



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**September 6, 2006**

**Ordinance 15579**

**Proposed No.** 2006-0309.1

**Sponsors** Constantine and Phillips

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to extending the waiver for  
2 public benefit rating system and timberlands application  
3 fees; and amending Ordinance 1076, Section 4, as  
4 amended, and K.C.C. 20.36.040.

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**STATEMENT OF FACTS:**

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1. Chapter 84.34 RCW authorizes counties to assess open space,  
9 agricultural lands, and timberlands based on their current use rather than  
10 their highest and best use in recognition of the public benefits that these  
11 uses provide.

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2. In 1992, the King County council approved Ordinance 1076  
13 implementing the provisions of chapter 84.34 RCW and establishing  
14 procedures, rules and fees for the consideration of applications for public  
15 benefit rating system assessed valuation on "open space land" and for  
16 current use assessment on "farm and agricultural land" and "timber land" as  
17 those lands are defined in RCW 84.34.020.

18           3. In doing so, the King County council found that it is in the best interest  
19           of the county to maintain, preserve, conserve and otherwise continue in  
20           existence adequate open space lands for the production of food, fiber and  
21           forest crops, and to assure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and  
22           scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being of the county and its  
23           citizens.

24           4. Since the establishment of King County's public benefit rating system,  
25           more than six hundred landowners have enrolled, resulting in protection of  
26           more than six thousand acres.

27           5. King County Comprehensive Plan policy E-101 directs that the county  
28           should use incentives to protect and restore the natural environment  
29           whenever practicable.

30           6. In order to facilitate applications to the public benefit rating system  
31           program, the King County council approved Ordinance 15137 amending  
32           K.C.C 20.36.040 to waive the application fee for the public benefit rating  
33           system in 2005.

34           7. The King County council appropriated funding to the water and land  
35           resources division in 2005 and 2006 to offset lost revenue for the fee waiver  
36           and to increase the number staff dedicated to outreach and monitoring for  
37           the public benefit rating system in 2005 and 2006.

38           8. With the implementation of the fee waiver and increase outreach to rural  
39           land owners, applications to the public benefit rating system program

40 increased from fifty-six land owners in 2004, to eighty-four landowners in  
41 2005.

42 8. The King County council would like to continue waive the application  
43 fee as a mechanism for facilitating participation in the public benefit rating  
44 system, and to extend the waiver to the timberlands program which provides  
45 an incentive to small forest land owners to continue forest uses.

46 9. Funds were appropriated to the water and land resources division in 2006  
47 to support continuation of the fee waiver. However, the authority to offer  
48 the fee waiver expired at the end of 2005.

49 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

50 SECTION 1. Ordinance 1076, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.36.040 are  
51 each hereby amended to read as follows:

52 A. Except as provided in subsection C. of this section, the applicant shall pay a  
53 current use filing fee as provided in K.C.C. 27.10.230, payable to the King County of  
54 finance and business operations division, for each open space, farm and agricultural or  
55 timber land application filed in calendar year 1973 or thereafter.

56 B. In the case of all farm and agricultural land applications, whether the application  
57 is based on land within or outside of an incorporated area, the entire fee shall be collected  
58 and retained by the county. In the case of open space or timber land applications based on  
59 land in an incorporated area of the county, where the city legislative authority has set no  
60 filing fee, the county fee shall govern and the entire fee shall be collected and retained by  
61 the county. Where the city legislative authority has established a filing fee for open space  
62 or timber land applications based on land in an incorporated area of the county, fees as set

63 forth in K.C.C. Title 27 shall be collected by the county from the applicant and the county  
64 shall pay the city one-half of the fee collected; provided, that in no event shall the amount  
65 paid to the city exceed the fee established by the city.

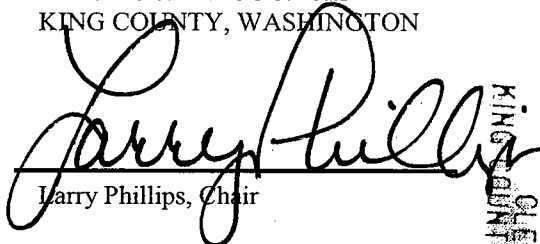
66 C. Public benefit rating system and timberlands application fees for lands in the  
67 unincorporated areas shall be waived from (~~April 1, 2005,~~) the effective date of this  
68 ordinance through December 31, (~~2005~~) 2007.

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Ordinance 15579 was introduced on 7/10/2006 and passed by the Metropolitan King  
County Council on 9/5/2006, by the following vote:

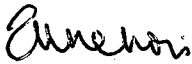
- Yes: 7 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Ferguson, Ms. Hague, Mr. Constantine and Ms. Patterson
- No: 1 - Ms. Lambert
- Excused: 1 - Mr. Gossett

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Larry Phillips, Chair

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ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 13th day of September, 2006.

  
for Ron Sims, County Executive

Attachments None