

The Sound Cities Association (SCA) represents 38 cities and over one million people in King County. SCA's primary goal is to create vital, livable communities and unite leaders toward collective decision-making on regional policy issues. The vitality of King County is determined by cities' collective voice in county and state decision-making. It is important to recognize that **King County's cities are currently facing a significant budget crisis**. In response to these urgent challenges, SCA requests the state to consider new state revenue sources to share with localities, grant local authority to institute local revenue sources, and not reduce existing shared revenues.

SCA asks the Legislature to partner with cities and act on the following priorities:

Improve Public Safety

Increase state funding for capital and operating expenses and maintain and/or increase existing tools and resources at the current level. Provide a local option for taxing authority to address public safety expenses and continue to provide other vital local government services.

Promote Housing Affordability

Provide additional funding resources (such as local option REET) to assist cities with the implementation of affordable housing legislation. Prioritize partnerships with cities on existing regulations that support the development of affordable housing prior to enacting new regulations.

Prioritize Equitable Resource Distribution for Local Climate Action.

Support legislation that emphasizes environmental justice and equity in the allocation of resources for implementation of local climate actions, including preventing and mitigating impacts of environmental harm to overburdened communities. Improve city access to Climate Commitment Act funding, considering geographical differences and specific climate-related needs.

Support Sustainable Funding for Core Local Services

Expand the variety of local revenue options that allow cities to provide and maintain core local services. Support local revenue options that respond to inflation and population growth, such as allowing property tax increases above 1%.

Invest in Transportation Infrastructure & Mobility

Support sustainable state transportation revenue that provides funding for local preservation, maintenance, operations, and safety improvements. Prevent diversion of funds and increase investment in the Public Works Assistance Account. Support local funding options to preserve and maintain public transportation systems.

Address the Behavioral Healthcare Crisis

Increase the capacity of the crisis response system and fund local systems that connect individuals with needed care and diversion programs.

Confront Labor Challenges

Increase support for workforce pipelines in order to address the gap between available jobs and the realities of labor shortages. Focus on recruitment and retention of individuals in critical fields.

Legislative Guiding Principles

SCA supports legislation that aligns with the following guiding principles:

*Advance racial equity and social justice

*Improve the social safety net

*Make no unfunded mandates to cities

*Preserve local decision-making authority