

**((2016)) 2024 King County Comprehensive Plan – ((updated December 6, 2022)) Adopted TBD Attachment A to Ordinance ((18427, as amended by Ordinances 18623, 18810, 19034, 19146, and 19555)) TBD**



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## CHAPTER 10

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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~~((The foundation for a vibrant and sustainable economy starts with providing livable communities and a high quality of life; these are among the principles that guide the Comprehensive Plan. Other elements of that foundation include, but are not limited to a favorable business climate with consistent and predictable regulations, an educated and trained workforce, adequate public infrastructure, land supply, research and advancing technology, affordable housing, available capital, recreational and cultural opportunities, a healthy natural environment and greater equity and opportunity for all.))~~ King County aims to be a welcoming community where every person can thrive. Residents cannot thrive without equitable access to high quality jobs and wealth building

The policies in this chapter are designed to continue King County's long-term commitment to a ~~((prosperous,))~~ diverse, equitable, prosperous, resilient, and sustainable economy; contribute to a strong and stable tax base; and create a desirable quality of life for all residents. They do so by promoting public programs and actions that ~~((support a successful economy, one in which the))~~ that are both managed internally and leverage private, nonprofit, and public sector ~~((s))~~ partnerships ~~((can thrive and create jobs, is compatible with the environment, and contributes to a strong and stable tax base and a high quality of life for all residents))~~. The policies also recognize businesses and the workforce as customers of an economic development system; and they support actions

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opportunities, which are supported by a robust and inclusive economy. To be successful in creating that access and opportunity, businesses and organizations need a competitive business climate with consistent and predictable regulations, an educated and skilled workforce, adequate public infrastructure, research and development tools, affordable workforce housing, reliable transportation, low-cost childcare, and a safe and healthy environment. These are among the principles that guide the economic development element of the Comprehensive Plan.

and programs that promote the strength and health of both groups.

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## ~~((I.)) Overview~~

### ~~((A.)) The State of the Economy~~

King County's labor market and economy ((is)) are the largest((,)) and most diverse((, and most significant)) economy in Washington State. Industries with the highest employment concentration in King County include agriculture; manufacturing; construction; retail; trade, transportation, and utilities; professional and business services; information education, and health services; and leisure and hospitality. ~~((In 2014, King County's economic base included:~~

- ~~• 1,285,000 nonagricultural jobs. This represents 67% of the Central Puget Sound Region's (King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties) 1,923,000 nonagricultural jobs and 42% of the state's 3,070,400 nonagricultural jobs;~~
- ~~• An \$87.4 billion payroll. This represents 74% of the region's \$118.5 billion payroll and 52% of the state's \$167.4 billion payroll; and~~
- ~~• 79,500 business firms, excluding sole proprietorships. This represents 63% of the region's 125,000 firms and 36.4% of the state's 219,000 firms.~~

~~The last fifteen years have been characterized by two major recessions and three periods of recovery and growth. Nonagricultural employment in King County peaked in 2000 at 1,187,000 jobs, but as the dot-com recession took hold, declined 7% to 1,109,000 jobs in 2003. Employment began to rise again in 2004, and by the job peak in 2008, employment had exceeded 2000 levels, growing to a total of 1,216,000 jobs. During the Great Recession, employment decreased by 7% again to 1,134,000 jobs in 2010, 4% below levels of a decade before. However, as the Great Recession ended employment began to grow again reaching more than 1,285,000 in 2014, a 13% increase over 2010 levels.~~

~~King County employment in 2014 was comprised of the following sectors:~~

- ~~• Trade, Transportation and Utilities was the largest sector, with 238,000 employees primarily in retail trade, wholesale trade, and transportation services.~~
- ~~• Professional and Business Services was the second largest sector with 211,000 jobs. This sector includes legal services, engineering services, computer software design, company management and administration.~~
- ~~• Two sectors each had about 166,000 employees: Government at all levels including public education, and Health Services/Private Educational Services. Another sector, Leisure and Hospitality, which includes hotels and restaurants, had 129,000 employees.~~
- ~~• Four other sectors are smaller but vital in terms of bolstering the county's economic base with substantial payroll. They include Manufacturing (108,000 jobs); Information (software publishing and tele-communications, 88,000 jobs); Financial Activities (banks, insurance, real~~

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44 estate, 71,000 jobs); and Construction with 62,000 jobs.

45 • ~~Other Services had the remaining 47,000 jobs, in repair and maintenance, personal services,~~  
46 ~~religious, professional and civic organizations.~~

47

48 In 2014, unincorporated King County had 252,000 residents and about 38,000 jobs.) Within the unincorporated  
49 jurisdiction are ~~((two))~~ three broad ~~((geographic types))~~ geographies, designated by King County under the  
50 Growth Management Act and the Comprehensive Plan:

51 • Urban unincorporated ~~((King County, within the Urban Growth Area))~~ areas;

52 • The Rural Area(s); and

53 • Natural Resource Lands ~~((outside the Urban Growth Area))~~.

54

55 Covering only 45 square miles, urban unincorporated King County contains a number of residential  
56 communities and a small number of business centers with about half of the unincorporated population ~~((, 127,000~~  
57 ~~people))~~. Major communities within this urban jurisdiction include North Highline, Skyway-West Hill,  
58 Fairwood, East Renton, and Lakeland South/East Federal Way. ~~((The urban unincorporated communities~~  
59 ~~together had about 17,600 jobs in 2014.))~~ The largest job sector is services, ~~((with about 6,000 jobs throughout~~  
60 ~~urban unincorporated King County.))~~ followed by ~~((E))~~ education and government ~~((is the second largest sector~~  
61 ~~with 5,000 jobs.<sup>†</sup>))~~

62

63 Other large sectors within the urban unincorporated geography include construction and resources, wholesale-  
64 transportation, retail, and manufacturing. In addition to its jobs ~~((–i.e.,))~~ (people working in urban  
65 unincorporated job centers ~~((–))~~), much of the urban unincorporated area is residential, and includes a skilled  
66 labor force. ~~((About 70,000 urban unincorporated residents are in King County’s labor force, and approximately~~  
67 ~~63,000 were employed in 2014, contributing significantly to the county’s economy.))~~

68

69 The Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands portions of the county’s economic base plays a significant role in  
70 helping the county maintain a diversity of economic sectors, thus contributing to the county’s overall economic  
71 health. Evaluation and discussion of the rural economy includes the Rural Area, Natural Resource Lands, and  
72 the Cities in the Rural Area, which include Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend,  
73 Snoqualmie, and Skykomish.

