one less. This is anticipated to create high risk for foodborne illness. Evaluation of implementation will be required to assess the health implications.

The 2014 Food Program Stakeholder subcommittee provided the following recommendations:

- Keep 3-tier risk based model
- Keep educational visits. Make them more accessible, enable online requests and provide tailor trainings specific to food establishment operations

Equity impact: Inequitable

This action would be inequitable to low-risk businesses and to the public. Equalizing the permit structure across all businesses would make permit fees the same for all businesses, regardless of size or type of operation. It would decrease food safety oversight for those who may need more assistance to manage high risk activities, and increase it for those who don't.

Timeline and next steps

Timelines and next steps include internal and external factors. At the January Board of Health meeting, Environmental Health and the Board of Health fee sub-committee brought forward a briefing of a fee proposal for the full Board including potential mitigation strategies. The Food Program is moving ahead with near-term actions to be ready for the 2015 permit cycle. A potential vote will occur at a future meeting, ideally before the end of the first quarter of 2015, and may integrate some or all of the near-term actions into the fee adoption. The Food Program will begin outreach to other counties regarding temporary events and farmers markets to begin developing a new permit structure here. The program has scheduled quarterly stakeholder meetings to keep stakeholders updated, and will schedule stakeholder specific meetings as needed. Environmental Health will work with staff and labor to identify staffing plans for Proviso 2 due on August, 2015.

Table 4: Timeline for next steps for 2015

Action items	Q1 – 2015	Q2 – 2015	Q3 – 2015	Q4 – 2015
Integrate near-term mitigation strategies				
Board of Health adopts 2015 fees				
Work with staff and labor regarding staffing plans				
Conduct outreach with other counties				
Identify best practices for farmers markets and temporary events				
Develop new permit structure for farmers markets and temporary events				
Conduct stakeholder outreach				



Sally J. Clark
Seattle City Councilmember

TO: Councilmember Largo Wales, Chair of Environmental Health Services Fees Subcommittee
 Ngozi Oleru, Division Manager, Environmental Health

FROM: Councilmember Sally J. Clark

DATE: January 7, 2015

RE: Environmental Health Services Fees for Food and Facilities

CC: Councilmember Joe McDermott, Chair of Board of Health
 Stella Chao, Deputy Director, Environmental Health Services

Over the past several months, the Board of Health's subcommittee on revised Environmental Health Services fees has with staff's great help made our way through complicated rate-setting conversations and some decisions. We remain blocked in one branch of those decisions, though, so I'm taking the opportunity of the New Year to set out a series of ideas and questions I hope will move us forward.

First, I feel comfortable with the decision to discontinue the single unified rate and pursue two rates, one for Community Environmental Health (Solid Waste, Pets, and Wastewater) and one for Food and Facilities (Food and Water Recreation). While I wish we were prepared with a full Environmental Health Services rate proposal for the Board of Health to consider, we aren't. **I propose that the rate proposal for the Community Environmental Health side move forward for BOH consideration in February, but that we take additional time to build a better proposal for the Food and Facilities rate.**

As to the Food and Facilities work, my take on what we've done so far:

- Maintained food and community safety as our top priority;
- Reviewed audit reports;
- Reviewed time/work analyses; and
- Reviewed initial staff-generated options for rates (and ultimately fees) to be charged division clients.
- We have worked under the King County Executive and Council's requirement that the division be self-sustaining.
- We have adhered to the requirement that fee-based programs charge only the rates and associated costs required to run the program.
- After completion of King County's 2015 budget we have now incorporated the requirements of provisos that passed with that budget.

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- Concurrent with this work, we have received much public feedback regarding the anticipated negative impact of substantially higher rates (and fees) on vendors at special events, especially farmers markets, and on the financial sustainability of farmers markets overall.

My impression is that we (and staff) remain stuck between two goals -- cost recovery and what can be seen as a “reasonable” increase to cover program costs. In our discussions committee members have pressed the question of how the program can reduce costs while maintaining safety. With staff comprising approximately 70% of program costs, the main levers to pull would seem to be **staff time** required for inspections, education and compliance, and the **frequency of “touches”** for the inspected groups. (It’s been helpful to be reminded that the time “on-site” is not all that’s paid for when a vender pays a fee. The rates take into account a distributed share of ongoing education and compliance work not covered by fines.)

Also, through our discussions, sub-committee members have wondered about the complexity of the current permit categories and whether there is an opportunity to simplify permitting from a customer perspective.

Additional work requested

I appreciate the important work of the Environmental Health division of Public Health to protect the health of our residents, and the difficulties of balancing this work with keeping fees low and promoting small businesses and the economy, all while operating on a fee-based system. I support the efforts already put forward by Public Health to examine the indirect cost allocations and to restructure staffing models to reduce overtime costs. It is my intention to ensure that we are considering *all* options to offer the best service to the community and to businesses.

To that end, I submit the following ideas and questions to feed our work. It’s my hope that we can use the information to come to BOH in the spring with a proposal for Food and Facility rates.

Farmers market and other temporary event **vendor** permits:

1. PH staff is considering a tiered permit system that would allow vendors to purchase permits allowing them to participate in multiple markets or events (rather than a separate permit for every event). I support this inquiry and would like to see further details, including tier options, potential associated rates, food safety implications and whether tier choice by a vendor would result in different inspection assumptions. Please also provide data points on how many events/markets vendors typically attend and any feedback on the process required for vendors to declare where and when they will be operating under this permit option.
2. In public feedback, some vendors have suggested PH offer a choice between a full-year permit and a reduced-cost seasonal vendor permit. A tiered approach to the number of events allowed under a vendor’s permit might already address this idea, but please provide

the pros and cons to this full-year-versus-seasonal approach and the recommended number of inspections and costs per permit option.

3. In brainstorming sessions the idea of a bonus (like a fee discount) for vendors with better inspection history has come up. Rates currently take into account food product risk levels. Could a rate proposal or final fee calculation also take into account a vendor's inspection and compliance record via a discount? Please provide pros and cons to this approach and, for further dialogue, a recommended discount amount.

Farmers market and temporary event **coordinator** permits:

PH data shows there a reduction in food safety violations at farmers markets over the past 4 years. This is likely due in part to PH staff's close working relationships with market staff and vendors. In the last rate review several years ago, rate increases were slightly mitigated by increasing the expectations on market coordinators. These market coordinators are not vendors, rather the staff employed by the market producing organization to oversee logistics and operations of markets.

In some public feedback we've heard encouragement to further increase and formalize the expectations on coordinators as a way to decrease PH inspector time and costs, and we've heard concern about what large increases in the market coordinator permit fees might mean to market financial sustainability.

4. Is there room to expand and formalize this market coordinator relationship with PH by training market staff (which carries a cost) and signing a contract agreement for market coordinators to provide specified food safety oversight? Please provide the pros and cons to this approach, requirements through the state food code, the recommended number of inspections and the predicted impact on rates and fees for this option.
5. Is there a continued utility in having one fee category for recurring event coordinators and a different category for farmers market recurring coordinators? Are there fundamental differences in events and markets and the related inspections that yielded this division? The questions below explore alternatives for structuring these categories.
6. Most farmers markets run in summer months and a smaller number (though they're larger markets) run year-round. However, the market coordinator fee looks to be one-size-fits-all. Please consider offering both a full-year market coordinator permit and a seasonal permit. Please provide the pros and cons to this approach and the recommended number of inspections and costs per permit option.
7. In the feedback sessions, we heard from those who coordinate markets and events in a wide range of sizes (by number of vendors) who raised questions about the difference in inspection time for larger and smaller markets. Please explore options for offering tiered market coordinator permit fee levels according to the size of the market, perhaps by total vendors or by total prepared food vendors.

Ways to further mitigate overall farmers market and special event costs

8. Overall, everyone involved with this review has spoken to the positive contributions markets and seasonal events involving food vendors make to our communities. Are there other efforts outside the PH EHS division rate review to examine the costs borne by these events? For example, street use permit fees, utility fees, costs of private land leases, outreach, etc.?
9. In public comment we've heard multiple requests for King County to reevaluate the total cost recovery approach to PH EHS rates and fees for vendors, markets and events. Speakers have passionately encouraged measuring and quantifying in some way the public benefit brought into communities by markets, vendors and other events. This is beyond the reach of BOH, but I hope those requests can be examined.



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 9:
2015 Legislative Session Update
DISCUSSION ITEM

SCA Staff Contact

Lyset Cadena, Senior Policy Analyst, lyset@soundcities.org, 206-433-7169

Discussion Item:

SCA staff will provide an update on issues currently before the 2015 legislature, specifically focusing on SCA’s legislative priorities of a comprehensive statewide transportation package, sustainable public health funding and providing cities with adequate tools to provide needed municipal services.

Background:

The Washington State legislature convened for the first day of session on January 12, 2015. In the odd-numbered year, for example, 2015, the regular session is 105 days; in the even-numbered year, for example, 2014, it is 60 days.

2015 Session Cutoff Calendar

January 12, 2015	First Day of Session
February 20, 2015	Last day to read in committee reports in house of origin, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
February 27, 2015	Last day to read in committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees in house of origin.
March 11, 2015	Last day to consider bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).
April 1, 2015	Last day to read in committee reports from opposite house, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
April 7, 2015	Last day to read in opposite house committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
April 15, 2015*	Last day to consider opposite house bills (5 p.m.) (except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session).
April 26, 2015	Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

* After the 94th day, only initiatives, alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, matters that affect state revenue, messages pertaining to amendments, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session may be considered.

2015 Legislative Session Priorities for the Sound Cities Association

The Legislature has a lot on its plate this session, including funding education and mental health services, and addressing conflicts between the state's recreational and medical marijuana laws. The Sound Cities Association has expressed strong support for three priority issues: a comprehensive statewide transportation package, sustainable public health funding and providing cities with adequate tools to provide needed municipal services.

Transportation

Representative Joan McBride (D-Kirkland) sponsored [HB 1593](#) concerning local transportation options. The bill would increase the Transportation Benefit District (TBD) councilmanic motor vehicle fee authority from \$20 to \$50, allow a city to assume administrative functions of a TBD entirely within its borders, make the TBD sales tax authority councilmanic rather than voter-approved, and authorize cities to form transportation utilities.

Representative Jake Fey (D-Tacoma) sponsored [HB 1757](#) concerning local transportation options. The bill would allow a city or county to assume administrative function of a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) and authorize a motor vehicle fee from \$20 to \$50 with voter approval.

Representative Jake Fey (D-Tacoma) sponsored [HB 1180](#) and Senator Lias (D-Edmonds) sponsored [SB 5128](#) concerning dedicated funding sources for high capacity transportation service. The companion bills would authorize a motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) up to 0.8%, increase the sales and use tax up to 0.5%, and impose a property tax levy of up to 25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value for the expansion of Sound Transit service. The House Transportation committee passed [HB 1180](#) on February 2, 2015.

Discussions on a comprehensive statewide transportation package are ongoing and it appears that the Senate might be releasing a transportation proposal in the coming weeks.

Infrastructure

Governor Inslee allocated about \$70 million for the Public Works Trust Fund (PWTF) construction loans while the Public Works Board recommended funding for \$170 million in projects. AWC and others are working to protect and enhance the Public Works Trust fund.

