



KING COUNTY
Signature Report

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

March 5, 2012

Motion 13644

Proposed No. 2012-0064.2

Sponsors Phillips and Ferguson

1 A MOTION relating to county efforts to reduce climate
2 pollution and prepare for the effects of climate change on
3 the environment, human health and the economy and to
4 minimize King County's operational environmental
5 footprint, and rescinding Motion 12362.

6 WHEREAS, there is consensus among the world's leading scientists, including
7 the National Academies and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, that human
8 sources of climate pollution such as carbon dioxide and methane are causing
9 unprecedented and severe changes in global and local climate systems, and the related
10 impacts are among the most significant environmental challenges facing the world, and

11 WHEREAS, climate scientists at the University of Washington report that
12 significant changes to the Pacific Northwest climate are causing environmental changes
13 including decreasing mountain snowpack and increasing flooding, and are negatively
14 impacting infrastructure, forests, salmon, human health and the Puget Sound, and

15 WHEREAS, King County's diversity of natural habitats and species, known as
16 biodiversity, helps to support pollination of crops, flood and erosion control, fisheries and
17 recreation, and

18 WHEREAS, climate change is causing increased stress and changes in
19 distribution of plant and animal species due to vegetation range shifts, streamflow

20 changes, invasive species invasions and increased freshwater and marine water
21 temperatures, and

22 WHEREAS, left unaddressed, human induced changes to the climate system will
23 severely impact economic prosperity and quality of life in King County and elsewhere,
24 and

25 WHEREAS, buildings account for thirty-five percent of greenhouse gas emissions
26 that occur in King County, and

27 WHEREAS, transportation accounts for forty-eight percent of greenhouse gas
28 emissions that occur in King County, and

29 WHEREAS, King County citizens, businesses, and governments also share
30 responsibility for the greenhouse gas emissions associated with goods and services that
31 are produced outside the region and consumed and disposed of locally, and

32 WHEREAS, projects that reduce climate pollution, such as energy efficiency
33 waste management improvements, can have multiple benefits to the county and its
34 citizens, including reducing operating costs and creating new revenue sources for King
35 County government, improving public health, and building a green economy, and

36 WHEREAS, the integration of land use, waste management and transportation
37 planning to create vibrant urban communities where residents can conveniently walk,
38 bicycle, van pool, ride share or take transit to places of work, school and shopping can
39 save energy, reduce climate pollution and waste, and improve health, and

40 WHEREAS, protecting and restoring natural areas such as wetlands and forests
41 naturally sequesters carbon dioxide and also supports a healthy and robust ecosystem that
42 is more resilient to local climate change impacts, and

43 WHEREAS, actions to reduce climate pollution support many other county
44 priorities from protecting the Puget Sound to addressing health inequities among King
45 County residents, to building a green economy, and

46 WHEREAS, the King County 2010-2014 Strategic Plan established
47 environmental sustainability as one of King County's eight goals, and outlines objectives
48 to reduce climate pollution and prepare for the effects of climate change on the
49 environment, human health and the economy and to minimize King County's operational
50 environmental footprint, and

51 WHEREAS, the 2010 King County Energy Plan established near-term goals for
52 energy efficiency in county buildings and vehicles, promotes the use and production of
53 renewable and greenhouse gas-neutral energy, and calls for integrated monitoring and
54 reporting of climate, energy and green building outcomes, and

55 WHEREAS, RCW 70.235.020 requires that by 2020 Washington state reduce
56 overall greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels, and that by 2050 emissions are further
57 reduced to fifty percent below 1990 levels, and

58 WHEREAS, the King County Comprehensive Plan directed that the county
59 collaborate with other local governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the
60 region to eighty percent below 2007 levels by 2050 and incorporate climate change
61 considerations into county plans, programs and projects among other related policies and
62 goals, and

63 WHEREAS, the draft King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management
64 Plan commits to implementing solid waste management practices that reduce greenhouse

65 gas emissions, including mitigation through conservation and energy recovery, and
66 adaptation through modifying facilities and operations, and