74

75 ~~((Information on the rural economy is as follows:~~

76 • ~~In 2014, about 8.3% (168,000) of the county’s total population of 2,017,300 lived in the Rural~~  
77 ~~Area, Resource Lands, and Cities in the Rural Area.~~

78 • ~~However, only 2.7% (34,200) of the total 1.2 million jobs in the county are located within the~~

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<sup>†</sup> This 2014 data does not reflect that Klahanie was annexed to Sammamish in 2016. Updated figures are not currently available.)

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Rural Area, Resource Lands, and Cities in the Rural Area (2014 data).

- About sixty percent of the rural jobs (20,400) are located in the rural unincorporated area, with the remainder located in the Cities in the Rural Area, especially in Enumclaw, North Bend and Snoqualmie.
- The Service Sector, which caters to both rural households and businesses, comprises 34% of rural employment.
- The Construction and Resources sector, including agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining, accounts for 16% of rural jobs.
- Farming in King County is changing in response to increased demand by urban residents to purchase locally grown foods. Farms are becoming smaller with increased crop diversity. In 2012 there were 1,837 farms in the county, with an average farm size of 25 acres. According to the 2012 United States Agricultural Census, farm acreage decreased slightly from 49,000 acres in 2007 to 48,000 acres in 2012. Farm product sales totaled nearly \$120 million in 2012.
- Sales at county farmers markets in 2014 generated over \$35 million in direct sales for Washington farmers.
- The timber industry experienced wide fluctuations in timber harvest volumes between 2004 and 2014 in response to economic conditions. During that period King County saw an overall 23% decline in timber harvest volume on private and public lands from 138 million board feet to 106 million board feet, while the value of that timber rose 11% from \$34 million in 2004 to \$37.8 million in 2014, according to the Washington State Department of Revenue.
- The equestrian industry plays a role in the rural economy. In 2005, there were about 3,200 persons directly employed in the equestrian industry and 945 persons employed in jobs related to the industry countywide. Additionally, equestrian industry sales totaled \$227 million based on 2005 numbers, which included direct, indirect, and induced sales.

## **B-)) General Economic Development Policies**

King County provides infrastructure, business, and workforce development services as part of its regional responsibilities. King County also partners with ((businesses,)) business; economic development, workforce development, community-based, industry trade, and labor organizations((;)); boards and commissions; and other jurisdictions ((in efforts)) to support and grow the regional economy ((to ensure the elements for a prosperous and successful economy are provided. The county also provides infrastructure, business, and workforce development products and services as part of its regional responsibilities; and it makes many other contributions to sustain the quality of life that makes the region a desirable place to live and work. General King County economic development policies include:)).

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- 114 ED-101 King County ~~((has a long-term commitment to))~~ should support sustainable,  
 115 inclusive, and equitable economic development throughout the county.  
 116
- 117 ED-101a King County ~~((is committed to promoting))~~ should promote diversity, equity, and  
 118 equality of opportunity in all economic development policies and programs, and  
 119 to ~~((integrating))~~ prioritize these ~~((as))~~ factors in~~((to))~~ decision and policy-making  
 120 efforts.  
 121
- 122 ED-101b King County shall engage with the public to inform County economic  
 123 development plans, policies, and programs. This includes fostering  
 124 opportunities for the public, especially communities with limited access to  
 125 economic opportunity and those with the highest needs, to be involved in  
 126 associated decision-making.  
 127
- 128 ED-102 The focus for significant economic growth ~~((will))~~ shall remain within the Urban  
 129 Growth Area, concentrated in cities and in a network of regionally designated  
 130 growth centers. ~~((while within))~~ In the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands,  
 131 ~~((the focus will))~~ economic development shall be focused on sustaining and  
 132 enhancing prosperous and successful rural and resource-based businesses, as  
 133 well as encouraging new businesses that support and are compatible with the  
 134 rural economic clusters.  
 135
- 136 ED-103 King County policies, programs, and strategies shall recognize the importance  
 137 of~~((,))~~ and ~~((place special emphasis))~~ focus on~~((,))~~ growing new businesses, such  
 138 as start-up companies and small local businesses, ~~((as well as retaining))~~ and  
 139 expanding ~~((homegrown firms in basic))~~ existing businesses in industries that  
 140 ~~((bring income into the county and increase the standard of living of the County's~~  
 141 ~~residents))~~ create jobs that pay family wages and share the County's values of  
 142 racial equity, environmental sustainability, and workers' rights.  
 143
- 144 ED-103a King County policies, programs, and strategies shall recognize the role and  
 145 importance of small and locally owned businesses in community stability and  
 146 creating opportunity for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color;  
 147 immigrants; refugees; the LGBTQIA+ community; women; and other historically  
 148 underrepresented groups.  
 149
- 150 ED-104 King County policies, programs, and strategies shall recognize the importance of  
 151 a diversified economic base to provide a continuum of skill training opportunities  
 152 to meet the skill level needs of industry and shall support middle-wage jobs.  
 153 King County should direct resources in ways that reduce inequities and build

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154 economic resiliency for those communities most negatively impacted by asset  
155 poverty.

157 **ED-105** King County ~~((recognizes))~~ shall protect the natural environment as a key  
158 economic ((value that must be protected)) asset and should support businesses  
159 that can be developed in environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient ways.

161 **ED-106** King County shall protect and prevent displacement of cultural resources, and  
162 promote expanded cultural opportunities for its residents and visitors ~~((in order))~~  
163 to enhance the region's quality of life and economic vitality.

