



**King County**

**Metropolitan King County Council  
Mobility and Environment Committee**

**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	8	<b>Name:</b>	Jenny Giambattista
<b>Proposed No.:</b>	2019-B0050	<b>Date:</b>	April 16, 2019

**SUBJECT**

A briefing on the Strategic Climate Action Plan 2017 Biennial Report.

**SUMMARY**

The Strategic Climate Action Plan Biennial Report provides an update on the County's progress in achieving the targets and priority actions in the 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP). While there is progress in some areas, the report shows that there is much more to do in order to meet that targets in the 2015 SCAP.

The chair has invited Executive staff to brief the committee on the County's progress in achieving the 2015 SCAP targets.

**BACKGROUND**

The Strategic Climate Action Plan<sup>1</sup> is a five-year strategic plan which outlines strategies, targets, and priority actions to address climate change. The SCAP is organized around 5 goal areas. For each goal area, there are targets and priority action at the countywide level as well as actions specific to King County government.

- GOAL AREA 1: Transportation and Land Use
- GOAL AREA 2: Buildings and Facility Energy
- GOAL AREA 3: Green Building
- GOAL AREA 4: Consumption and Materials Management
- GOAL AREA 5: Forests and Agriculture

The 2015 SCAP also includes a section titled, "Preparing for Climate Change" which identifies priority actions to address the impacts of climate change.

As specified in King County Code section 18.25.010, the Executive is required to report biennially on progress in achieving strategic climate plan performance measures and

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<sup>1</sup> Motion 14449

targets and accomplishments of priority actions as well as findings outlining recommendations for changes in policies, priorities and capital investments.

The SCAP includes ambitious targets throughout the plan. Many of the targets are aspirational, and may not be achievable without significant additional action by King County government, residents, businesses, and other jurisdictions. Such aspirational targets are standard in climate plans and may have value in inspiring action and setting the direction that is needed for moving forward.

## **ANALYSIS**

The Biennial Report assesses progress in achieving the 2020 targets identified in the 2015 SCAP. Targets are rated as “Meeting or Exceeding Target,” “Approaching Target,” or “Off-Target.”

The Biennial Report was transmitted in June 2018 and uses 2017 data. The 2020 SCAP will include an updated assessment of whether the 2020 targets set by the 2015 were achieved.

### **Community Level Targets for Reducing GHG Emissions**

Table 1 reports progress on each community level target in the SCAP. As shown in Table 1, there are still many targets in SCAP needing significant additional work to achieve the 2020 target.

Many of these targets were established in partnership with the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration and are included in the Joint County-City Climate Commitments signed by all 16 participating cities.

The “\*” indicates those targets with the greatest potential GHG emissions reductions. In King County, the largest sources of GHG emissions are from transportation and energy use. Thus, the fact that the community is “off-target” in achieving the vehicle miles reduction and energy reduction targets is concerning. Additionally, solid waste is another significant source of greenhouse emissions, but our recycling and waste reduction targets are not being met.

**Table 1  
Status of Community Level Targets**

<b>Transportation and Land Use</b>		
<b>*</b>	Increase Metro Transit ridership	Approaching target
	Increase non-drive alone travel	Meeting target
	Maintaining new construction within the Urban Growth Area	Meeting target
	Build more miles of new regional rails	Meeting target
<b>*</b>	Vehicle mile reduction	Off target
<b>Buildings and Facilities Energy</b>		
<b>*</b>	Reduce countywide energy use in existing buildings	Off target

	Increase solar energy generation by residents and businesses	Meeting target
*	Countywide renewable electricity use	Off target
	Green Buildings building residential certification	Off target
<b>Consumption and Materials Management</b>		
*	Zero waste of valuable resources by 2030	Off target
*	70 percent recycling rate by 2020	Off target
	Tons recycled at Solid Waste Transfer Stations	Approaching target
<b>Forests and Agriculture</b>		
	Land with stewardship plan or enrolled in conservation plan	Meeting target
*	Forest, agriculture and open space preservation	Off target
	Acres of agricultural land in food production	Approaching target
	Farms in 100 year floodplain with raised agriculture structures and farm pads	Off target

### *Increasing Metro Transit Ridership*

Council staff asked for additional information on why the report concludes Metro is “approaching its ridership target” given that the ridership numbers do not appear to be close to achieving the 2020 target.



Executive staff report that Metro ridership is short of the 2020 target, but regional transit ridership is on track with these targets consistent with the PSRC Vision 2040. Specifically, Metro ridership + Link Light rail ridership exceeds the 2020 target (i.e. In 2017, Metro had 126.1 million, plus Link Light Rail had 23 million, for a total of 149.1 million). This metric is scored as yellow/approaching target because regionally we are approaching the target.

Transit reports that the goal as defined needs to be updated to align with regional transit delivery. A priority for the 2020 SCAP update is to align the ridership target with METRO CONNECTS and our regional transit ridership goals with Sound Transit. Some of the additional service hours in recent years have been focused on improving transit access

in underserved areas of the County. In these areas, ridership growth is expected to grow more slowly per service hour invested.

Additionally, Metro Transit is not fully funded to achieve the 2020 goal. Metro Transit is funded to add 134,950 service hours in 2019 and 66,625 additional service hours in 2020. As noted above, Transit is exploring as part of the 2020 SCAP process shifting to a regional ridership target, more representative of the priority to support regional mobility via bus or rail.