67 WHEREAS, K.C.C. chapter 18.17 requires the incorporation of green and
68 sustainable practices into the design, construction and operation of capital improvement
69 projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce energy and other operating costs and
70 create healthier and more appealing environments for the public, and

71 WHEREAS, the 2011 King County Board of Health Planning for Healthy
72 Communities Guidelines call for residents in all communities in King County to have
73 access to safe and convenient opportunities for physical activity and exercise that will
74 result in a co-benefit of reducing vehicle miles traveled and reducing climate pollution,
75 and

76 WHEREAS, people located within one mile of public amenities such as regional
77 trails are more likely to access those trails for mobility and recreation, which will result in
78 a co-benefit of reducing vehicle miles traveled and reducing climate pollution, and

79 WHEREAS, climate policies were integrated throughout the King County
80 Comprehensive Plan during the last major update in 2008, and the next major
81 Comprehensive Plan update in 2012 provides an opportunity to revise climate goals and
82 policies to reflect new direction from Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 and
83 the updated King County Countywide Planning Policies, and

84 WHEREAS, the Growth Management Planning Council approved in 2011 a new
85 countywide planning policy calling for the establishment of a countywide greenhouse gas
86 reduction target that exceeds the statewide reduction requirement that is stated as the

87 2050 goal of a fifty-percent reduction below 1990 levels, while also establishing several
88 other climate change and energy related policies, and

89 WHEREAS, King County partnered with the city of Seattle and the Puget Sound
90 Clean Air agency to update the King County geographic greenhouse gas emissions
91 inventory, assess emissions associated with all King County consumption regardless of
92 where the emissions occur, and to develop a framework for assessing progress towards
93 countywide emissions reduction goals, and

94 WHEREAS, emissions from King County operations represent only a small
95 percentage of all King County greenhouse gas emissions, and significant progress in
96 meeting emissions reduction targets can only happen through collaborative action at a
97 countywide scale, and

98 WHEREAS, King County is carrying out a wide range of transportation, land use,
99 open space and resource land protection, land management, energy efficiency, green
100 building, waste reduction, recycling and outreach initiatives to reduce climate pollution
101 and prepare for the inevitable impacts of climate change, and

102 WHEREAS, long-term and significant reductions in climate pollution will only be
103 achieved through commitments to specific targets and actions and to reduce climate
104 pollution and by assessing the results of these actions, and

105 WHEREAS, Motion 12362, the climate and energy motion adopted in 2006,
106 outlined a series of near-term actions and opportunities related to climate change, and

107 WHEREAS, over the course of the last five years there have been significant
108 changes in the area of climate change that warrant an update to Motion 12362, and

109 WHEREAS, Ordinance 17270 (Proposed Ordinance 2012-0049) requires
110 development of a strategic climate action plan using the planning framework of the King
111 County Strategic Plan to be completed by June 29, 2012, and

112 WHEREAS, reducing climate pollution and preparing for climate change are key
113 objectives of the 2010 King County Strategic Plan and there are opportunities for
114 immediate actions to advance these objectives during 2012 while a more detailed
115 strategic climate action plan is being developed, and

116 WHEREAS, this motion shall serve to guide the county's immediate actions to
117 reduce climate emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change while a more
118 detailed strategic climate action plan is developed in 2012, and

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

120 A. Motion 12362 is hereby rescinded.

121 B. With respect to conducting emissions inventories, establishing greenhouse gas
122 emissions reduction targets and performance measures, and ensuring accountability:

123 1. The county will continue its collaboration in 2012 with the city of Seattle and
124 the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and other partners to develop key messages and
125 communications strategies related to a recently completed comprehensive assessment of
126 greenhouse gas emissions associated with King County and will use this new data to
127 guide projects, programs and policies that best support community-scale emissions
128 reductions;

129 2. The county, through its participation in the Growth Management Planning
130 Council, will collaborate with cities to develop a countywide-level emissions reduction
131 target that is informed by the recent emissions inventory work and meets or exceeds the