165 King County's role in economic development is implemented at several levels. At all levels, King County seeks  
166 to coordinate, partner, and engage with private and public organizations to pursue ~~((mutually beneficial~~  
167 ~~outcomes))~~ shared goals.

169 **ED-107** ~~((At the multicounty level,))~~ King County should partner with other counties,  
170 regional entities and the state~~((, as appropriate,))~~ to devise and implement  
171 economic development policies, programs, and strategies to ~~((provide for))~~  
172 achieve sustainable, inclusive, and equitable growth throughout the Puget Sound  
173 region.

175 **ED-108** At the countywide level, King County should partner with other jurisdictions,  
176 economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, the Port of  
177 Seattle, and others~~((, as appropriate,))~~, to develop and implement policies,  
178 programs, and strategies that set the general framework for economic  
179 development within the county.

181 **ED-109** Within the unincorporated areas, King County should partner and engage with  
182 local businesses, the Agriculture and Rural Forest Commissions, community  
183 service areas, adjacent cities, other organizations, and residents~~((, as~~  
184 ~~appropriate,))~~, to develop and implement policies, programs, and strategies that  
185 promote compatible, inclusive, and equitable local economic development.

## 187 ~~((H.))~~ **Business Development**

188 ~~((King County has long supported a growing and diversified economy, one that provides business development~~  
189 ~~opportunities throughout the county.))~~ To support business development, King County's policies, plans, and  
190 programs should support a ~~((positive and healthy))~~ business-friendly climate that ~~((enables all local firms to stay~~  
191 ~~globally competitive, quality oriented, technologically advanced, and able to pay good wages))~~ is conducive to  
192 the domestic and global complete environment.

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194 Homegrown businesses are those that started in the region. ~~((Local and national research over the last 25 years~~  
 195 ~~has concluded that h))~~ Homegrown, small to medium-size businesses create the majority of new jobs in a local  
 196 economy. Industries and firms that export their products and services outside King County bring income into  
 197 the county ~~((and are considered basic, in economic terms. Jobs in basic industry))~~ and generally pay better than  
 198 ~~((non-basic))~~ jobs ~~that are dependent on the local economy.~~ ~~((and))~~ These exporting sectors can help support the  
 199 ~~((non-basic or secondary))~~ local part of the county's economy. ~~((As of 2012, 37% of the jobs in King County are~~  
 200 ~~basic and support the 63% non-basic jobs, such as retail and personal services. Roughly one of every four jobs in~~  
 201 ~~the Puget Sound region is dependent on international trade.))~~

202

203 The county's leading export sectors are:

- 204 • Information ~~((S))~~services, ~~((with 16.4% of all export jobs. Software Publishing is the principal factor in this~~  
 205 ~~sector, accounting for over 50% of the sector's basic jobs and 9.3% of total basic employment))~~ led by  
 206 software development.
- 207 • Manufacturing, ~~((with 14% of all basic employment,))~~ led by aerospace~~((, with 9% of total basic jobs)).~~
- 208 • Business ~~((S))~~services, such as banking, insurance, accounting, legal, architectural, engineering, research and  
 209 development, and computer services~~((, with 13.8% of export jobs)).~~

210

211 King County has also identified the creative sector as a critical segment of the regional economy that requires  
 212 additional support and renewed focus. King County's local creative economy includes the film, music, arts and  
 213 culture, festival, and events industries, videogaming, fashion and more. These industries are predominantly  
 214 driven by small businesses, entrepreneurs, and gig workers. Supporting creative sector development that is  
 215 compatible with surrounding land uses contributes to the region's regional reputation, drives tourism, and creates  
 216 desirable environment for business development.

217

218 King County's targeted industry support also includes those identified in the Puget Sound Regional Council's  
 219 Regional Economic Strategy, the Local Food Initiative, and 30-Year Forest Plan.

220

## 221 **Working Collaboratively in the Region**

222 King County partners with several organizations to grow and sustain regional economic vitality and global  
 223 competitiveness, such as the Puget Sound Regional Council's Central Puget Sound Economic Development  
 224 District Board (serving King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties) ((adopted a "Regional Economic Strategy  
 225 for the Central Puget Sound Region" in 2005, updated it in 2012, and then adopted an updated version entitled  
 226 "Amazing Place: Growing Jobs and Opportunity in the Central Puget Sound Region" in 2017. Amazing Place  
 227 was developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council to sustain economic vitality and global competitiveness.));  
 228 Greater Seattle Partners; King County Associate Development Organization; Workforce Development Council;  
 229 and other subregional economic development organizations and local jurisdictions.



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230

231 ((In order to accomplish this, Amazing Place identifies 14 industrial clusters that, based on regional economic  
232 analysis, offer the best opportunities for business growth and job creation in the Central Puget Sound region for  
233 the next several years.

234

235 Clusters are concentrations of industries that export goods and services that drive job creation and import wealth  
236 into the region. An industry cluster differs from the classic definition of an industry sector because it represents  
237 the entire horizontal and vertical value-added linkages from suppliers to end-producers, including support  
238 services, specialized infrastructure, regional universities' research and development, and other resources.

239 Clusters are supported by the economic foundations such as workforce training, infrastructure, quality education,  
240 a stable and progressive business climate, and more. The clusters are Aerospace, Architecture and Engineering,  
241 Business Services, Clean Technology, Food and Beverage, Information and Communication Technology, Life  
242 Sciences and Global Health, Maritime, Materials Manufacturing, Military and Defense, Recreational Gear,  
243 Tourism, Transportation and Logistics, and Wood Products. Amazing Place identifies specific strategies and  
244 actions to help support the growth of each cluster.

245

246 The County is also working with several other regional business development efforts such as the Trade  
247 Development Alliance, Workforce Councils, Chambers of Commerce, and other partners to create opportunities  
248 for new business development, help retain and expand existing companies, and recruit new firms into the  
249 county.))

