



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Motion

Proposed No. 2024-0206.1

Sponsors Balducci

1 A MOTION endorsing the Safe System approach to
2 achieve the goal of zero traffic deaths and serious injuries
3 in King County; and requesting that the King County
4 executive propose a strategy to develop a coordinated,
5 multiagency safety action plan using the Safe System
6 approach.

7 WHEREAS, according to the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center
8 of the University of Washington, there were eight hundred ten traffic deaths in
9 Washington state in 2023, a ten percent increase since 2022, and the largest number of
10 traffic deaths in the state since 1990, and

11 WHEREAS, according to the Washington state Traffic Safety Commission, there
12 were one hundred sixty-seven traffic deaths involving motor vehicles in King County
13 during 2023, double the amount recorded in 2014, including a one-hundred-sixty-five-
14 percent increase in pedestrian deaths in King County over the last decade from 20 in
15 2014 to fifty-three in 2023, and

16 WHEREAS, according to the King County traffic safety coalition, in 2023, the
17 societal cost of traffic collisions in King County was \$5.5 billion per year, and

18 WHEREAS, according to Smart Growth America's Dangerous by Design 2024
19 report, Black and Native Americans, older adults, and people walking in low-income
20 communities die at higher rates and face higher levels of risk when using our nation's

21 streets, and

22 WHEREAS, both the adopted 2012 King County Comprehensive Plan, as
23 amended, and the proposed King County Comprehensive Plan, to be adopted under
24 Proposed Ordinance 2023-0440, state as a goal that King County should maintain safe
25 and secure county-owned infrastructure, including roads, bridges, trails, buses, passenger
26 ferries, and transit and ferry facilities, and

27 WHEREAS, the Vision Zero strategy, which was developed in Europe in the
28 1990s and is now used worldwide, aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe
29 injuries, while increasing safety, health, and equitable mobility for all, and

30 WHEREAS, at the federal level, the U.S. Department of Transportation has
31 adopted the Vision Zero goal to strive to eliminate fatal and serious injuries for all road
32 users, and is implementing the Safe System approach to achieve that goal, and

33 WHEREAS, the Safe System approach is founded on the principles that humans
34 make mistakes, that human bodies have limited ability to tolerate crash impacts, and that
35 those mistakes should never lead to death, and

36 WHEREAS, applying the Safe System approach involves anticipating human
37 mistakes by designing and managing roadway infrastructure to keep the risk of a mistake
38 low, and when a mistake leads to a crash that the impact on the human body doesn't
39 result in a fatality or serious injury, which requires a focus on safe vehicles, safe speeds,
40 safe roads, safe road users, and postcrash care to make roadways safer for all users, and

41 WHEREAS, at the state level, the Washington state Department of Transportation
42 in coordination with the Washington state Traffic Safety Commission has developed a
43 Strategic Highway Safety Plan that includes the goal of reducing the number of traffic

44 deaths and serious injuries on Washington's roadways to zero by 2030, and

45 WHEREAS, at the regional level, the Puget Sound Regional Council has
46 launched a multi-year effort to develop a regional safety action plan using the Safe
47 System approach to improve traffic safety in the central Puget Sound region and achieve
48 the state's long-term goal of zero deaths and serious injuries in a comprehensive, data-
49 informed, equitable, and collaborative way, and to complement the development of local
50 safety action plans by individual counties and cities, and

51 WHEREAS, to support the Vision Zero goal, the federal Infrastructure Investment
52 and Jobs Act of 2021 established the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program, with
53 five billion dollars in grant funds available to support regional, local, and Tribal
54 initiatives to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries through the Safe System
55 approach, and

56 WHEREAS, in 2023 the Puget Sound Regional Council was awarded nearly eight
57 million dollars through two grants from the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All grant
58 program to support the development of the regional safety plan, as well as local safety
59 plans for the cities of Bonney Lake, Burien, Eatonville, Edmonds, Everett, Federal Way,
60 Fife, Kent, Kirkland, Redmond, Renton, Shoreline, Sultan, and Tukwila, and for Pierce
61 and Snohomish counties, and

62 WHEREAS, in 2023 the roads services division of King County's local services
63 department received a grant of eight hundred thousand dollars from the federal Safe
64 Streets and Roads for All grant program to develop a comprehensive road safety action
65 plan for the one thousand five hundred miles of roads and one hundred eighty-five
66 bridges in unincorporated King County that are managed by the roads services division,

67 and

68 WHEREAS, in addition to managing roads and bridges in unincorporated King
69 County through the roads services division, King County also operates other services and
70 facilities through which people or vehicles interact with traffic throughout both
71 incorporated and unincorporated King County, including through the Metro transit
72 department, which operates public transportation services, the King County sheriff's
73 office, which provides traffic enforcement, the parks and recreation division of the
74 department of natural resources and parks, which develops and operates the recreation
75 and active transportation system on King County's regional trails network, Public Health
76 - Seattle & King County, which coordinates the King County traffic safety coalition and
77 other public health initiatives related to people's use of transportation and the built
78 environment, and the fleet services division of the department of executive services,
79 which manages the operations of King County's fleet vehicles, and

80 WHEREAS, King County does not manage or operate roadways or the built
81 environment within incorporated cities, but an increasing number of cities within the
82 county have adopted Vision Zero goals or are developing local safety plans using the
83 Safe System approach, including the cities of Bellevue, Burien, Covington, Federal Way,
84 Issaquah, Kenmore, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Redmond, Renton, Seattle,
85 Shoreline, and Tukwila, and

86 WHEREAS, because the impacts of King County's operations related to traffic
87 safety extend beyond the operations of the roads services division, it is essential that King
88 County develop a multi-agency safety action plan using the Safe System approach to
89 coordinate traffic safety initiatives being implemented by King County departments, the

90 King County traffic safety coalition, the Puget Sound Regional Council, local
91 jurisdictions, and stakeholder organizations, to achieve the goal of zero traffic deaths and
92 serious injuries in King County, and

93 WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the King County executive coordinate the
94 development of this multi-agency safety action plan using the Safe System approach;

95 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

96 A. King County endorses the Safe System approach to achieve the goal of zero
97 traffic fatalities and serious injuries in King County.

98 B. The council requests that the King County executive, working with King
99 County departments, the King County traffic safety coalition, Puget Sound Regional
100 Council, local jurisdictions, and stakeholder organizations, propose a strategy to develop
101 a coordinated, multiagency safety action plan using the Safe System approach, including,
102 but not limited to, information about the proposed scope, budget, timeline, and resources
103 needed to develop the safety action plan, as well as a proposed date by which King
104 County would strive to achieve zero traffic deaths and serious injuries in King County.

105 C. The executive should electronically file a description of the proposed strategy
106 to develop a coordinated, multiagency safety action plan using the Safe System approach
107 no later than January 30, 2025, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original

Motion

108 and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the chief
109 policy officer, and the lead staff for the committee of the whole, or its successor.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Dave Upthegrove, Chair

ATTEST:

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, _____.

Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: None