132 current state requirements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This includes
133 establishing a 2020 goal for reduction of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from
134 King County operations informed by recent countywide greenhouse gas emissions
135 inventories conducted in partnership with the city of Seattle and the Puget Sound Clean
136 Air Agency as well as through conducting lifecycle assessments of carbon emissions
137 from King County facilities and operations;

138 3. As part of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan update and the development of a
139 strategic climate action plan, the county will review and revise its climate and energy
140 goals as needed to ensure that it is doing its part both operationally and at the community
141 scale to advance the emissions reduction targets being established by the growth
142 management planning council;

143 4. The county will monitor and report greenhouse gas emissions from
144 government operations using protocols approved by the Climate Registry beginning in
145 2012;

146 5. King County should continue to participate as a test community in the
147 development of national standards for measuring sustainability at a community scale,
148 through the "STAR Communities" program sponsored by ICLEI - Local Governments
149 for Sustainability, and use lessons learned from this effort to inform both future actions
150 and performance measures; and

151 6. As required by Ordinance 17270 (Proposed Ordinance 2012-0049), the
152 county will develop and report on specific strategies and performance measures and
153 targets to reduce climate pollution and prepare for the impacts of climate change, and use
154 performance findings on an ongoing basis to update targets and strategies. This reporting

155 will take place as part of integrated annual reporting on climate, energy, green building,
156 and environmental purchasing required by KCC 18.50.010.

157 C. With respect to managing land use and transportation to reduce greenhouse
158 gas emissions:

159 1. As part of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update, King County will review
160 and update policies related to land use and transportation based on changes in federal and
161 state requirements, current climate science, the outcome of updated community and
162 operational emissions inventories, multicounty planning policies and updated countywide
163 planning policies;

164 2. Consistent with the 2011 King County Board of Health Planning for Healthy
165 Communities Guidelines and as part of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update, King
166 County will review and update policies and regulations to encourage a mix of land uses
167 with well-designed public spaces accessible to transportation alternatives including
168 public transit and pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which simultaneously reduce climate
169 pollution and help to prevent chronic disease and premature death;

170 3. The county will work with developers, community groups and the
171 Sustainable Cities Roundtable to identify and establish additional incentives to locate
172 new development within established urban centers, use design standards that will reduce
173 energy use and greenhouse gas emissions beyond what is required by current building
174 and energy codes, and maximize carbon sequestration functions of soils and vegetation
175 through site layout and restoration. As part of this effort, the county will evaluate use of
176 the state environmental policy act review as a tool for evaluating alternatives for relative
177 greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating impacts;

178 4. The county will work with cities, the Puget Sound Regional Council, regional
179 transit agencies, and housing groups as part of implementing the Sustainable
180 Communities Grant to develop policies and strategies to encourage and guide transit
181 oriented development along high capacity corridors. As part of this effort, the county
182 will carry out a "catalyst" project around the Northgate Transit Hub, promoting integrated
183 planning and support for housing, mixed use development, and seamless connections
184 between bus and light rail transportation modes. The county will also promote transit
185 oriented development at park and ride lots around the county, including South Kirkland
186 Park and Ride. In participating in joint planning efforts for transit oriented development,
187 the county should encourage use of green building standards;

188 5. Consistent with the Regional Transit Task Force recommendations and the
189 Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, the county will plan transit
190 service by more closely linking employment centers and residential density to service,
191 while also ensuring social equity and considering geographic value concerns;

192 6. As funding allows, the county will expand the transit division's participation
193 in the Washington state Commute Trip Reduction employer partnerships program to
194 achieve a ten percent reduction in drive alone commuting by 2015;

195 7. Building on the successful establishment of the RapidRide Line between
196 Federal Way and Tukwila in 2010, and between Bellevue and Redmond in 2011, the
197 county will continue to implement the RapidRide program with the following target dates
198 for new lines: downtown Seattle to West Seattle and Ballard in 2012; downtown Seattle
199 to the King-Snohomish line in 2013; and Renton to Burien in 2013;

200 8. Consistent with the 2010 King County Energy Plan, the county will replace
201 diesel buses if sufficient funding and appropriate technologies are available to help to
202 achieve the county's energy and climate goals;

203 9. The county will continue to lead efforts to promote electric vehicles and
204 participate in infrastructure improvements to support widespread adoption of this
205 technology; and

206 10. King County will continue to develop and maintain an interconnected
207 countywide system of regional trails in order to promote options for nonmotorized
208 transportation, especially in historically underserved geographies and communities with
209 poor health outcomes relative to the county population as a whole.