250

251 **ED-201** King County shall partner with federal, state, and local governments, economic  
252 development organizations, schools, educational and research institutions  
253 ~~((and)),~~ the private sector, and other organizations to foster ~~((an))~~ innovative and  
254 ~~((entrepreneurial environment and support programs and strategies that~~  
255 ~~promote))~~ sustainable business development and job creation~~((Programs that~~  
256 ~~provide technical and financial assistance to businesses include, but are not~~  
257 ~~limited to:~~

258 a. ~~Financial, marketing, expansion, and general operations assistance for~~  
259 ~~small businesses to help them become competitive in the private sector;~~

260 b. ~~Technological, efficiency, and managerial assessments to help~~  
261 ~~manufacturers reduce costs and use smaller footprints for existing or~~  
262 ~~expanded production; and~~

263 c. ~~Assessment and/or remediation of contaminated property (Brownfields)~~  
264 ~~in order to continue or expand operations to help individual small~~  
265 ~~businesses or jurisdictions impacted by Brownfields)).~~

266

267 **ED-202** King County shall ~~((emphasize continued))~~ prioritize support for the aerospace,  
268 green energy, creative economy, and information technology industrial clusters;  
269 agriculture and forestry clusters; ~~((as well as industrial clusters offering))~~ and

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270 **emerging sectors that offer** the best opportunities for business development, job  
 271 creation, and economic growth **((including those identified in the Puget Sound**  
 272 **Regional Council's Regional Economic Strategy, the Local Food Initiative and the**  
 273 **King County Rural Economic Strategies Plan))**.

274

275 **ED-203** King County shall support and participate in programs and strategies that help  
 276 create, retain, expand, and attract businesses that export their products and  
 277 services. Exports bring income into the county that increases the standard of  
 278 living of residents.

279

280 **ED-204** King County shall encourage redevelopment of and reinvestment in industrial  
 281 and manufacturing properties by collaborating with other jurisdictions, and the  
 282 private sector to remove, revise, or streamline regulatory or other redevelopment  
 283 barriers without compromising environmental standards or quality. This  
 284 includes assessment and/or remediation of contaminated properties.

285

286 ~~**((ED-205** King County shall support programs and strategies to promote and market  
 287 **Foreign Direct Investment opportunities in the county.))**~~

288

289 **ED-206** King County shall promote and help position small and mid-size businesses to  
 290 gain greater participation in the supply chains of large companies and the  
 291 military located in the region.

292

293 **ED-207** King County shall provide opportunities for small businesses to compete for and  
 294 obtain contracts on ~~((e))~~ County-funded construction, consulting, and goods and  
 295 services projects. King County shall also collaborate with other jurisdictions to  
 296 promote public-contracting opportunities for small businesses and to develop  
 297 and maintain common standards, a common application, and a common  
 298 directory for small contractors and suppliers seeking contracts on  
 299 publicly-funded projects.

300

301 **ED-208** King County shall assist businesses, property owners, and other jurisdictions in  
 302 preserving and enhancing historic properties, including historic business  
 303 districts, through incentives and economic development measures. County  
 304 programs and incentives for land and resource preservation and economic  
 305 development shall support and be coordinated with preservation of historic  
 306 properties.

307

308 **ED-209** King County shall foster the development and use of public/private partnerships  
 309 to implement economic development projects and programs. At a minimum,  
 310 these projects ~~((must))~~ **shall** demonstrate that they:

311

- a. Cannot be accomplished solely by either sector;

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- 312    b.        Have an experienced and proven private partner(s);
- 313    c.        Do not unduly enrich the private partner(s);
- 314    d.        Provide tangible and measurable public benefits in terms of tax and
- 315    other revenue, construction and permanent jobs, livable wages with
- 316    benefits and a wage-progression strategy, and public amenities; and
- 317    e.        ~~((Will use the King County Jobs Initiative, or other entities with similar~~
- 318    ~~programs, as their first source of referral for training and employing~~
- 319    ~~low-income, low-skill residents in entry-level and semi-skilled jobs))~~
- 320    Share decision-making power with and spread benefits to community
- 321    groups.
- 322

## ED-210

King County should support programs and strategies to expand international trade, including those that:

- 324
- 325    a.        Promote, market, and position the county for increased export((,)) and
- 326    import, and foreign investment opportunities;
- 327    b.        Promote the health and viability of the region's export and import
- 328    gateways through active collaboration with the Northwest Seaport
- 329    Alliance and the Port of Seattle;
- 330    c.        Provide technical assistance, training, and opportunities for local firms
- 331    wishing to export; ~~((and))~~
- 332    d.        Partner with regional trade groups to promote assistance, opportunities
- 333    and partnerships to connect current and potential exporters with
- 334    international markets; and
- 335    e.        Contribute to a more circular economy that reduces demand for
- 336    materials; keeps materials in use as long as possible; regenerates
- 337    natural systems by reusing waste products, materials, or byproducts of
- 338    manufacturing, supporting export of recyclable materials; or otherwise
- 339    improves processes to be more efficient.
- 340

## ED-211

King County should support programs and strategies to preserve and plan for an adequate supply of industrial and commercial land capacity, including but not limited to:

- 344    a.        Complying with the ~~((State of Washington))~~ Growth Management Act
- 345    ~~((Buildable Lands))~~ Review and Evaluation Program – Revised Code of
- 346    Washington 36.70A.215 – and, in cooperation with the cities,
- 347    inventorying and monitoring the use of industrial, commercial, and
- 348    residential lands every five years;
- 349    b.        Partnering with other jurisdictions and the private sector, to advocate for
- 350    development and maintenance of a regional Geographic Information
- 351    System ~~((to track the supply of land));~~

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- 352 c. Actively applying for federal, state, and other resources to help defray  
353 the costs of assessment, remediation, and redevelopment of private  
354 and/or public Brownfields;
- 355 ~~((e.))~~ c. Selling ~~((e))~~ County-owned surplus industrial and commercial lands for  
356 development by the private sector;
- 357 ~~((e.))~~ d. Promoting the redevelopment and infill of industrial and commercial  
358 areas and exploring the feasibility of using incentives to achieve this  
359 goal; and
- 360 ~~((f.))~~ e. Preventing the encroachment of non-industrial uses on  
361 industrially-zoned land and the rezoning of industrial land to other uses.  
362