*Tons Recycled at Solid Waste Transfer Stations.*

Council staff asked for additional information on the assessment of “approaching target” given that the numbers do not appear to be close to achieving the 2020 target of 60,000 tons recycled at transfer stations. Executive staff report this target had been rated as yellow (approaching target) in December 2017. This was because strong progress had been being made towards the target. For example, transfer station recycling increased by 25% between 2016 and 2017 (from ~25,600 tons to 32,000 tons), and because there is a plan to ramp up recycling to this target. Significantly increasing recycling efforts and achieving the target is dependent on more recycling infrastructure being developed at transfer stations. This includes acceptance of new materials such as mattresses and tires, and development of new facilities. Executive staff report that collection of these materials across our system has been delayed until a fee can be developed. Additionally, completion of the South County Transfer and Recycling Station has been delayed by several years since the target was developed. At this time, the collection of 60,000 at county transfer stations is not feasible by 2020, and thus executive staff report the status should be updated to red.

**King County Government Operational Targets for Reducing GHG Emissions**

The largest source of GHG emissions in county operations is the operation of the Metro Transit fleet (43%), fugitive methane landfill emissions (23.3), building and facility energy use (21.4%), non-metro fleet and equipment (10.6%), and fugitive methane emissions from wastewater (1.7%).

Table 2 reports the progress on each of the operational level targets in the 2015 SCAP.

**Table 2  
Status of Operational Level Targets**

Target		Status
<b>Transportation and Land Use</b>		
*	Reduction in energy use per boarding by all Metro vehicles	Approaching target
*	Reduction in energy use of all vehicle	Off target

	operations excluding Metro fleet between 2014 and 2020	
*	Increase in alternative fuel use for all county vehicle operations	Approaching target
<b>Buildings and Facilities Energy</b>		
*	Percentage of Electricity Being Consumed in Government operations that is GHG Neutral	Meeting target
	Produce renewable energy equal to or greater than 100% of total county government net energy requirements by 2017 and each year thereafter, excluding the public transit	Meeting target
*	Consume renewable energy equal to 70 percent of government operation facility energy consumption by 2020 and 85 % by 2025	Approaching target
*	Reduction in energy use in county-owned facilities by at least 7.5% by 2020 and 10 % by 2025 compared to 2014.	Approaching target
	All King County government buildings over 20,000 square feet (with exceptions) shall be Energy Starr Certified	Off Target
<b>Green Buildings</b>		
	County-owned capital projects achieving highest possible certification levels	Approaching target
	County project construction and demolition materials diverted from landfills	Meeting target
<b>Consumption and Materials Management</b>		
	Total amount of copy paper purchased	Off target
	Server virtualization	Meeting target
*	Landfill Gas collection efficiency at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill	Meeting target
<b>Forests and Agriculture</b>		
	Forests Stewardship Plans on Forested Sites over 200 acres managed by the Parks Division	Meeting target
*	Number of trees planted by King County and Public and Private Partners.	Meeting target

## Preparing for Climate Change Impacts

There are no specific on-going performance metrics for the section of the SCAP related to preparing for climate change impacts. In December 2017, Executive staff evaluated their progress on the following priority actions to address climate change. Executive staff reviewed the status of these actions and the table below has been updated to reflect the status change as of April 2019 for 3 priority actions. (See Attachment 2 for the details of status changes for these actions.)

For the 2020 SCAP, the Council may wish to consider including specific performance metrics for preparing for climate impacts similar to the type of metrics prepared for reducing GHG emissions.

**Table 3  
Status of Priority Actions for Preparing for Climate Change Impacts**

<b>Priority Action</b>	<b>Status as of Dec. 2017</b>	<b>April 2019 Status Changes</b>
Assess climate impacts on rainfall patterns	In progress	Complete or ongoing
Assess impacts on wastewater conveyance	In progress	
Develop a comprehensive approach for managing sea level rise	In progress	
Survey and engage stakeholders on health and climate change	Complete or ongoing	
Update stormwater design requirements	In progress	
Assess climate impacts on flood size and frequencies	Needs action	In progress
Work regionally to prepare for climate action	In progress	
Expand and fund public health preparedness and responses.	Needs action	In progress
Evaluate emergency preparedness mitigation strategies	In progress	
Conduct landslide hazard mapping	Complete or on-going	
Provide emergency climate preparedness education	Complete or on-going	
Assess climate change impacts on water supply in King County	Complete or on-going	
Plan for low stream flows	Complete or on-going	
Expand use of recycled water	In progress	
Assess climate change impacts on population growth rates	In progress	
Plan for salmon recovery	In progress	

## **Climate Equity and Community Engagement**

The 2015 SCAP did not include specific performance metrics related to community engagement and capacity building. The Biennial Progress Report rated the County's progress on climate equity and community engagement as in "progress." The report highlights the following activities related to climate equity and community engagement.

- Capacity building through community scholarships to attend climate related workshops and conferences
- Climate change engagement and communications with immigrant, refugees, and communities of color
- Engaging Seattle's International District and Rainier Valley neighborhoods to prevent heat-related illness
- Supporting community gardens in underserved areas
- Reducing food waste
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy in white center
- Equity and Social Justice in green building and capital projects
- Wildfire smoke and hazy days messaging
- Metro zero-emission bus deployment in low-income and minority communities.

For the 2020 SCAP, the Council may wish to consider including specific performance metrics for preparing for climate impacts similar to the type of metrics prepared for reducing GHG emissions.

### **INVITED**

- Megan Smith, Director of Climate and Energy Initiatives, Office of the Executive
- Matt Kuharic, Senior Climate Change Specialist, Department of Natural Resources and Parks
- Jamie Stroble, Climate Engagement and Community Partnership Specialist, Department of Natural Resources and Parks
- Lara Whitely Binder, Climate Preparedness Specialist, Department of Natural Resources and Parks

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Report 2018-RPT0091 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan 2017 Biennial Report
2. SCAP 2015 Actions that have changed status