210 D. With respect to managing land and providing technical assistance and
211 incentives to enhance carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

212 1. King County will continue to promote the use of conservation easements on
213 private property as well as acquire, steward and restore natural public lands for ecological
214 and recreational purposes. These protected lands will provide biological carbon storage
215 in forests and soils and will help reduce local climate change impacts such as increasing
216 flooding;

217 2. The county will continue to support forestry and agriculture technical
218 assistance, tax incentives and property acquisitions as a way to offset greenhouse gas
219 emissions through carbon sequestration;

220 3. The county will partner with the National Wildlife Federation and others to
221 publicize a new on-line technical assistance program in 2012 to encourage private land

222 owners to retain and enhance forest and soil cover and productivity to improve carbon
223 sequestration and reduce climate change impacts;

224 4. The county will consider establishment of tax incentives through the public
225 benefit rating program tied to commitments by landowners to enhance carbon
226 sequestration through retention and enhancement of forest and soil cover productivity;
227 and

228 5. King County will pursue opportunities to support forest and soil management
229 and restoration projects, and conduct these projects in ways that prioritize biological
230 carbon sequestration and plan for changing climate conditions.

231 E. With respect to environmental management, emergency preparedness, and
232 preparing for impacts of climate change:

233 1. As part of the next update to the flood hazard management plan, began in
234 2011, the county will review available information on the potential impacts of climate
235 change on winter floods, and consider these impacts in updating flood risk reduction
236 policies and capital improvements plans and projects;

237 2. By the end of 2012, the county should inventory essential county facilities,
238 including roads and wastewater treatment and conveyance facilities, that are subject to
239 climate change related impacts including sea level rise and exacerbated river flooding,
240 and develop strategies for reducing risks and mitigating future damages;

241 3. King County will integrate observed and projected climate change related
242 changes in severe weather, flooding, drought, fire, landslides, and related issues into
243 emergency management planning and programs including the 2014 King County
244 Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan;

245 4. The county, consistent with the Regional Wastewater Services Plan and
246 Reclaimed Water Plan, should evaluate alternatives for production and use of reclaimed
247 water for industrial, irrigation and environmental restoration purposes to determine if it is
248 a reasonable means of mitigating the climate change impacts projected to decrease
249 summer stream flows and affect water supplies; and

250 5. To foster resistance and resilience to climate change in ecosystems and
251 species, the county will prioritize the restoration of riparian vegetation to reduce warming
252 in cold water systems, restore wetlands to reduce drought and flooding, improve
253 connections between different habitats and protect and restore areas most likely to be
254 resistant to climate change.

255 F. With respect to improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas
256 emissions from county operations:

257 1. The county will implement the adopted 2010 King County Energy Plan,
258 including actions to achieve the following near-term goals: produce, use, or purchase
259 renewable energy equal to fifty percent of total county energy requirements by 2012,
260 reduce net normalized energy usage in county buildings by ten percent by 2012 and
261 reduce net normalized energy use in county vehicles by ten percent by 2015;

262 2. The county will develop medium and long-term energy goals in 2012 needed
263 to support achievement of the community-level greenhouse gas emissions reduction
264 targets and county operational emissions targets established through the strategic climate
265 action plan, the countywide planning policy update and King County Comprehensive
266 Plan update, and the King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan update;

267 3. The county will continue to maximize the creation of resources from products
268 such as biogas, biosolids and heat produced by wastewater treatment and solid waste
269 disposal in a manner that produces renewable energy and reduces greenhouse gas
270 emissions;

271 4. The county will seek, subject to budget, operational, and maintenance
272 limitations, to utilize the most energy-efficient commercially viable vehicles for its fleet.
273 King County will also seek to deploy these vehicles in an energy-efficient manner
274 through vehicle routing, idling reduction, and operator practices;