363 ED-212 King County shall encourage and support community~~((-))~~-based and community~~((~~  
364 ~~))~~-led efforts to ~~((support))~~ develop and retain existing small and local businesses  
365 and resilient communities. These efforts may include:

366 a. Priority hire programs that create middle-wage employment in  
367 historically underserved and historically underrepresented communities;

368 b. Ensuring public investment decisions protect culturally significant  
369 economic assets and community anchors; and

370 c. Engaging communities directly affected by economic development  
371 activities in planning, decision-making, and implementation.  
372

373 ED-213 King County shall coordinate with a broad range of partners, organizations,  
374 businesses, and public sector agencies to support the development of business  
375 innovation districts and ~~((related))~~ other community stabilization initiatives ~~((#))~~  
376 to help prevent the displacement of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color;  
377 immigrants; refugees; LGBTQIA+ people; and lower income communities~~((, with~~  
378 an emphasis on food innovation districts, in particular)).  
379

## 380 ~~((III.))~~ Workforce Development

381 King County provides programs and participates in partnerships to address the new and ongoing regional  
382 workforce opportunities and challenges ~~((of the Puget Sound region and within the county))~~. The current  
383 economic climate has created more opportunity, and yet there is an ~~((ever greater))~~ increasing divide between  
384 those who are benefitting from a strong economy and those who are not. For this reason, King County has an  
385 even greater need to ensure ~~((access by))~~ all residents have access to information about local workforce  
386 development programs and opportunities, especially for those residents ~~((of the County))~~ who are not benefitting  
387 equitably from the strong economy.  
388

389 While many low-income people in isolated communities may have difficulties gaining access to quality  
390 education, training, and support services to ~~((help them))~~ secure living wage jobs, many displaced workers also

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391 need access to re-training opportunities to obtain employment. Meeting these challenges successfully ((will))  
 392 requires the ((e))County to continue and to strengthen strategies and working relationships across sectors and  
 393 ((between)) among business, government, labor, communities, advocacy organizations, education and training  
 394 institutions, and human service providers.

395  
 396 Jobs that pay wages sufficient to support families are vital to ((the)) a high quality of life. However, training,  
 397 education, and skill levels((, and abilities)) vary from person to person. As such, it is important for King County  
 398 to support accessible job training programs and ensure that all residents have equal access to job opportunities  
 399 ((for all residents)) at a range of entry levels so that all people have the opportunity to be self-reliant.

400  
 401 King County's Green Jobs Strategy emphasizes connecting frontline communities to living wage employment  
 402 opportunities to build a skilled and diverse workforce across the career spectrum. The County utilizes its  
 403 resource network to promote and meaningfully connect local workers to living wage positions by developing  
 404 high-quality workforce partnerships to diversify and add climate-informed skills building into existing sectors  
 405 such as construction, transportation, manufacturing, and professional services/technology, while preparing for  
 406 the clean energy future. The Strategy emphasizes integrating workforce development into County climate and  
 407 clean energy initiatives, while collaborating with regional partners to grow green jobs through sectors essential to  
 408 clean energy deployment. The Strategy outlines the recipe for high-road workforce partnerships based on  
 409 building trusted relationships with job seekers, connecting to partners providing skills training and industry-  
 410 recognized credentials, and clear employment on-ramps developed with employers and labor partners.

411

412 **ED-301**

**King County should support workforce development programs that are  
 413 integrated with the ((e))County's overall economic strategies, including but not  
 414 limited to:**

- 415 a. **Apprenticeship opportunities on ((e))County public works projects to  
 416 ensure a continual pipeline of skilled, local construction trades workers  
 417 and to encourage family-wage job opportunities((-);**
- 418 b. **~~((Development and growth of clean technology “green” jobs linked to the  
 419 preservation and sustainability of the natural environment, including  
 420 jobs in pollution prevention, Brownfields cleanup, energy efficiency,  
 421 renewable energy industries, natural resource management, and other  
 422 technologies that address climate change.))~~ Identified partnerships  
 423 prioritizing providing frontline communities (including middle skill  
 424 workers and youth) accessible pathways and skills building toward  
 425 positions providing a family sustaining wage within identified local high  
 426 growth sectors while supporting reduced energy use and reduced  
 427 greenhouse gas emissions including manufacturing, construction,  
 428 transportation, and professional services; and**

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- 429 c. Training ~~((in))~~ prioritizing in-demand skills ~~((job clusters) that apply to~~  
 430 ~~and are in demand))~~ across ~~((multiple))~~ identified high-growth industry  
 431 ~~((clusters))~~ sectors.
- 432  
 433 **ED-302** King County should support the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King  
 434 County ~~((, authorized by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of~~  
 435 ~~2014, and composed of high-level representatives from business, local~~  
 436 ~~government, labor, education and training institutions, advocacy organizations,~~  
 437 ~~and human service providers. The purpose of the Workforce Development~~  
 438 ~~Council is))~~ to coordinate and improve employment, training, literacy, and  
 439 vocational rehabilitation programs to meet the needs of workers and employers.  
 440 King County ~~((will))~~ should work with the Workforce Development Council to  
 441 emphasize the needs in and highlight opportunities for communities that have  
 442 the highest unemployment rates in the region, including the potential for  
 443 development of training opportunities in these areas.  
 444
- 445 **ED-303** King County policies, programs, strategies, and partnerships shall recognize the  
 446 importance of worker training and retraining, especially for ~~((low-income and~~  
 447 ~~low-skilled residents,))~~ workers in low-wage and low-barrier industries and  
 448 communities with the highest unemployment rates, to provide the skilled workers  
 449 needed by local businesses and industry. King County shall support and partner  
 450 with other jurisdictions, educational institutions and industry to promote  
 451 programs that align with community needs, such as:
- 452 a. Programs that retrain dislocated workers for jobs in growing industries;  
 453 b. Training for jobs in growing industries that require post-technical or  
 454 post-secondary training and credentials and provide a career pathway to  
 455 self-sufficiency;  
 456 c. Programs that facilitate employer involvement in hiring workers with  
 457 limited experience and skills and provide successful strategies for skills  
 458 training, job placement, and worker retention;  
 459 d. Programs that reduce recidivism by helping residents exiting the  
 460 criminal ~~((justice))~~ legal system gain access to training and employment  
 461 services;  
 462 e. Alignment of ~~((homeless))~~ housing and employment systems to  
 463 ~~((assure))~~ ensure people who are experiencing homelessness have  
 464 access to both housing and employment opportunities;  
 465 f. Food-related, creative economy, and green technology workforce  
 466 development activities and opportunities;  
 467 g. School-to-work programs and effective alternatives for out-of-school  
 468 youth to provide a clear pathway to self-sufficiency through career  
 469 options and applied learning opportunities;