Two bills related to tax increment financing have been introduced: [HB 1383](#) would allow cities to create an apportionment district and impose a special property tax within the district on the incremental property value increase within the district. [SB 5624](#) and the accompanying constitutional amendment in [SJR 8204](#) provide a framework to assist small to medium sized jurisdictions access the private debt (bond) market by providing state assistance to go through the process.

Marijuana

Senator Ann Rivers (R-La Center), along with Senator Mark Mullet (D-Issaquah), and a number of other senators introduced a bill, [SB 5417](#), that would share a portion of the marijuana excise tax with local governments. The bill shares 33% of the excise tax revenue collected by the state with cities and counties per a distribution model that provides funding for jurisdictions based in-part on how much marijuana revenue is generated in their community and also in-part on a per-capita basis for criminal justice purposes. The bill only provides revenue to jurisdictions that allow for the siting of marijuana businesses. Additionally, it allows for local authority for a city to modify the 1,000 foot buffer zone around certain uses.

Also introduced were two bills that addressed flexibility in siting marijuana businesses:

- [HB 1411](#) allows a legislative body of a city or town to exempt certain land uses from the one thousand foot buffer from marijuana businesses if it is necessary for the creation of enough potential locations within the city or town of a marijuana retail facility and it will not negatively impact the jurisdiction's strong regulatory enforcement, law enforcement interests, public safety or public health.
- [HB 1413](#) reduces the buffer for marijuana businesses from 1,000 feet to 100 feet for the following uses: recreation center or facility, child care center, public park, public transit center, or library, or any game arcade admission to which is not restricted to persons aged twenty-one years or older.

Another bill would add additional uses to the 1,000 foot buffer criteria. [HB 5450](#) adds churches, chemical dependency programs and other places where children generally congregate to the 1,000 foot buffer requirement. If passed, the new exclusions would be applied prospectively to new licensees and to renewals.

Two bills have been introduced to align medical and recreational marijuana. Senator Jeanne Kohl-Wells (D-Seattle) introduced [SB 5519](#) and Senator Ann Rivers (R-La Center) introduced [SB 5052](#).

2015-2017 Operating Biennial Budget

Providing cities with adequate tools to provide needed municipal services such as the liquor excise tax, retaining streamlined sales tax mitigation and funding for public health are part of the budget discussions that are ongoing. In regards to the 1% property tax issue, no bills have been introduced but it is part of the ongoing budget discussions.

Other Areas of Interest

Oil Train Safety

Senator Doug Ericksen (R-Ferndale) sponsored [SB 5057](#) relating to the safe transport of hazardous materials. This bill requires the Department of Ecology to develop a grant program for emergency first responders to meet the needs for oil and hazardous materials spill prevention and response plans. It also imposes an oil spill response tax and the oil spill administration tax on bulk oil terminals receiving crude oil shipments by rail tank car.

Senator Christine Rolfes (D-Bainbridge Island) has also introduced Governor Inslee request legislation [SB 5087](#), which closely follows the recommendations in the Department of Ecology Marine and Rail Oil Transport Study. This bill provides more authority and resources for the Department of Ecology and the Utilities & Transportation Commission to prevent and respond to oil transportation incidents.

Next Steps:

Additional and up-to-date information, including opportunities for testimony on pertinent bills, will be provided at the February 11, 2015 PIC meeting.



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 10:
2014 Membership Survey Results
DISCUSSION ITEM

SCA Staff Contact

Deanna Dawson, Executive Director, office 206-433-7170, deanna@soundcities.org

Discussion Item:

SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson will provide a summary of the results of the 2014/2015 SCA Membership Survey, focusing on feedback received regarding the Public Issues Committee (PIC).

Background:

Our mission at SCA is to provide leadership through advocacy, education, mutual support and networking to cities in King County as they act locally and partner regionally to create livable vital communities. Our vision for the future is to be the most influential advocate for cities, effectively collaborating to create regional solutions. We are continually working to improve as an organization, and to provide excellent value to our member cities.

In 2012 the SCA Board of Directors identified the need for a membership survey to obtain a baseline assessment of membership satisfaction, to identify areas for organizational improvement, and to determine how to provide additional value to members. The membership survey revealed a high level of membership satisfaction. Over 90% of members indicated that they felt that the organization was heading in the right direction.

This past year, SCA decided to conduct another membership survey to take stock on what is working well and how we can improve in the future. The results of this survey will help the Board and staff learn what our member cities value most, and how we can improve in the future.

At the February 11, 2015 PIC meeting, SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson will provide the PIC with an overview of the results of the 2014/2015 Membership Survey. She will focus on feedback received about the PIC.



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 11:
SCA Potential Issues for 2015
DISCUSSION ITEM

SCA Staff Contact

Deanna Dawson, Executive Director, office 206-433-7170, deanna@soundcities.org

Discussion Item:

SCA staff is seeking feedback on issues members would like the PIC to consider in 2015.

Background

At the January 14, 2015 Public Issues Committee (PIC) meeting, SCA Executive Director asked members to note any issues PIC should consider in 2015. Following is a list of issues members noted at that meeting. SCA staff is seeking feedback on this list and if other issues should be added for consideration. SCA staff will keep this list updated throughout the year.

Potential Issues:

- Homelessness
 - Identified at 1/14/2015 PIC
 - On agenda for 2/11/2015
- Best Starts for Kids Levy, Early Learning
 - Identified at 1/14/2015 PIC
 - Will be a Pre-PIC item for 3/11/2015
- Jail Management Plan
 - Identified at 1/14/2015 PIC
 - Staff working with City of Auburn staff to determine next steps
- Regional Food Policy Action Plan
 - Identified at 1/14/2015 PIC
 - On agenda for 2/11/2015 as an informational item
- Sound Transit 3
 - Identified at 1/14/2015 PIC
 - Will come to PIC as an informational or discussion item as more details emerge
- Medical Marijuana Edibles Regulation
 - Identified at 1/14/2015 PIC
 - Will come to PIC if potential regulations come to the Board of Health



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 12a:

Service Guidelines Task Force

Informational Item

SCA Staff Contact

Lyset Cadena, Senior Policy Analyst, lyset@soundcities.org, 206-433-7169

SCA Regional Transit Committee Representatives

Councilmember Kimberly Allen (caucus chair), Redmond; Councilmember Dave Asher, Kirkland; Mayor Bruce Basset, Mercer Island; Councilmember Dennis Higgins, Kent; Mayor Dave Hill (caucus vice-chair), Algona; Councilmember Kathy Hougardy, Tukwila; Councilmember Wayne Osborne, Auburn; Councilmember John Wright, Lake Forest Park; Mayor Bill Allison, Maple Valley (alternate); Deputy Mayor Kathy Huckabay, Sammamish (alternate); Mayor Matt Larson, Snoqualmie (alternate); Council President Ed Prince, Renton (alternate).

About the Regional Transit Committee

The Regional Transit Committee (RTC) reviews and makes recommendations to the King County Council on policies for public transportation services operated by King County. The committee's responsibilities include the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, which is the blueprint for establishing guidelines for allocation of transit service throughout King County; long range planning; and the structure for transit fares.

Background

In 2009, in response to Metro's ongoing financial challenges and the increasing regional interest in improving efficiency of the system, the first Regional Transit Task Force (RTTF) was convened. The work of the task force was the foundation for the adopted King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation and Service Guidelines that are in place today.

The Service Guidelines are a living document that will evolve over time and now is the time to evaluate the Guidelines before the next update to the Guidelines.

2015-2016 King County Biennial Budget

The adopted 2015-2015 King County Biennial Budget included a proviso requiring the Executive to transmit a motion establishing a regional stakeholder transit task force to review and make recommendations regarding:

1. How transit service performance is measured as specified in the Metro Service Guidelines to reflect the varied purposes of different types of transit service;
2. Approaches to evaluating how the goal of geographic value is included in the Metro Service Guidelines, including minimum service standards;

3. Approaches to evaluating how the goal of social equity is included in the Metro Service Guidelines;
4. Outline financial policies for purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities; and
5. Outline guidelines for alternative services implementation.

Service Guidelines Task Force Objectives ([Attachment A](#))

1. **Transit Service types:** The Task Force will review and consider the transit service types that are currently included in the guidelines and make recommendations on potential additional types of service. For each suggested service type, including alternative services, the Task Force will review potential performance measures, such as crowding standards, and may recommend modifications to achieve desired outcomes that could be incorporated into the service guidelines.
2. **Geographic value:** The Task Force will consider and make recommendations on minimum levels of service established by the service guidelines or added through future long range planning efforts. The Task Force will also consider and make recommendations on the role of park-and-rides in providing geographic value.
3. **Social equity:** The Task Force will consider and make recommendations on additional ways to incorporate social equity measures in the guidelines, such as incorporating social service agencies into the analysis. The Task Force may examine available information and data on social and human services, shifting land uses and demographic trends.
4. **Financial policies for purchase of additional services:** The Task Force will consider the newly established Community Mobility Contracts (CMC) program and the current financial policies for the purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities as it relates to the Service Guidelines. The Task Force may make recommendations on changes to the guidelines as they relate to the CMC program.
5. **Guidelines for alternative services implementation:** The Task Force will build on the work completed for the Alternative Service Delivery five-year implementation plan and the 2015-2016 budget. The Task Force will review the alternative service type and guidelines for implementation as part of the service types and geographic value discussions. The Task Force may make recommendations on changes to the Service Guidelines as they relate to the alternative services program.

Service Guidelines Task Force Membership

Membership of the task force includes 30 executive-level participants representing a variety of interests throughout King County. Membership includes a mix of elected officials, corporate/business leaders, labor, major institutions, human and social services, large employers, environmental groups, transit advisory committee members, mobility advocates, metropolitan planning organizations and unincorporated area representatives. The final membership will be confirmed by the King County Council through the passage of proposed motion 2015-0041.

Timeline

The Service Guidelines Task Force is scheduled to convene on February 19, 2015 and will meet six times with sub-committee meetings as needed.

Next Steps

SCA staff will monitor and attend task force meetings and provide briefings to members of the Public Issues Committee (PIC). A pre-PIC meeting on the Service Guidelines Task Force and Metro's Long Range Plan has been tentatively scheduled for March 11, 2015.

Attachment:

- A. [Service Guidelines Task Force Work Plan](#)

King County Metro Transit

Service Guidelines Task Force Work Plan

A regional stakeholder transit Task Force charged with reviewing and making recommendations regarding service types, geographic value and social equity, as well as financial policies for purchase of additional services and alternatives services implementation.