275 5. Consistent with 2010 King County Energy Plan, the county will evaluate
276 options and develop policy guidance and budgeting practices in 2012 to enable county
277 agencies to capture verified operating savings from purchase of hybrid vehicles and
278 building efficiency projects, and apply the savings to up-front capital investment in
279 vehicle purchase or efficiency improvements;

280 6. The county will transition to use of one-hundred percent recycled content
281 paper in 2012 and carry out a campaign to reduce paper use by an additional 20 percent
282 by 2013;

283 7. The county will continue to provide internal training and technical assistance
284 to ensure consistent implementation of the green building and sustainable development
285 ordinance, Ordinance 16147;

286 8. The executive shall identify actions the county may take to ensure that capital
287 improvement projects consider opportunities for the county to participate in district
288 energy projects when and where appropriate;

289 9. The county will continue its participation in the United States Environmental
290 Protection Agency's WasteWise program to promote internal waste prevention, recycling
291 collection and purchase of recycled products. The county will continue to quantify and
292 report the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions associated with these actions; and

293 10. The county will review international best practices in emissions reductions
294 for energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and waste management, including
295 studies and standards adopted by the European Union, in the continual process of
296 updating this strategic climate action plan based on new research.

297 G. With respect to community outreach, education, advocacy and information
298 sharing with other local governments and universities:

299 1. As funding allows, the county will continue to participate in national and
300 regional organizations of local governments sharing strategies to reduce emissions and
301 prepare for climate change. The county will continue to advocate for federal initiatives
302 and grant programs, like the Better Buildings Initiative and Energy Efficiency
303 Community Development Block Grants, which support local investments in projects to
304 reduce energy use and efficiency while creating green jobs;

305 2. The county will continue to advocate for national emissions inventory
306 standards that recognize the unique role of local governments, particularly counties, and
307 managing land use and transportation in a manner that reduces community-scale
308 emissions;

309 3. The county will continue to carry out green building programs, which provide
310 technical assistance to local governments, businesses, non-profit organizations, and

311 residents to implement green building practices while addressing critical environmental
312 issues, such as climate change, critical habitat restoration and solid waste reduction;

313 4. As described in Ordinance 17270 (Proposed Ordinance 2012-0061), the
314 county will participate in and support the King County-Cities Climate Pledge and
315 Collaboration, a partnership between the cities of King County and King County itself to
316 increase the effectiveness of local governments' sustainability and climate change efforts;

317 5. The county will continue to pursue waste reduction and recycling initiatives,
318 including education and technical assistance to cities, to divert waste from disposal and
319 reducing associated greenhouse gas emissions;

320 6. Consistent with the Regional Economic Strategy for Central Puget Sound,
321 King County will work with the business community to help identify effective and
322 efficient green manufacturing practices that reduce energy use and greenhouse gas
323 emissions, and promote King County and the Puget Sound region as a center for green
324 manufacturing. The county will also work with community groups to promote the
325 consumption of green-manufactured products;

326 7. The county will continue to partner with the University of Washington to
327 identify and plan for the impact of climate change on human health, including
328 synthesizing data on the effects of changing temperature on illness and death in King
329 County; and

330 8. The county will develop and incorporate into existing outreach efforts public
331 health messages related to the health implications of climate change, particularly in urban
332 communities, and the benefits of actions, such as using alternative transportation options
333 that simultaneously reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve public health.

334 H. Using the King County Strategic Plan framework, the executive shall review
335 and integrate, as appropriate, the near-term actions specified in sections B through G in
336 this motion with the strategic climate action plan being developed consistent with
337 Ordinance 17270. (Proposed Ordinance 2012-0049).
338

Motion 13644 was introduced on 2/6/2012 and passed by the Metropolitan King
County Council on 3/5/2012, by the following vote:

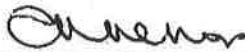
Yes: 7 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague,
Ms. Lambert, Mr. Ferguson and Mr. McDermott
No: 0
Excused: 2 - Ms. Patterson and Mr. Dunn

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None