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- 470 h. Summer youth employment programs for ~~((at-risk))~~ historically  
471 underserved youth;
- 472 i. Access to alternative modes of transportation by providing  
473 transportation information, ~~((financial assistance programs))~~ income-  
474 based discount programs such as ORCA LIFT, and services to  
475 jobseekers and workers; ~~((and))~~
- 476 j. Access to childcare by increasing the availability and affordability of  
477 quality childcare for low-income families; and
- 478 k. Initiatives aimed at facilitating skills training and on-ramps to living wage  
479 employment for frontline communities connected to identified high  
480 growth industry sectors as outlined in King County’s Green Jobs  
481 Strategy.

482

483 ~~((ED-304) King County shall continue to increase equity in jobs and career opportunities~~  
484 ~~for youth through programs such as the Education Engagement Strategy~~  
485 ~~launched by Public Health in 2013, and others. These efforts may include:~~

486 ~~a. Partnering with private businesses, community organizations and~~  
487 ~~educational institutions to provide job shadowing, internship and~~  
488 ~~summer job opportunities for King County youth; and~~

489 ~~b. Partnering with Maritime and Manufacturing industry businesses, and~~  
490 ~~other business sectors, to engage high school students in vocational~~  
491 ~~programs that offer training for living wage industry jobs, and working~~  
492 ~~with these businesses to engage schools in promoting regional~~  
493 ~~opportunities for apprenticeships and internships for high school~~  
494 ~~students.))~~

495

496 **ED-305** King County shall help promote and develop opportunities for ~~((limited-English~~  
497 ~~proficiency populations))~~ communities that speak a language(s) other than  
498 English, including:

499 a. Partnering and investing in community organizations that represent  
500 ~~((limited-English proficiency populations))~~ linguistically diverse  
501 populations;

502 b. Improving translation and interpretation services;

503 c. Partnering with private business to promote the hiring of ~~((limited~~  
504 ~~English proficiency populations))~~ people that speak a language(s) other  
505 than English; and

506 d. Partnering with regional educational institutions to develop methods for  
507 recertification for limited English proficiency professionals with  
508 credentials from other countries, and partnering with community  
509 organizations to promote and increase access to recertification  
510 programs.

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511

512 **ED-306** King County shall work with regional workforce development organizations and  
513 regional educational institutions, especially community colleges, to promote  
514 greater alignment between educational programs and workforce needs.

515

516 ~~((H-159))~~ **ED-307** King County should support programs and projects that provide apprenticeship  
517 and employment training in the building trades through affordable housing  
518 development. King County should explore ways to partner with non((-))profit  
519 housing developers in offering pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and  
520 employment training opportunities.

521

## 522 ~~((IV.))~~ Infrastructure Development

523 Adequate and well-maintained public infrastructure is crucial to a strong economy and to attract new industry  
524 and development. Basic public services that maintain a high quality of life in an area support employment  
525 growth and increased productivity, and influence business location decisions.

526

527 **ED-401** ~~((King County recognizes that adequate infrastructure is essential to support  
528 existing economic activity and to attract new industry and development. The  
529 county therefore))~~ King County shall support((s)) and partner((s)) on programs  
530 and strategies to maintain existing infrastructure and construct new  
531 infrastructure and facilities (including, but not limited to, transportation, utilities,  
532 schools, information, communications, ((including)) and an adequate supply of  
533 housing) necessary to accommodate current and future economic demand, in  
534 locations and at a size and scale that is consistent with other policies in the  
535 Comprehensive Plan.

536

537 **ED-402** King County ~~((will))~~ shall support programs and partnerships to facilitate the  
538 efficient movement of freight to promote global competitiveness for business  
539 and industry.

540

541 **ED-403** King County shall partner, where feasible, with jurisdictions and other  
542 ~~((stakeholders))~~ organizations to develop ~~((subarea))~~ locally-specific economic  
543 development strategies to promote development and redevelopment in areas that  
544 can accommodate growth.

545

546 **ED-404** ~~((Through local subarea planning and partnerships with other agencies and  
547 organizations,))~~ King County should use zoning, incentives, partnerships, or  
548 other measures to capitalize on the economic benefit of infrastructure projects in



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549 locations and at a size and scale that is consistent with other policies in the  
550 Comprehensive Plan.

551

552 **ED-405** King County should support programs and partnerships to facilitate the  
553 development of adequate technology infrastructure, to meet growing  
554 technological demand and to ensure high quality infrastructure for the regional  
555 economy.

556

557 ~~((V.))~~ **Sustainable Development in the Private Sector**

558 ~~((It is the goal of))~~ King County ~~((to work toward becoming))~~ seeks to become a model sustainable community  
559 where ~~((both))~~ the public and private sectors ~~((seek to))~~ balance urban growth with natural resource protection  
560 while addressing climate change. Sustainable development ~~((seeks))~~ aims to achieve this goal by addressing the  
561 environmental impacts of the built environment in which people live and work. Sustainable development is  
562 implemented through planning, design and construction methods, including green building and ~~((L))~~ low  
563 ~~((I))~~ impact ~~((D))~~ development that promote environmental quality, economic vitality and healthy communities.