January 5, 2015

Prepared for:
King County Council

Prepared by:



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Metro Transit Division
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Introduction

Ordinance 17941, which adopted the 2015/2016 King County Biennial Budget included proviso (P1), stating:

Of this appropriation \$1,000,000 may not be encumbered until the executive transmits a motion establishing a regional stakeholder transit Task Force and adopting a detailed Task Force work plan and the motion is passed by the council. The motion shall reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance, ordinance section and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

- A. *The work plan shall provide for convening a Task Force by March 31, 2015 that is charged with reviewing and making recommendations regarding:

 - 1. *How transit service performance is measured as specified in the Metro Service Guidelines to reflect the varied purposes of different types of transit service;*
 - 2. *Approaches to evaluating how the goal of geographic value is included in the Metro Service Guidelines, including minimum service standards;*
 - 3. *Approaches to evaluating how the goal of social equity is included in the Metro Service Guidelines;*
 - 4. *Outline financial policies for purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities;*
 - 5. *Outline guidelines for alternative services implementation; and**
- B. *The work plan shall reflect integration with long range transit system planning and reflect corridor analyses including of Sound Transit corridors as well as Metro Transit System corridors.*
- C. *The work plan shall include a scope of work, tasks, schedule, milestones, budget, Task Force membership criteria and the creation of an interbranch working group to support the Task Force process.*

The executive must file the work plan and motion approving it by January 14, 2015, in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the policy staff director and the lead staff for the regional transit committee and the transportation, economy and environment committee, or its successor.

This work plan addresses the requirements of Proviso 1 from Section 113 of Ordinance 17941.

Scope of Work

This section outlines the scope of work, including project background and the objectives of the Task Force.

Background

In 2009, in response to Metro's ongoing financial challenges and the increasing regional interest in improving efficiency of the system, the first Regional Transit Task Force (RTTF) was convened. The work of the award-winning Task Force was the foundation for the adopted Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, 2011-2021 and King County Metro Service Guidelines that are in place today.

The RTTF called for transparent, performance-based guidelines emphasizing productivity, social equity, and geographic value. To this end, the Service Guidelines list 64 transit activity centers, 17 regional growth centers, and four manufacturing/industrial centers, that are distributed throughout King County and are connected by transit corridors. Target service levels on these transit corridors are identified through a scoring system, with points assigned as follows:

- 50 percent of points are based on household, job, and college student proximity to the corridor;
- 25 percent of points are based on the share of boardings in census tracts with higher than average low-income and minority populations; and
- 25 percent of the points are awarded for corridors that are the primary connections between centers.

Analysis of total points scored establishes an initial service level in one of six service families a corridor belongs in: very frequent, frequent, local, hourly, peak, or alternative service. The results of this analysis inform investment and reduction priorities for specific routes, which also take into account the actual performance of each route.

In the three years since these planning documents were adopted, Metro has completed four Service Guidelines Reports and adjusted service ten times. The County also updated the Service Guidelines in 2013. Building on the lessons of the past three years, further refinements to the Guidelines could help to ensure that future transit investments reflect the intent of the RTTF's policy guidance. The Service Guidelines Task Force that will be convened starting early in 2015 will use the solid foundation developed in the 2009 effort to further analyze how transit service is allocated and measured across the region. The success of the RTTF was, in part, due to the tremendous collaboration by King County, partner cities, regional decision makers, and diverse stakeholders. This same approach will help to develop recommendations that improve the regional transit system.

The Service Guidelines are a living document that will evolve over time, and after three years of their use, now is an opportune time to evaluate them in advance of the next update to the Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines, scheduled for 2015.

Objectives of the Service Guidelines Task Force

The Task Force will consider the varied purposes and performance characteristics of different types of transit service, which could include definitions of types of service beyond the market based service types (Seattle core versus non-Seattle core) that are currently in the guidelines. The Task Force will review how the geographic value and social equity standards have been incorporated into the adopted guidelines. The Task Force will build upon existing work completed for the Community Mobility Contracts (CMC) program to outline financial policies for the purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities. The Task Force will also build upon work completed for the Alternative Services Program to outline guidelines for alternative

services implementation. The discussion of alternative services will be incorporated into the discussion on service types, social equity, and geographic value.

Given the robust nature of the above discussion topics, Metro would like to provide clarity about the Task Force process. Metro recommends that the discussion focus on the following aspects (see the Proposed Schedule on page 11 for the order that these topics would be presented to the Task Force):

1. **Transit service types:** The proviso asks Metro to review and make recommendations on “how transit service performance is measured as specified in the Metro Service Guidelines to reflect the varied purposes of different types of transit service.”

Definition: In 2010, the RTTF recommended that Metro create and adopt a new set of performance measures by service type. As Metro developed the Service Guidelines, Metro identified two types of service, based on the market served – those that serve the Seattle core (downtown Seattle, First Hill, Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, the University District or Uptown) and those that do not serve the Seattle core. Metro evaluates performance by service type and by whether the service operates all-day or during peak-periods. In addition, Metro is currently following policies updated in 2013 by incorporating alternative services more fully into performance measurement and evaluating these services separately. As noted in the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) peer review of Metro Transit, “Metro could continue to evaluate opportunities to revise the service guidelines to compare service productivity by service type as this enables a more appropriate analysis of service.”

With Task Force guidance, Metro could introduce a different or expanded way of defining service types beyond services that do or do not serve the Seattle core. Different types of fixed route transit services serve different purposes depending on the transportation needs of an area, land use characteristics, density of population and trip-generating attractions. Transit that serves these different purposes could be held to different productivity standards.

Task Force work: The Task Force will review and consider the transit service types that are currently included in the guidelines and make recommendations on potential additional types of service. For each suggested service type, including alternative services, the Task Force will review potential performance measures, such as crowding standards, and may recommend modifications to achieve desired outcomes that could be incorporated into the service guidelines.

2. **Geographic value:** The proviso asks Metro to review and make recommendations on “approaches to evaluating how the goal of geographic value is included in the Metro Service Guidelines, including minimum service standards.”

Definition: In 2010, the RTTF recommended that the policy guidance for making service reduction and service growth decisions should be based on three principles, one of which is to provide geographic value throughout the county. According to the RTTF, service allocation decisions (for both reductions and growth) must be perceived as “fair” throughout the county and should be represented by three elements – balancing access with productivity, tax equity, and economic vitality. As Metro developed the service guidelines, Metro identified 64 Transit Activity Centers that are distributed throughout King County and include major destinations and transit attractions, such as large employment sites, significant healthcare institutions and major social service agencies.

These Transit Activity Centers, taken together with the 17 regional growth centers and four manufacturing/industrial centers, represent activity nodes throughout King County that form the basis for an interconnected transit network throughout the urban growth area of King County. Metro identifies primary connections between centers as warranting a higher level of service – these connections are the predominant transit connections between centers, based on a combination of ridership and travel time.

The guidelines also incorporate geographic value by classifying routes by market served – Seattle core and non-Seattle core – as described in the social equity section above. This classification allows us to compare similar routes when assessing productivity. Routes that serve the Seattle core are expected to perform at a higher level because their market potential is greater than routes serving other parts of King County.

With Task Force guidance, Metro could look at how geographic value is represented in the transit system, including potential introduction of minimum service levels on the primary connections between centers to ensure that the more dispersed transit activity centers are connected at usable service levels to the main destinations that people travel. Metro could also examine whether the function that park-and-rides play in providing access to the transit network is adequately reflected in the guidelines.

Task Force work: In reviewing the geographic value standards, the Task Force will consider and make recommendations on minimum levels of service established by the service guidelines or added through future Long Range Planning efforts. The Task Force will also consider and make recommendations on the role of park-and-rides in providing geographic value.

3. **Social equity:** The proviso asks Metro to review and make recommendations on “approaches to evaluating how the goal of social equity is included in the Metro Service Guidelines.”

Definition: In 2010, the RTTF recommended that the policy guidance for making service reduction and service growth decisions should be based on three principles, one of which is to ensure social equity. As Metro developed the service guidelines, Metro determined that it would identify areas where low-income and minority populations are concentrated as warranting higher levels of service. Metro determines low-income and minority census tracts using census data, and then compares the percentage of people who board buses in these areas with the county average. Metro evaluates changes to its service network using Federal Transit Administration requirements, including Title VI, which calls for changes not to cause a disparate impact on minority populations or a disproportionate burden on low-income populations. In 2013, Metro updated its service guidelines to include information about Title VI. Metro’s evaluation of productivity and ridership in the service guidelines also reinforces the targeting of service where transit dependent communities exist.

With Task Force guidance, Metro could expand the social equity measures in the guidelines to include more specific information about where services are located where such information exists. Metro could also examine incorporating destination information about where social services are located, not just where people are traveling from, into the service guidelines process.

Task Force work: in reviewing the social equity goal, the Task Force will consider and make recommendations on additional ways to incorporate social equity measures in the guidelines, such as incorporating social service agencies into the analysis. The Task Force may examine the available information and data on social and human services, shifting land uses and demographic trends.

- 4. Financial policies for purchase of additional services:** The proviso asks Metro to “outline financial policies for purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities.”

Definition: Metro has established the Community Mobility Contract (CMC) program that allows cities or entities to purchase transit service beyond what Metro is able to provide given financial constraints.

With Task Force guidance, Metro could build on the work that is being completed for the CMC program and identify guidelines that could be included in the Service Guidelines update.

Task Force work: The Task Force will consider the newly established CMC program and the current financial policies for the purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities as it relates to the Service Guidelines. The Task Force may make recommendations on changes to the guidelines as they relate to the CMC program.

- 5. Guidelines for alternative services implementation:** The proviso asks Metro to “outline guidelines for alternative services implementation.”

Definition: The 2015-2016 Transit budget earmarks \$12 million over two years for alternative services implementation. Metro is developing an alternative services program and has identified a service family for alternative service in the service guidelines.

With Task Force guidance, Metro could build on the work that is being done for the Alternative Services Program and identify guidelines that could be included in the Service Guidelines update. Metro’s Five-Year Implementation Plan for Alternatives to Traditional Transit Service Delivery (Alternative Services Plan) was adopted in 2012. This plan is intended to guide Metro’s decision-making about the provision of alternatives to fixed route service in King County between 2012 and 2017 and provides additional detail on product types, outreach process, and candidate areas for alternative service delivery. Building on this plan, the 2015-2016 budget includes funding to expand the program to mitigate for fixed route transit service reductions, right-size for cost-efficiency and provide complementary services.

Task Force work: The Task Force will build on the work completed for the Alternative Service Delivery five-year implementation plan and the 2015-2016 budget. The Task Force will review the alternative service type and guidelines for implementation as part of the service types and geographic value discussions. The Task Force may make recommendations on changes to the Service Guidelines as they relate to the alternative services program.

Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of the facilitator/mediator, Metro staff and the Service Guidelines Task Force members.

Responsibilities of the Facilitator/Mediator

We propose using a facilitator modeled after the Regional Transit Task force effort. The facilitator/mediator will be responsible for the following list of tasks. This task list may be updated in the future.

Lay the Process Foundation

- Conduct initial communication with Task Force members and County Councilmembers.
- Help with preparation of initial materials for Task Force members.
- Prepare and review materials and agendas for Task Force meetings.

Build the Framework of Consensus

- Facilitate Task Force meetings.
- Conduct ongoing communication with Task Force members.
- Facilitate sub-committee meetings as needed.
- Communicate and meet with Project Coordination Team and Interbranch Working Group.

Finalize the Recommendations

- Prepare final recommendations and summary report for regional, local and unincorporated areas.
- Participate in and prepare for briefings and updates of County Executive, County Council, and other stakeholders.

Responsibilities of Metro Staff

Metro staff will be responsible for the following list of tasks. This task list may be updated in the future.

Lay the Process Foundation

- Set up Task Force meetings and framework.
- Prepare initial materials for Task Force members.
- Prepare materials and agendas for Task Force meetings.

Build the Framework of Consensus

- Handle meeting logistics and materials preparation for all meetings.
- Respond to requests for information.

Finalize the Recommendations

- Prepare final recommendations and summary report for regional, local and unincorporated areas.
- Participate in and prepare for briefings and updates of County Executive, County Council and other stakeholders.

Responsibilities of Task Force Members

Task Force Members will be engaged in the following list of activities. This list may be updated in the future.

Lay the Process Foundation

- Participate in initial interviews with Facilitator and:
 - Express opinions, perspectives, and interests.
 - Identify possible solutions that might be proposed during the meetings.

Build the Framework of Consensus

- Attend Task Force meetings between February and May. Meetings are expected to be three hours each.
- Communicate as needed with Facilitator between meetings.
- Attend sub-committee meetings as needed.
- Keep an open mind about possible solutions that could reflect a consensus among Task Force members.
- Work together to identify a consensus set of recommendations to the Facilitator and Metro.

Finalize the Recommendations

- Review and provide comments on recommendations.

Responsibilities of Project Coordination Team

The Project Coordination Team will consist of members of Metro staff, the Facilitator, County Council central staff, and County Executive staff, and will be engaged in the following list of activities. This list may be updated in the future.

Lay the Process Foundation

- Prepare agendas and review materials for Service Guidelines Task Force meetings.

Build the Framework of Consensus

- Attend Task Force meetings between February and May. Meetings are expected to be three hours each.
- Prepare agendas and review materials for Service Guidelines Task Force meetings.

Finalize the Recommendations

- Review final recommendations and summary report for regional, local and unincorporated areas.
- Participate in and prepare for briefings and updates of County Executive, County Council and other stakeholders.

Responsibilities of Interbranch Working Group

We propose using an Interbranch Working Group, with staff representatives of all nine King County Councilmembers, County Council Central staff, County Executive staff, Metro staff and the facilitator, modeled after the Regional Transit Task force effort. The Interbranch Working Group will be responsible for the following list of tasks. This task list may be updated in the future.

Lay the Process Foundation

- Attend meetings and inform stakeholders about process.

Build the Framework of Consensus

- Attend Interbranch Working Group meetings between February and May. Meetings are expected to be an hour and a half each.
- Communicate as needed with Metro staff between meetings.
- Communicate with and inform stakeholders about the process.

Finalize the Recommendations

- Review final recommendations and summary report for regional, local and unincorporated areas.
- Participate in briefings and updates of County Council and other stakeholders.

Tasks, Deliverables, Milestones and Budget

The table below outlines the tasks involved in supporting the Task Force, as well as deliverables, and milestones.

Tasks, Deliverables, and Milestones

Tasks	Deliverables	Responsibility	Milestones
Lay the Process Foundation			
Prepare & Reach Agreement on Scope of Work and Schedule	Final invitation letter to Task Force members	Facilitator	Mid-January, 2015
Conduct initial communication with Task Force Members	Initial interviews w/ Task Force members and County Councilmembers	Facilitator	Mid-February, 2015
	Memo that summarizes members interests, and provides a statement of key findings and mutual interests	Facilitator	End of February, 2015
Set up Task Force meetings and framework	Schedule meetings for Task Force, Interbranch Working Group and Project Coordination Team	Metro Project Manager	Mid-January, 2015
	Provide all materials, logistic support for meetings	Metro Project Manager	Ongoing
Prepare initial materials for Task Force	Create background notebook	Metro Project Manager	Mid-February, 2015
	Review and shape background notebook	Facilitator	Mid-February, 2015
Prepare Materials for Task Force Meetings	Work with Project Coordination Team to prepare and establish Task Force meeting agendas	Facilitator	1-2 times per month
	Prepare meeting materials, presentations	Metro Project Manager	1-2 times per month
	Review and comment on meeting agendas, materials and presentations	Facilitator	1-2 times per month

Tasks	Deliverables	Responsibility	Milestones
Build the Framework of Consensus			
Facilitate Task Force Meetings	Prepare for, facilitate and follow-up on Task Force meetings	Facilitator	1-2 times per month
	Prepare ground rules	Facilitator	Mid-February, 2015
	Prepare and distribute meeting summaries	Facilitator	1-2 times per month
	Handle meeting logistics and materials preparation	Metro Project Manager	Ongoing
Conduct ongoing communication with Task Force members	Build relationships with Task Force members	Facilitator	Ongoing
	Communicate with members between meetings	Facilitator	Ongoing
	Respond to requests for information	Metro Project Manager	Ongoing
Facilitate sub-committee meetings (if needed)	Facilitate and support sub-committees as needed	Metro/Facilitator	As needed
Communicate with Staff and Leadership Teams	Project Coordination Team logistics	Metro Project Manager	1-2 times per month
	Interbranch Working Group meeting logistics	Metro Project Manager	Monthly
	Attend Project Coordination Team and Interbranch Working Group meetings	Metro/Facilitator	2-4 times per month
	Coordinate with county staff on a regular basis	Facilitator	Ongoing
Finalize the Recommendations			
Prepare Final Recommendations and Summary Report	Develop outline of draft recommendations	Facilitator	End of June, 2015
	Draft and support preparation of summary report	Metro/ Facilitator	Mid June, 2015
	Final summary report/Task Force recommendations	Metro/ Facilitator	Early July, 2015
Participate in and prepare for briefings and updates of County Executive, County Council and Other Stakeholders	Prepare presentation materials summarizing Task Force work	Metro/ Facilitator	Early July, 2015
	Presentations to stakeholders as needed	Metro/ Facilitator	As needed

Budget

The budget for the Task Force is \$150,000.

Schedule and Timeline

This section shows the expected schedule for the Task Force process. There will be six full Task Force meetings, with sub-committee meetings as needed. This schedule is aligned with the Long Range Plan schedule and the Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines update schedule. The outcome of the Task Force process will influence both of these processes; Metro needs adequate time to produce a report and allow time for County Council review and adoption.

Proposed Schedule

	M	T	W	Th	F	Full Task Force Meeting Topic
January	5	6	7	8	9	
	12	13	14	15	16	
	19	20	21	22	23	
	26	27	28	29	30	
February	2	3	4	5	6	
	9	10	11	12	13	
	16	17	18	19	20	Overview and introductions
	23	24	25	26	27	
March	2	3	4	5	6	Service guidelines, frame social equity discussion
	9	10	11	12	13	
	16	17	18	19	20	
	23	24	25	26	27	
April	30	31	1	2	3	Social equity, frame service types & alternative services discussion
	6	7	8	9	10	
	13	14	15	16	17	
	20	21	22	23	24	
	27	28	29	30	1	Service types & alternative services, frame geographic value discussion
May	4	5	6	7	8	
	11	12	13	14	15	
	18	19	20	21	22	Geographic value, financial policies for purchase of additional services
	25	26	27	28	29	
June	1	2	3	4	5	Continued policy discussion, final discussion, closing remarks
	8	9	10	11	12	
	15	16	17	18	19	
	22	23	24	25	26	

SGTF meetings
Project Coordination Team meetings
Interbranch meetings

Materials Distribution

The initial Task Force notebook will be available one week in advance of the first meeting. Subsequent meeting materials will be available no later than the day prior to the meeting at noon. These materials will be sent out to Task Force members, County Councilmembers, County Council staff, County Executive staff, and Metro staff.

Integration with Long Range Plan and Other Planning Efforts

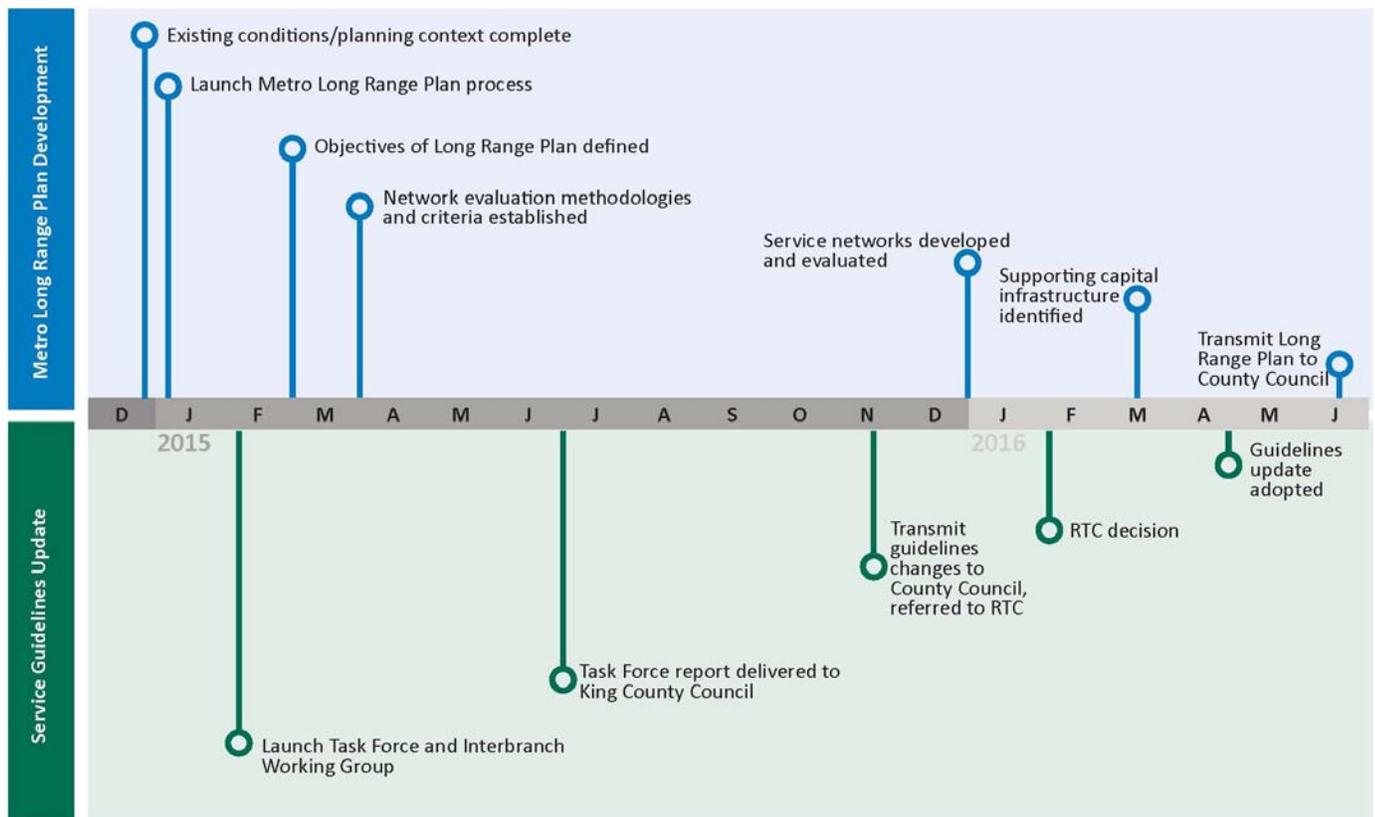
This section shows how the Task Force will be integrated with Long Range Planning efforts.