564

565 ~~((King County also works to increase the sustainability awareness of its residents. The county offers a Localize  
566 Sustainability tool, which help residents track and develop strategies for increasing their own sustainability  
567 profile. Transportation is also key element of sustainability.))~~ Public transportation ~~((will))~~ plays an important  
568 role in protecting the environment by reducing emissions and supporting more compact land use patterns. King  
569 County seeks to foster innovative design and development techniques in the private sector that reduce the  
570 negative impacts of site development and building construction while maintaining ~~((affordability and economic  
571 development))~~ a favorable business climate.

572

573 **ED-501** King County should encourage, support and promote the application of  
574 sustainable development practices in all private sector development within the  
575 county. ~~((This may be accomplished through working with residential and  
576 commercial developers to use Low Impact Development principles and practices,  
577 including minimized impervious surface areas, protect ground and surface water  
578 within a watershed, ensure that habitat protection needs are incorporated into  
579 development proposals to the extent possible, incorporate greater use of green  
580 building materials, eliminate, to the extent possible, the use of materials that  
581 pose health hazards, and utilize systems that conserve or reuse resources,  
582 including those that use energy more efficiently. When King County provides  
583 technical assistance and incentives for the use of sustainable development  
584 practices, it shall be at no cost to any private sector development. King County  
585 shall collaborate with the private sector on potential future regulatory tools.))~~

586

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587 **ED-501a** King County shall ~~((strive to))~~ promote green building and smart building  
 588 practices throughout private, public, and residential uses and shall support  
 589 programs that foster this type of development through collaboration with  
 590 jurisdictions and other sectors.

591  
 592 ~~((ED-502~~ ~~—————~~ ~~In the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands, King County shall provide~~  
 593 ~~assistance through development of customized stewardship plans for individual~~  
 594 ~~properties, to help property owners understand their properties' characteristics~~  
 595 ~~and the potential impacts of their actions, and to make sustainable land~~  
 596 ~~management choices that protect natural resources.))~~

597  
 598 **ED-503** King County shall identify and evaluate potential changes to land use  
 599 development regulations and building codes, in collaboration with the private  
 600 sector, to support and promote sustainable development.

601  
 602 ~~((ED-504~~ ~~—————~~ ~~King County should participate in the development and use of national standards~~  
 603 ~~for measuring sustainability at the community scale and the breadth and~~  
 604 ~~effectiveness of county policies and practices that improve community-scale~~  
 605 ~~sustainability.~~

606

## 607 ~~VI.)~~ **The Rural Economy**

608 King County values its entire Rural Area and the Natural Resources Lands and recognizes the traditional  
 609 economic activities that support rural communities and a rural lifestyle. A healthy and sustainable rural  
 610 economy is necessary to ensure rural residents can continue to both live and work throughout the Rural Area  
 611 and Natural Resource Lands. The farm, livestock, and forestry operations, the many entrepreneurial  
 612 home-based businesses, the Rural Towns, Rural Neighborhood Commercial Centers, and the Cities in the Rural  
 613 Area all provide rural residents with goods, services, and employment.

614

615 Within unincorporated rural King County, economic activities include, but are not limited to, farming, livestock  
 616 raising, equestrian uses, forestry, resource value-added businesses, and home-based businesses. The Rural  
 617 Neighborhood Commercial Center ~~((s are designed to))~~ land use designation provides for a limited array of goods  
 618 and services to local rural residents on a small scale. ~~((The))~~ Rural Towns provide a wider range of goods,  
 619 services, and jobs for rural residents, including retail, restaurants, and services. ~~((The designated))~~ Natural  
 620 Resource Lands support the long-term commercial aspects of agriculture and forestry and potential resource  
 621 value ~~((d))~~-added products.

622

623 The County also recognizes that the land areas, economies, and natural beauty of the Rural Area and Natural  
 624 Resource Land designations benefit all county residents. The agriculture sector provides a ~~((safe))~~ high-quality  
 625 and reliable local food source ~~((—keeping costs low and quality high—))~~ to restaurants ~~((and households, the~~

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626 majority of which are in urban areas, and regionally to farmers markets and specialty stores)) institutions,  
 627 farmers markets, and direct to consumers. The Rural ((King County)) Area and Natural Resource Lands  
 628 provide((s)) many diverse recreation and tourism opportunities, including scenic vistas; trails for hiking,  
 629 bicycling, off-road, and equestrian use; ((harvest festivals;)) open space and wildlife habitat; and working farms  
 630 and forest lands, all within a short distance from ((the)) urban centers.

631

632 A vibrant and sustainable rural economy depends on several factors, including, but not limited to, preserving and  
 633 enhancing the businesses within traditional rural economic clusters, ensuring that new commercial enterprises  
 634 are of a size and scale that is consistent with and retains the rural character of the surrounding area, and changes  
 635 in regulations to reflect and respond to the differing needs and emerging trends of rural economic activity while  
 636 protecting the natural environment.

637

638 ((In 2004, the King County Comprehensive Plan was amended to include a policy that directed the county to  
 639 develop and implement a rural economic development strategy. To comply with this policy, the county  
 640 developed an annual Rural Economic Strategies Report in 2005 and began implementing the identified strategies  
 641 and actions in 2006. Annual reporting occurred through 2008. Ordinance 17485, which adopted the 2012  
 642 Comprehensive Plan, called for an update to the Rural Economic Strategies to build upon the work done  
 643 previously. In response to this, a Rural Economic Strategies Plan was adopted in 2014 via Ordinance 17956.