Metro's Long Range Plan

The Service Guidelines Task Force will take place in the first part of 2015 so that it can influence the long range planning work, scheduled to be complete by mid-2016, and the Service Guidelines update, scheduled to be complete by April 2016. Metro's Long Range Plan is coordinated with regional planning efforts being undertaken by Sound Transit, the Puget Sound Regional Council, local jurisdictions and stakeholders. Corridor analyses that are completed as part of the Task Force work will include Sound Transit as well as Metro corridors.

A high-level timeline that shows how the Long Range Plan and Service Guidelines update will take place in the same timeframe is shown below. As we move through the Long Range Plan process, updates to the Council and other stakeholders will take place on a regular basis.

Metro Coordinated Planning Efforts: Long Range Plan and Service Guidelines Update



Task Force Membership Criteria

Membership of the Task Force includes 20-30 executive level participants representing a variety of interests throughout King County. Members are not necessarily transit experts, but are reasonably familiar with how the transportation system affects quality of life, and transit's relationship to land use and mobility.

Membership includes a mix of elected officials representing jurisdictions across King County, corporate/business leaders, labor, major institutions, human and social services, large employers, environmental groups, Transit Advisory Commission members, mobility advocates, and the metropolitan planning organization. Members have been identified through consultation with the King County Council and have been recruited by the County Executive's office and the King County Department of Transportation.



February 11, 2015
SCA PIC Meeting

Item 12b:

PSRC Regional Food Policy Council Blueprints

Informational Item

SCA Staff Contact

Lyset Cadena, Senior Policy Analyst, lyset@soundcities.org, 206-433-7169

PSRC Food Policy Council Representative:

SCA does not appoint members to this committee but Deputy Mayor Nancy Tosta, Burien, represents the City of Burien and other town and cities.

About the PSRC Food Policy Council:

The Regional Food Policy Council was established in September 2010 at the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) to bring together community, government, business and agricultural interests to work on integrated and sustainable policy recommendations to strengthen the regional food system. The Regional Food Policy Council is an independent forum convened at PSRC and has a diverse membership of 30 jurisdictions, businesses, institutions and community organizations.

Background:

The Regional Food Policy Council chose to develop policy recommendations found in [Attachment A](#) to local jurisdictions to support healthy food access and the local food economy through planning, zoning, economic development, and procurement policies.

The Regional Food Policy Council identified five initial topic areas and recommendations to address with this project:

- Comprehensive Plans
 - a. Incorporate supportive policies in the comprehensive plan.
- Urban Agriculture
 - a. Define/clarify urban agricultural land uses and activities in city code. Develop implementation strategies to increase urban agriculture.
 - b. Identify land available and used for urban agriculture.
- Farmers Markets
 - a. Streamline permitting and fees to remove barriers to establishing and maintaining a farmers market.
 - b. Identify allowable locations for farmers markets to operate. Consider permitting markets to operate on city-owned property.
 - c. Define farmers markets.

- Local Food Procurement
 - a. Support institutional procurement policies that encourage purchases of locally grown food products.
 - i. Target percentage of local food purchases.
 - ii. Mandated percent price preference.
 - iii. Discretionary geographic price preference or general geographic preference.
 - iv. Comprehensive plan policies to promote local food procurement.

- Rural Farmland Preservation
 - a. Review zoning and land use regulations to ensure farmland is protected for long-term agricultural use and is sufficient to support local food, forage and fiber production.
 - b. Purchase or transfer development rights to protect agricultural land.
 - c. Promote current use taxation programs for farmers.
 - d. Provide Economic Development and Regulatory Assistance to Agricultural Business Enterprises

These food policy blueprints provide recommendations for local governments interested in addressing the local food economy and food access through policy and programs. The recommendations focus on examples from the Puget Sound region to show steps some local jurisdictions have already taken.

The blueprints aim to address challenges and opportunities for local communities. Challenges include health disparities and access to healthy food, preserving agricultural resources, and ensuring resiliency in the food system during emergencies. Food system planning can create opportunities to grow the local food economy and provide other community benefits.

The intent is for these resources to grow and change over time as the Council incorporates new recommendations, policy areas or examples.

Next Steps:

Members of the Food Policy Council and PSRC staff are available to provide technical assistance to jurisdictions considering any of the recommendations. For more information, contact Liz Underwood-Bultmann, lunderwood-bultmann@psrc.org, 206-464-6174.

Attachment:

- A. [Food Policy Blueprints](#)



Food Policy Blueprints

In 2012, the Washington State Department of Health contracted with PSRC's Regional Food Policy Council to work on a policy or systems change that would increase equitable access to healthy foods in the Puget Sound region. The Regional Food Policy Council chose to develop policy recommendations to local jurisdictions to support healthy food access and the local food economy through planning, zoning, economic development, and procurement policies.

The Regional Food Policy Council identified five initial topic areas to address with this project:

- Comprehensive Plans
- Urban Agriculture
- Farmers Markets
- Local Food Procurement
- Rural Farmland Preservation

These food policy blueprints provide recommendations for local governments interested in addressing the local food economy and food access through policy and programs. The recommendations focus on examples from the Puget Sound region to show steps some local jurisdictions have already taken.

The blueprints aim to address challenges and opportunities for local communities. Challenges include health disparities and access to healthy food, preserving agricultural resources, and ensuring resiliency in the food system during emergencies. Food system planning can create opportunities to grow the local food economy and provide other community benefits.

The intent is for these resources to grow and change over time as the Council incorporates new recommendations, policy areas or examples.

About the Regional Food Policy Council

The Regional Food Policy Council brings together community, government, business and agricultural interests to work on integrated and sustainable policy recommendations to strengthen the regional food system. It was established in September 2010 at the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). PSRC serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties and is focused on ensuring a thriving central Puget Sound region now and into the future through planning for transportation, growth management and economic development. The Regional Food Policy Council has a diverse membership of local jurisdictions, businesses, institutions and community organizations.

Members of the council and PSRC staff are available to provide technical assistance to jurisdictions considering any of the recommendations.

Resources and reports on various food policy topics are available online here:

<http://www.psrc.org/growth/foodpolicy/resources-topic/>

The Blueprints

Farmers Markets

Background

Farmers markets serve as an important community gathering place, economic development opportunity and connection point between producers and consumers. Farmers markets sit at the intersection of many important policy issues: nutrition and health, environmental protection, food security, economic growth, and community development. While farmers markets can provide significant benefits, urban markets are often challenged by complicated, expensive permitting; lack of stable, long-term locations; and underfunding.

Both locally and nationwide, local governments have taken steps to remove barriers and improve access for farmers markets. This can include establishing a clear code definition for farmers markets, amending codes to allow farmers markets in appropriate zones, allowing markets on city-owned property, streamlining permitting, and establishing a program to sponsor farmers markets. Jurisdictions may also consider supportive steps they can take to facilitate acceptance of electronic payment and food assistance benefits at farmers markets.

Recommendation: Streamline permitting and fees to remove barriers to establishing and maintaining a farmers market.

Several local jurisdictions have identified licensing and fee schedule improvements to streamline the permitting process for farmers markets. The cities of Gold Bar and Seattle have both considered how to support their farmers markets by streamlining or exempting markets from fees, licenses, or permits. The City of Gold Bar exempts operators at farmers markets from business licenses, while the City of Seattle completed a process in 2009 to streamline market requirements and fees. MRSC has collected other state and local approaches on their [Farmers Market](#) page.

Local Examples: Streamlined Processes

Gold Bar

[5.04.040\(C\)\(10\) - Business Licenses](#)

The following shall be exempt from the licensing provisions of this chapter and are not required to comply with the licensing requirements of this chapter: Businesses operating at a "farmers" market or other city-sponsored or -approved activity so long as the activity does not occur more than one (1) time per week for more than five (5) months of each calendar year; and provided that the name, address, and telephone number is submitted to the city on a city business license application form, in advance.

Seattle

Streamlined fees and permitting: [Seattle Farmers Market Ordinance](#) (2009)

Other Resources

[Zoning for Public Markets and Street Vendors](#) – APA Zoning Practice (2009)

[Establishing Land Use Protections for Farmers Markets](#) - Public Health Law and Policy (2009)

[Community Health and Food Access: The Local Government Role](#) - International City/County Management Association (2006)

[King County Farmers Market Report](#) – King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (2010)

Topic

Background

Recommendations with examples

Resources

This publication was supported by Washington State Department of Health (DOH) through Cooperative Agreement Number 5U58DP001491-05 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of DOH or CDC.

Comprehensive Plan Policies

Background

Planning for food is increasingly a topic of interest both locally and around the country. Supporting local food is important for the local rural economy, for community food security and for reducing the distance food travels from farm to table. Local governments can play a significant role in supporting local agriculture, promoting public health, improving access to healthy and affordable food, reducing environmental impacts, and diverting food waste from landfills.

Supporting the local food system with comprehensive planning can have economic, quality of life, and environmental benefits.

- Creating and sustaining farm income
- Living-wage food production, processing, and sales jobs
- Improving the economic viability of local agriculture
- More efficiently using vacant or underutilized parcels through urban agriculture
- Increasing access to healthy food choices in all neighborhoods

Regional and countywide planning also provides direction to local jurisdictions in addressing the food system. VISION 2040 is the central Puget Sound region's long-range growth management, transportation, and economic development framework. It addresses the importance of conserving agricultural land, supporting the local food economy, and building healthy communities. Each central Puget Sound county has countywide planning policies that discuss the food system in some capacity. Depending on the county, these policies look at production, food access, local food procurement, and agriculture.

The examples below focus on supporting food access and the local food economy. In other parts of the country, some jurisdictions have also chosen to address disincentives to unhealthy food in their communities. If jurisdictions choose to incorporate policies regarding "healthy" and "unhealthy" foods, they should consider defining these terms.

Resources are available to help local jurisdictions evaluate food access in their communities and potentially establish quantifiable measures to track changes. Several jurisdictions have found the Retail Food Environment Index (RFEI) to be a useful indicator of the availability of healthy and unhealthy retail. The RFEI is calculated by dividing the total number fast-food restaurants and convenience stores by the total number of supermarkets and produce vendors. More information and state-by-state maps of the Retail Food Environment Index are available [online](#).

For suggested implementation actions, see sections on [Urban Agriculture](#), [Farmers Markets](#), and [Local Food Procurement](#).

Recommendation: *Incorporate supportive policies in the comprehensive plan.*

Land Use Element

Goal: Promote food security, local food production, and public health by encouraging locally-based food production, distribution, and choice through urban agriculture, community gardens, farmers markets, and food access initiatives. Establish partnerships and share resources to promote food access and production.

Policies:

- Agriculture and community gardening
 - Work with residents to evaluate and remove barriers to food production.
 - Minimize conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural uses through maintaining a Right-to-Farm Ordinance.
 - Expand community gardening through city land, including parks and surplus property.
 - Support the development and adoption of joint-use agreements on publicly owned sites or institutional facilities to allow gardens, distribution and sales.
 - Promote inter-agency and intergovernmental cooperation and resource-sharing to expand community gardening opportunities.

- Healthy food access
 - Explore incentives or regulatory changes to encourage location of food purveyors in underserved areas.
 - Prioritize low-income areas as potential locations for community gardens, farmers markets, and food access programs.

Economic Development Element

Goal: Support the local food economy. Seek ways to expand capacity to grow, process, distribute, and access local foods. Establish partnerships and share resources to support the local food economy.

Policies:

- Local food economy
 - Support retail sales and local food economy by encouraging locally based food production, distribution, and choice through the support of community gardens, farmers or public markets, and other small-scale, collaborative initiatives.
 - Explore economic development opportunities related to local agriculture. Assess and plan for community-supported agriculture programs, and local food processing/wholesaling/distribution facilities to connect local agriculture to markets such as retailers, restaurants, schools, hospitals, and other institutions.
 - Encourage business, programs and uses that support local food production.
- Farmers markets
 - Support farmers markets as means to encourage community-building, support local agriculture and economic development.
 - Identify potential farmers' market sites on public property, community facilities, and, where feasible, on streets using temporary street closures. Encourage new farmers markets in neighborhoods with low food access.
- Procurement
 - Explore procurement policies that favor local and regional food sourcing of healthy food in city or county services.

Local Examples: Healthy Des Moines Element

The adopted [Healthy Des Moines Plan Element](#) shows how food policies have been integrated in an element focused on health and well-being.

12-03 POLICIES

12-03-01 Healthy Eating

- (1) Support policy, systems, and environmental changes that result in increased access to healthy foods for the most at risk populations in the City, with an emphasis on school-age children.
- (2) Provide healthy food and beverages in City programs and facilities to promote healthy eating habits.
- (3) Support the Des Moines Food Bank, Farmers Market and other organizations that help provide food assistance to low-income residents so that all families, seniors, schools, and community-based organizations are able to access, purchase, and increase intake of fresh fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods.

12-04 STRATEGIES

12-04-01 Healthy Eating

- (1) Adopt a Healthy Food Resolution and create a long-term action plan to ensure commitment to healthy food access beyond CPPW funding.
- (2) Evaluate, adopt and implement nutritional standards and healthy food procurement policies in City owned and operated facilities and across departments.

12-04-02 Active Living

- (1) Develop and implement a communication plan and Healthy Des Moines website with information and links about healthy eating, active living and related events.

Local Examples: King County Comprehensive Plan

The [King County Comprehensive Plan](#) provides examples of supportive food policies that have been integrated throughout plan elements.

Rural Legacy and Natural Resource Lands

R-517 King County should explore ways of creating and supporting community gardens, farmers' markets, produce stands and other similar community based food growing projects to provide and improve access to healthy food for all rural residents.

R-665 The county should develop incentives that support local food production and processing to increase food security and provide a healthy local food supply, and reduce energy use.

R-674 King County should work with farmers and ranchers to better understand the constraints to increased food production in the county and develop programs that reduce barriers and create incentives to growing food crops and raising food-producing livestock.

R-675 King County should prioritize its programs to help build and support a sustainable, reliable, equitable, and resilient local food system.

R-676 King County should consider adopting procurement policies that would encourage purchases of locally grown fresh foods.

R-677 King County should promote local food production and processing to reduce the distance that food must travel from farm to table.

R-678 King County should collaborate with other organizations to further the development of programs that increase the ability of shoppers to use food assistance benefits and the ability of farmers to accept electronic and other forms of payment at farmers' markets and farm stands.

Environment

E-455 King County shall work with regional stakeholders to ensure a viable and safe organics recycling infrastructure that allows for yard, food, wood, biosolids, manure and other organic wastes to be turned into resources benefiting climate change, soil health, water quality, and maximizing landfill diversion.

Economic Development

ED-602f King County will explore opportunities to support agricultural tourism and value-added program(s) related to the production of food, flowers, and wine in the county. These partnership venues should be educational and include information on the diversity of products available in the county and the importance of buying local.

ED-603 King County should partner with other Puget Sound counties and businesses to analyze the need and possible sites for regional agricultural (including beef and poultry) and forest product processing facilities that may require regional demand to make them economically feasible. The county should also explore options and incentives to encourage entrepreneurs to invest in mobile forest and food production processing facilities that can serve the region.

ED-604 King County will continue to partner with organizations that support programs and strategies that strengthen the interdependence and linkage between the rural and urban economies, such as the Regional Food Policy Council and Puget Sound Fresh.

Other Resources

[Food Access Policy and Planning Guide](#) – University of Washington Northwest Center for Livable Communities (2011)

[Integrating Food Policy in Comprehensive Planning: Resources for the City of Seattle](#) – Puget Sound Regional Council (2012)

[Planning to Eat? Innovative Local Government Plans & Policies to Build Healthy Food Systems in the United States](#) - SUNY – Buffalo (2011)

[Planning for Food Access and Community-Based Food Systems: A National Scan and Evaluation of Local Comprehensive and Sustainability Plans](#) – American Planning Association (2012)

Urban Agriculture

Background

Urban agriculture can play an important role in increasing food security, building community, and improving the environment. Local governments occupy a key role in ensuring that cultivation, processing, and sales of locally produced food occurs in appropriate locations with few barriers. Urban agriculture activities include home gardening in front and backyards, planting strips and roofs; keeping livestock, beekeeping, larger urban farms, private and public community gardens, production and sale of value added products like jams and pickles, and on-site sales of locally produced food.

Codes and development regulations are ways for local governments to enable urban agriculture activities. Jurisdictions can ensure that codes permit urban agriculture in appropriate zones. Streamlining permitting processes can help entrepreneurs enter the market. Beyond permitting food production and sales, jurisdictions can adopt plans or strategies to increase access, education, and support for urban agriculture programs. Several central Puget Sound jurisdictions have adopted language in resolutions, codes, and plans to ensure opportunities to grow food in most zones.

For example, jurisdictions have developed policies and code language to:

- Support urban agriculture through plans, programs, administrative actions and development regulations.
- Encourage business, programs and uses that support local food production.
- Encourage alternative growing options, like roof gardens and edible landscaping.

Recommendation: *Define/clarify urban agricultural land uses and activities in city code. Develop implementation strategies to increase urban agriculture.*

Municipal Code Audit

Goal: To identify barriers to urban agricultural activities and develop policies that can be built upon to encourage urban agriculture.

Action: Jurisdictions will first need to understand the location and types of urban agricultural activities currently allowed. Then, desired activities, including their scale and permitted locations, can be examined. Different agricultural activities may require amending definitions, land use codes, zones, and site requirements in zoning and development regulations. For example, jurisdictions have identified and developed policies and code language that address:

- Zones suitable for urban agriculture and community gardens
- Where gardening is allowed on private property (e.g., planting strips, front yards)
- Accessory structures (hoop houses, cold frames, tool sheds)
- Roof treatments
- Vertical/Indoor farms
- Bonuses for including gardening space or edible landscaping in development projects
- Animals allowed
- Pest management
- Onsite sales of produce/products
- Licensing for offsite sales
- Community kitchens
- Incorporating gardens/fruit trees in landscaping guidelines
- Targets for community garden access
- Composting and waste
- Water use and reuse for agricultural purposes

A code audit could focus on urban agriculture holistically, or a targeted subject, e.g., community gardens. In either case, the audit and subsequent code changes should be mindful of the sustainability of implementing a policy, particularly in view of tenure and maintenance of property that will be farmed or gardened. Involving external groups with dedicated interests in urban agriculture, such as conservation districts, can help both the audit and reviewing proposed code changes.

Model Land Use Code for Urban Agriculture

Goal: To incorporate policies increasing urban agriculture in city code.

Action: After policy areas to improve are identified, code amendments can be drafted to address these issues. Model codes can provide modifiable examples. Language may be inserted into the zoning code, other land use regulations, or elsewhere in the city/county code.

Local examples: Municipal code audit

King County

King County has taken a proactive approach to revising its code to ensure the preservation and sustainability of agriculture. This process has been iterative and very collaborative, with many groups, including members of the county agriculture commission, the King Conservation District, farmers in the community, and state and national regulators. The county's work emphasizes the importance of working with both internal and external groups for feedback and input. In 2009, as a part of the creation of the King County FARMS Report, a regulatory review team was formed to review and identify agriculturally friendly regulations.

Code revisions have occurred in several waves. The county began by revising allowed uses in agricultural zones, with an eye towards ensuring economic sustainability and viability of farming. After making these changes, the county became aware that flood and environmental regulations still prevented some of these uses from occurring, and worked to revise these regulations.

These review activities and code amendments are underlined by policies in the King County strategic and comprehensive plans. They explicitly state goals of preserving and sustaining agriculture.

Tacoma

The City of Tacoma adopted a revised urban forestry element in its comprehensive plan in 2010. Since then, they have been revising their city code to ensure that the plan may be implemented. Tacoma's experience also underlines the role that review groups can play in a code audit. Tacoma recently amended its code regarding poultry husbandry. The change was brought about after a member of the Sustainable Tacoma Committee identified that the animal code discouraged residents from keeping poultry by requiring a 50-foot setback for chicken coops and imposing criminal penalties for offenders. The City examined other jurisdictions' codes regarding chickens and worked with code enforcement to draft new rules. The revised code was presented to the community for feedback and passed in 2012.

A community petition prompted the City of Tacoma to allow raised bed gardening in planting strips on a permit basis. The code was revised simply to allow this and to remove the annual fee for occupying the right of way.

Local examples: Land use code and supporting policies

Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Policies – [Urban Forest Policy Element](#)

Create an urban agriculture program. Encourage and assist partners to support and/or create urban agriculture programs and policies. Work with partners to establish a model community garden program, including strategies to increase quantity, quality, security, land use, mitigate soil contamination and address other issues that affect community gardens.	Urban Forest Policy Element. UF-UA-1
Implement an education and outreach program to increase the awareness of the benefits of locally and sustainably grown food. Encourage the use of integrated pest management, sustainable water usage, and natural and organic methods to produce food.	Urban Forest Policy Element. UF-UA-2
Encourage the use of native and/or regionally produced edible plants or seeds for use in urban agriculture. Educate citizens about the selection and care of plants in a manner that does not threaten the health of the urban forest ecosystem.	Urban Forest Policy Element. UF-UA-4

Adopt zoning regulations that establish community gardens as a permitted or conditional use in appropriate locations.	Urban Forest Policy Element. UF-UA-7
Encourage new affordable housing units to contain designated yard or other shared space for residents to garden.	Urban Forest Policy Element. UF-UA-8
Encourage development in Mixed-Use Centers, Downtown, and commercial areas to incorporate green roofs, edible landscaping, and the use of existing roof space for community gardening. Community garden space should count towards open space requirements.	Urban Forest Policy Element. UF-UA-9

Tacoma Municipal Code – Keeping of Poultry

[Tacoma Municipal Code](#) - 5.30.010 Keeping – Prohibited places.

A. No more than 6 adult poultry and 6 pigeons are allowed per parcel provided that if a person has more than 6 adult poultry or 6 pigeons as of September 10, 2012, he/she may keep those excess poultry or pigeons until July 1, 2015, at which time he/she must comply with the maximum limit allowed; provided further that an owner may have up to 10 adult poultry and 10 pigeons if they obtain written consent from all owners of all residences, dwellings, hotels, apartment houses, or rooming

houses owned by others within 50 feet of where the adult poultry or pigeons are kept, and file such consent with the City Clerk.

One additional adult poultry or pigeon is allowed for each 5,000 square feet of lot area in excess of 10,000 square feet.

B. Pursuant to TMC 17.02.041, it is a violation for any person to own, possess, or harbor a rooster within the City limits.

C. Animal enclosures such as a cage or coop shall be set back a minimum of 12 feet from the nearest portion of any residence, dwelling, hotel, apartment house or rooming house. Animal enclosures must be located behind the front wall of the main building on a lot, and shall not be located in the required side yard setback area of the main building as described in TMC 13.06.100.F.5. Animal enclosures larger than 200 square feet must obtain a building permit.

D. The keeping of poultry and pigeons that do not meet these standards is hereby declared to be a public nuisance; provided that this chapter shall not apply in areas in which abattoirs or stockyards are permitted by appropriate ordinances.

(Ord. 28085 Ex. A; passed Aug. 28, 2012: Ord. 22212 § 17; passed Sept. 30, 1980: Ord. 16586 § 1; passed Jun. 14, 1960)

Tacoma Municipal Code – Removal of right of way occupancy fees for gardening

[Tacoma Municipal Code](#) - 9.08.075 Fees.

The City Council hereby authorizes the fees for street occupancy permits set forth in the schedule below, and all previously adopted fee schedules are hereby rescinded, except that the existing fee schedule for Shoreline Districts shall remain in effect until superseded by an alternative use fee as referenced in Section 2 below. Application and renewal fees are established commensurate with the costs of administration involved in the issuance and continuance of the permits. **Application and renewal fees do not apply for garden activities.** Use fees are established for commercial uses of the street rights-of-way, and are payable in addition to the application and renewal fees. Sidewalk cafes are recognized as a special street occupancy that promotes desirable street life that can have favorable economic impact by encouraging visitation to City business districts and result in patronage of its businesses. Since sidewalk cafes are encouraged, street occupancy permit fees for sidewalk cafes are given favorable consideration.

Seattle Municipal Code – Urban Agriculture

[Summary of Seattle Code Changes](#) enacted in 2010

[Ordinance 123378](#) contains and authorizes the 2010 code changes

Recommendation: *Identify land available and used for urban agriculture.*

Land inventory

Goal: To inventory land currently used and/or potentially available for urban agriculture, including community gardens.

Action: Inventorying and identifying land suitable for urban agriculture can be performed with varying levels of technical skill. This assessment will provide a baseline for measuring progress toward urban agriculture goals.

- Identify land in urban agriculture use with property records, maps, GIS, and community-based information.
- Identify land where urban agricultural activity could occur (by zoning right, land that meets land use code/zoning criteria).
- Perform a suitability analysis of vacant, publicly owned, and/or park land that could be dedicated to urban agriculture, considering characteristics such as area, water access, slope, shade, soil quality, proximity to underserved neighborhoods, proximity to community gardens or other urban farms/gardens.

Local examples: Inventories of land

Seattle

As a part of Seattle's Local Food Action Initiative Resolution, passed in 2008, the Department of Neighborhoods was tasked to create an inventory of publicly owned land that has community garden potential. The report, [Growing Green](#), listed in the other resources section below, represents an attempt to analyze publicly owned land in Seattle for suitability as P-Patch gardens.

Other Resources

[Urban Agriculture Code Audit: Milwaukee, WI](#) – City of Milwaukee (2012)

[Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture](#) – ChangeLab Solutions (2011)

[Growing Urban Agriculture: Equitable Strategies and Policies for Improving Access to Healthy Food and Revitalizing Communities](#) – PolicyLink (2012)

[Urban Agriculture: A Sixteen City Survey of Urban Agriculture Practices Across the Country](#) – Turner Environmental Law Clinic (2011)

[Growing Green: An Inventory of Public Lands Suitable for Community Gardening in Seattle, Washington](#) – Horst (2008).

[Plotting P-Patch Potential](#) – Bertulfo et. al. (2009).

[Green Roofs](#) research by the University of Washington Green Futures Lab.

Farmers Markets

Background

A farmers market can serve as an important community gathering place, economic development opportunity and connection point between producers and consumers. Farmers markets sit at the intersection of many policy issues: nutrition and health, environmental protection, food security, economic growth, and community development. While farmers markets can provide significant benefits, urban markets are often challenged by complicated, expensive permitting, lack of stable, long-term locations, and underfunding.

Both locally and nationwide, local governments have taken steps to remove barriers and improve access for farmers markets. These include establishing a clear code definition for farmers markets, amending codes to allow farmers markets in appropriate zones, allowing markets on city-owned property, streamlining permitting, and establishing a program to sponsor farmers markets. Jurisdictions may also consider additional steps, such as facilitating acceptance of electronic payment and food assistance benefits, outreach and access to markets, and options for stable, year-round infrastructure.

Recommendation: *Streamline permitting and fees to remove barriers to establishing and maintaining a farmers market.*

Several local jurisdictions have identified licensing and fee schedule improvements to streamline the permitting process for farmers markets. The cities of Gold Bar and Seattle have both supported their farmers markets by streamlining or exempting markets from fees, licenses, or permits. The City of Gold Bar exempts operators at farmers markets from business licenses, while Seattle completed a process in 2009 to streamline market requirements and fees. Municipal Research and Service Center has collected other state and local approaches on their [Farmers Market](#) page.

Local examples: Streamlined processes

Gold Bar

[5.04.040\(C\)\(10\) - Business Licenses](#)

The following shall be exempt from the licensing provisions of this chapter and are not required to comply with the licensing requirements of this chapter: Businesses operating at a "farmers" market or other city-sponsored or -approved activity so long as the activity does not occur more than one (1) time per week for more than five (5) months of each calendar year; and provided that the name, address, and telephone number is submitted to the city on a city business license application form, in advance.

Seattle

Streamlined fees and permitting: [Seattle Farmers Market Ordinance](#) (2009)

Recommendation: *Identify allowable locations for farmers markets to operate. Consider permitting markets to operate on city-owned property.*

Several local jurisdictions have clarified where farmers markets are permitted to operate and have reduced administrative barriers for temporary use of public land to host a farmers market. In addition to sponsoring markets, Steilacoom, Renton, Kirkland, Auburn, Issaquah, Snoqualmie, and North Bend provide space for farmers markets on city land. Identifying feasible locations accessible to patrons and market vendors can be an important step forward that benefits both neighborhoods and markets.

Local examples: Farmers markets on public land

Seattle

Seattle facilitated location of farmers markets on city property with clear process and procedures. See [Seattle Administrative Rules Regarding Use of Public Land](#) (2009)

Renton & Steilacoom

Renton and Steilacoom both host farmers market on city-owned property. Steilacoom has established a clear [process and guidelines](#) to maintain a stable and well-run market.

Recommendation: *Define farmers markets.*

Some jurisdictions define what constitutes a farmers market to help differentiate these regular markets from other outdoor fairs and sales. Defining a farmers market allows a jurisdiction to more easily set policies to help farmers markets succeed and to identify appropriate locations for markets.

Local examples: Defining farmers markets

Snohomish County

Snohomish County defines farmers markets under their county code as a basis for identifying allowable locations and other relevant development regulations. The following definition for a farmers market is used by the county: "A farmers' market is defined as a site or facility owned or operated by a farmers' cooperative or similar arrangement for the growers and producers of agricultural products to display and sell agricultural products." (SCC 30.91F.184) [Farmers Market AG Bulletin #9](#) (2010)

Seattle

The City of Seattle provides a detailed definition of farmers markets in Attachment A of [Farmers Markets Permitting Process](#) (2009). Seattle's administrative definition of a farmers market requires at least 70% of the market's vendors to be based in Washington state and selling items that include fresh farm products, value-added farm foods, dried flowers and crafted farm products, and processed and prepared foods. This definition is used as criteria for participation in farmers market program that streamlines permitting and allows use of right of way.

Other Resources

[Zoning for Public Markets and Street Vendors](#) – APA Zoning Practice (2009)

[Establishing Land Use Protections for Farmers Markets](#) - Public Health Law and Policy (2009)

[Community Health and Food Access: The Local Government Role](#) - International City/County Management Association (2006)

[King County Farmers Market Report](#) – King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (2010)

[Farmers Markets, Public Markets](#) – Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington

[Farmers Markets and Low-Income Communities](#) – Project for Public Spaces

Local Food Procurement Policies

Background

Encouraging government and other institutions to purchase locally grown food can strengthen the local food system. It establishes new institutional markets for local producers, maximizes the freshness and quality of food served by these agencies, and can support improvements to local food infrastructure, such as distribution and processing facilities.

Supporting the local food economy can also have important economic, quality of life, and environmental benefits. Benefits include preserving farmland and training the next generation of farmers. Living-wage jobs develop through food production, processing, and sales. New markets of institutional food service providers are created.

Because approximately 50% of food is consumed away from home¹, institutions that provide meals, snacks, vending and beverage choices can have a role in improving diets. Offering more fruits and vegetables leads to an increase in the choice and consumption of these foods. It ensures that people have access to a diet that helps them meet the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). Beyond providing additional food choices, institutional bulk food purchases provide an opportunity over time to impact our food system as a whole. Organizations that might adopt healthy and local food procurement policies include local governments, school districts, colleges and universities, restaurant and food service organizations, hospitals, correctional facilities, youth providers, and private businesses.

State governments, school districts, and private business have adopted locally grown food purchasing policies or practices in recent years. There are few examples of local governments who have passed these policies, making this a real opportunity for leadership in Washington state. By establishing such practices, organizations can use their food purchasing power to support the local food economy, offer healthier options for their customers, and in the long run, improve the environment.

A number of resources are available on other institutional purchasing of local food, specifically Farm to School. For information on Farm to School programs, please visit the [WSDA Farm to School Toolkit](#).

Recommendation: *Support institutional procurement policies that encourage purchases of locally grown food products.*

Goal: Promote public health, local food production, and the environment by establishing policies and practices that support local food procurement by government agencies and private businesses.

Elements that can be included in a local food procurement policy:

- Percent food purchased within a specific geographic area
- Diet-related health concerns
- Supporting area farmers
- Environmental Protection
- Food quality and safety

Strategy: *Target percentage of local food purchases.*

Under a target percentage policy or law, a certain percentage of all food purchases must be from local sources.

Voluntary efforts to increase local procurement are also an option. An organization could pass a resolution or other statement expressing its support for increased local procurement or could launch a 10% campaign encouraging organizations to buy 10% of their food from local sources.

¹ [USDA - Economic Research Service](#)

Policy examples: Target local percentages

[Illinois' Local Food, Farms, Jobs Act of 2009](#) set a goal that all state institutions purchase at least 20% of their food from local sources by 2020.

North Carolina State University's [The 10% Campaign](#) provides an example of encouraging organizations to buy 10% of their food from local sources.

Strategy: *Mandated percent price preference.*

A law that mandates percent price preference requires locally-produced food to be purchased when the cost of the food is within a certain percentage of the price of similar from a conventional source.

Policy examples: Price preference

Alaska

Any state entity or school district receiving state money must purchase its agricultural products from farms within the state as long as the in-state product costs no more than 7% above similar out-of-state products and the in-state product is of the same quality ([ALASKA STAT. ANN. § 36.15.050\(a\)](#)).

Massachusetts

Their law requires all state agencies purchasing agricultural products (defined to include processed foods and seafood) to prefer products grown in the state or end products made using products grown in the state. When given the choice between Massachusetts-produced products and those from out of state, state agencies are required to buy the local products as long as they are not more than 10% more expensive than the out of state choices. ([MASS. GEN. LAWS ch. 7, § 23B\(a and c\)](#)).

Strategy: *Discretionary geographic price preference or general geographic preference.*

States can specify that state agencies have discretion to spend more on local products over out-of-state products using a discretionary geographic preference law. States are not required to purchase local, but can do so, even if the cost of the local product is higher.

Policy example: Geographic preference

Using a local food procurement statute, [Montana](#) gave broad discretion to state institutions (including agencies, schools, prisons, universities, hospitals, etc.) to purchase Montana-produced food directly from farmers and other producers rather than going through the state's standard procurement procedures.

Strategy: *Comprehensive plan policies to promote local food procurement*

Local food procurement can be reinforced through goals and policies in the comprehensive plan. The 2012 King County Countywide Planning Policies included a new policy statement regarding institutional procurement of local food; jurisdictions in King County in particular should consider how to address this new policy.

Policy example: Comprehensive plan policies

[King County Countywide Planning Policies](#): Support institutional procurement policies that encourage purchases of locally grown food products. (Development Patterns chapter, DP-60)

[King County](#): King County should consider adopting procurement policies that would encourage purchases of locally grown fresh foods. (Comprehensive Plan, Rural Element, R-676)

[Bremerton](#): Encourage local and regional purchasing of consumer goods by the City and private sector. (Comprehensive Plan, Environment Element, Sustainability, E1D)

Policy example: Other approaches to purchasing local food

[The New York City Food Purchasing Guidelines](#) address a number of strategies to procure local food including geographic and price preference. In addition to those policy elements, they also include other ways to assure local procurement.

Their policy language is as follows:

Under Subsection (8)(a) of GML §103, the purchasing agency may also mandate that a particular product, e.g., apples, come from New York State, thereby limiting competition to bidders that can supply such products, rather than similar products sourced from other locations. Under Subsection (8)(a) of GML §103, the purchasing agency may purchase the types of products included on the NYSDA [New York State Department of Agriculture List] list, using solicitations that seek bidders for multiple “classes” of goods. Using this procedure, bidders can be invited to submit offers to provide either a bundle of goods that includes New York State food products (e.g., with a requirement for 30% of the class as such New York State food products) and/or a bundle of goods with no sourcing restrictions. Upon reviewing the bids received, DCAS may then decide to award a contract to either the low bidder in the first “class,” or the low bidder in the second “class.” In addition to the above-described bid solicitation terms that specifically prefer New York State food products, purchasing agencies may use the new “best value” provisions of GML §103 to craft solicitations that consider the freshness and perishability of the food being purchased, such as the number of days from harvest to delivery.

Other Resources

[A Guide to Developing a Sustainable Food Purchasing Policy](#) - Food Alliance

[A School’s Guide to Purchasing Washington-Grown Food](#) – Washington State Department of Agriculture

[Local Food for Local Government – Considerations in Giving Preference to Locally Grown Food](#) –Public Health Law & Policy

[Improving the Food Environment Through Nutrition Standards: A Guide for Government Procurement](#) - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations](#) - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Good Laws, Good Food: Putting State Food Policy to Work for our Communities](#) - Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic

[Healthy and Sustainable Food for San Francisco](#) – City and County of San Francisco

[New York City Food Purchasing Guidelines](#) – New York City Office of Contract Services

[Portland State University - Local Food Purchasing](#) – Portland State University

[Mother Earth Farm](#) – Emergency Food Network (example of direct sourcing for institutional use)

Rural Farmland Preservation

Background

Preserving rural farmland is crucial to the success of existing and future farms. Farmland preservation also results in economic development and environmental benefits beyond the value of production. Local governments use a variety of strategies to protect farmland. These include requiring large lot sizes in agricultural zones and ensuring that all viable farmland is within these zones. They can also offer tax relief authorized under existing statutes and participate in the purchase or transfer of development rights.

Local governments also recognize the value of integrating economic and business activities around existing agricultural production. Farms require strong support infrastructure and distribution networks in order to remain economically viable. Fostering scale-appropriate processing and distribution channels will also help ensure a healthy agricultural sector.

Conservation funding can also support farmland preservation. Land trusts that include farmland in private conservation agreements can help preserve farmland by virtue of tax advantages associated with such agreements. Creative application of conservation funding by local jurisdictions will afford further opportunities to enhance the scope of farmland protection.

Please see the [Farmers Market](#) and [Local Food Procurement](#) blueprints for more information about some direct marketing opportunities to support local agriculture.

Recommendation: *Review zoning and land use regulations to ensure farmland is protected for long-term agricultural use and is sufficient to support local food, forage and fiber production.*

Each county and many municipalities in the region promote some type of agricultural land preservation. In some instances, the intent of preservation is directly related to the benefits of supporting agriculture, while in others, support is based on synergies with other goals, such as environmental protection.

County governments can preserve agricultural land through zoning. Agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance are required to be designated and zoned appropriately per the Growth Management Act ([RCW 36.70a](#)). In addition to this requirement, land suited to or used for agriculture may be preserved with additional zones protective of this use. To do this, counties should identify all lands suitable for agricultural production, both within and outside agricultural zones, and evaluate whether minimum lot sizes and allowable uses are sufficient to promote agricultural uses. To discourage low-density rural sprawl, consider minimum lot sizes of at least 20 acres and tight restrictions on residential and commercial uses not related to agriculture. Other appropriate measures include expanding agricultural zones and using agricultural districts to protect farmable land outside current agricultural zones.

Land in cities may also be suitable or currently used for temporary or permanent food production. City governments can identify this property and ensure that food production is a permitted use. Soil remediation may be of greater concern in cities; public health issues of food produced on brownfield or potentially contaminated sites should be considered.

Local examples: Farmland preservation

King County

King County devotes a chapter of its county code to agricultural and open space land. This chapter includes priority areas and agricultural districts for land acquisition and conservation. See [Title 26 Agriculture and Open Space Lands](#). Lot size and development standards for agricultural and rural area land are addressed in [Title 21A.04](#).

Bainbridge Island

Bainbridge Island has a long history of agricultural production and has included goals and policies to protect and promote agricultural uses in its comprehensive plan and development regulations. In 2006, American Farmland Trust and Cascade Harvest Coalition completed a report for the city with recommendations on long-term management and support of agricultural uses on the island. The recommendations in [the report](#) may be useful to other cities or towns interested in preserving some agricultural uses.

Recommendation: *Purchase or transfer development rights to protect agricultural land.*

Purchase of development rights (PDR) programs allow local governments to buy the development rights from threatened resource lands. This voluntary, incentive-based approach fairly compensates willing landowners while ensuring agricultural potential in perpetuity. All cities and counties may consider the appropriation of funds from discretionary sources, including the Conservation Futures Tax or Real Estate Excise Tax for conservation ([RCW 82.46.070](#)), for programs that purchase development rights from farmland.

Transfer of development rights (TDR) programs are set up between urban and rural lands and create a market-based solution for protecting farmland. Instead of a government purchasing and holding the development rights of farmland, the development rights are purchased by a private developer for use as a density bonus or upzone in an urban development project. In cooperation with cities, county governments establish criteria and processes that prioritize farmlands as the source for development rights and quantify these development rights. City governments identify receiving sites for transferred development rights and prioritize rights from farmlands for initial trading activity. To strengthen use of the program, city governments may consider requiring transfer of development rights for all zoning and development actions that increase density.

Local examples: Transfer of Development Rights

Pierce County

Pierce County prioritizes agricultural and farmland for sending areas within their [Transfer of Development Rights Program](#). Pierce County has used County Conservation Futures and grant funds to acquire development rights for its TDR bank. In 2012, the county completed its first transaction to transfer development rights to an urban area when it signed a conservation easement for the Reise Farm site. The county acquisition of the development rights reduced the development value of the property, allowing PCC Farmland Trust to buy the property at an affordable price. In fall 2012, Pierce County signed an interlocal agreement with the City of Tacoma to transfer 369 development rights to the city.

Seattle

Under the [Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program](#), Seattle has proposed including both South Lake Union and downtown as TDR receiving areas. Under the program, a portion of incentive zoning would be gained through the purchase of regional TDR credits. In exchange, the city would use a portion of future county property tax revenue from new development in the area to fund local infrastructure improvements.

Recommendation: *Promote current use taxation programs for farmers.*

Counties offer current use taxation programs that tax agricultural properties at their present use instead of their highest and best use. Land must meet specific size and use criteria. While these programs are already in place, not all properties eligible for the programs take advantage of their benefits and protections. Fine tuning current use taxation programs and actively promoting them to landowners could increase the amount of farmland protected.

Local examples: Current Use Taxation

Pierce County

Like other current use taxation programs, Pierce County's [Farm & Agriculture Tax Program](#) incentivizes voluntary conservation of active farm and agricultural land. To qualify for the program, property owners must have income generated from the farm and a farm plan.

Recommendation: *Provide Economic Development and Regulatory Assistance to Agricultural Business Enterprises*

Processing and Marketing

While agricultural zoning can protect farmland, it may restrict commercial activities that make farming economically feasible. Jurisdictions should review zoning to ensure that compatible on-site processing and sales are permitted and that physical structures to support processing and direct marketing of farm products are allowed.

Environmental regulations

Achieving a harmonious balance between environmental regulation and agricultural enterprise is a challenge. Jurisdictions can ensure that permitting essential for environmental purposes does not place an undue financial or procedural burden on farmers. Common agricultural practices that require permits include ditch maintenance and storage of agricultural products. While the issues are complicated, clear advice and regulatory assistance to farmers can add predictability to agricultural business.

Local examples: Economic Development and Regulatory Assistance

Snohomish County

The [Focus on Farming program](#) is a hub of economic development and assistance information for farmers in Snohomish County. [Plain language guides](#) demystify the processes of permitting and regulation and a dedicated agricultural planner are available to assist farmers on regulatory issues.

Other Resources

[Losing Ground: Farmland Protection in the Puget Sound Region](#) – American Farmland Trust (2011)

[Future of Farming](#) – Washington State Department of Agriculture (2009)

[WA State Farmland Preservation Indicators](#) – WA Conservation Commission Office of Farmland Preservation (2009)

[Ag Sustainability Report: A Community Vision for Sustainable Agriculture in Snohomish County](#) – Snohomish Co. (2007)

[FARMS Report: Future of Agriculture Realizing Meaningful Solutions](#) – King County (2009)

[Kitsap County Strategic Agricultural Plan and Inventory](#) – Kitsap County (2011)

[Preserving Farmland and Farmers: Pierce County Agriculture Strategic Plan](#) – Pierce County (2006)

[Regional Transfer of Development Rights in Puget Sound](#) – Regional TDR Alliance (2013)

[Direct Marketing Support for Puget Sound Area Producers](#) – [presentation]

[Marin Agricultural Land Trust](#)

[Washington State Land Trusts](#) – Land Trust Alliance