644

645 The mission of the Rural Economic Strategies Plan is to advance the long-term economic viability of the Rural  
 646 Area and Natural Resource Lands, with an emphasis on farming, forestry, and other rural businesses consistent  
 647 with the unique character of rural King County. The mission is accomplished by initiating and implementing  
 648 specific strategies and actions to support and enhance rural economic viability. Rural businesses generally fall  
 649 into six rural economic clusters and each cluster is supported by specific strategies and actions to strengthen  
 650 and/or enhance it. The clusters are: Agriculture, Forestry, Equestrian, Home Based Businesses (i.e., those home  
 651 occupations that are allowed on lands designated Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Area), Recreation and  
 652 Tourism, Commercial and Industrial Rural Neighborhood Commercial Centers, Rural Towns, and Cities in the  
 653 Rural Area. Consistent with CP 539, found in Chapter 11, Community Service Area Subarea Planning, no  
 654 expansion of industrial land use or zoning is allowed within the Rural Town of Fall City.

655

656 The specific strategies and actions are intended to be flexible in order to respond to evolving rural business needs  
 657 and changes within any of the economic clusters. Periodically, the county evaluates the actions accomplished to  
 658 date, introduces new actions to be initiated, and discusses proposed actions for the following year. This ensures  
 659 the process stays flexible and is current with evolving trends in the rural economy. It is anticipated that this  
 660 procedure will become part of the Annual Work Plans developed for each of the Community Service Areas.))

661

662 The rural economic policies are designed to establish and maintain a long-term commitment to a sustainable and  
 663 vibrant rural economy. They support ((implementation of the Rural Economic Strategies Plan;)) continued  
 664 evaluation of ((e))County codes to support the evolving agriculture, forestry, and other rural economic clusters((;

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665 and support for), as well as programs and strategies that foster a diversified rural economy, compatible with  
 666 existing rural character, while maintaining the natural environment.

667

668 **ED-601** King County is committed to a sustainable and vibrant rural economy that allows  
 669 rural residents to live and work throughout the Rural Area and Natural Resource  
 670 Lands. County policy, regulations, and programs should be reviewed and  
 671 developed in partnership with rural businesses, the Agriculture and Rural Forest  
 672 Commissions, ~~((the Community Service Area))~~ community groups, and others to  
 673 support the preservation and enhancement of traditional rural economic  
 674 activities and lifestyles, while supporting evolving compatible commercial uses  
 675 and job opportunities.

676

677 **ED-602** King County should identify and implement ~~((the Rural Economic Strategies Plan  
 678 to guide future))~~ rural economic development ~~((and will modify and add))~~  
 679 strategies ~~((as needed to))~~ that reflect the evolving nature of the rural economy,  
 680 while protecting the traditional rural economic clusters.

681 a. King County recognizes the value of the agriculture and forestry clusters  
 682 for both their economic contribution and for their natural, educational,  
 683 and recreational benefits to the county as a whole. The ~~((ε))~~County  
 684 ~~((will))~~ shall work with the Agriculture Commission, Rural Forest  
 685 Commission, and other related organizations on strategies and  
 686 programs to strengthen and enhance the economic viability of these  
 687 clusters and the evolving value-added industry that helps sustain the  
 688 county's legacy of raising crops and livestock and managing and  
 689 harvesting forestlands.

690 b. King County recognizes the value of home-based business, recreation  
 691 and tourism, and commercial and industrial clusters for their ability to  
 692 provide job opportunities in the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands,  
 693 and help sustain the rural economic base. The ~~((ε))~~County ~~((will))~~ shall  
 694 continue to work with chambers of commerce and other organizations  
 695 that support these rural businesses to help ensure the continued  
 696 viability and economic health of new and existing businesses in these  
 697 clusters.

698 c. King County recognizes the importance of the equestrian cluster for its  
 699 diversity of business and recreation related operations which combine to  
 700 provide jobs and income opportunities within the rural economy. The  
 701 ~~((ε))~~County ~~((will))~~ shall continue to work with equestrian related  
 702 organizations on business and recreation aspects of the equestrian  
 703 cluster and with organizations that represent the various trail user  
 704 groups to help ensure the continued viability and economic health of  
 705 equestrian and related recreation businesses.

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- 706                   d.       As a means and in support of protecting rural character and Natural  
707                   Resource Lands, King County recognizes the value of the partnership  
708                   with Cities in the Rural Area to act as local urban centers for  
709                   employment and centers of commerce that provides goods and services  
710                   for the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands. The ((e))County ((will))  
711                   shall work with the cities and other organizations to support economic  
712                   development for Cities in the Rural Area, at a size and scale consistent  
713                   with the Growth Management Act.
- 714                   e.       King County is committed to ensuring that all economic development,  
715                   including the provision of infrastructure, within the Rural Area and  
716                   Natural Resource Lands shall be compatible with the surrounding rural  
717                   character, be of an appropriate size and scale, and protect the natural  
718                   environment.
- 719                   f.       King County ((will)) shall continue to support and partner on programs  
720                   and incentives to ensure the economic vitality of rural historic resources  
721                   to help maintain the character of the Rural Area and Natural Resource  
722                   Lands.
- 723                   g.       King County ((will)) shall explore opportunities to support agricultural  
724                   tourism and value-added program(s) related to the production of food,  
725                   flowers and specialty beverages (including beer, distilled beverages, and  
726                   wine) in the county. Partnership venues should be educational and  
727                   include information on the diversity of products available in the county  
728                   and the importance of buying local, should seek to unify regional  
729                   tourism efforts, and should encourage development of new markets for  
730                   agricultural products and value-added goods.
- 731                   h.       King County ((will)) shall continue to review existing and proposed  
732                   regulations to ensure they are relevant and effective in accommodating  
733                   the differing needs and emerging trends of the compatible businesses  
734                   that comprise the rural economy.
- 735                   i.       King County should continue to identify the infrastructure needs of the  
736                   rural economic clusters, including transportation, drainage, and  
737                   information technology needs, and provide support for these needs,  
738                   including identification of other funding sources.
- 739                   j.       King County should continue to identify and encourage businesses to  
740                   take advantage of incentives and technical assistance programs that  
741                   promote economic viability of existing and new businesses in the Rural  
742                   Area and Natural Resources Lands, particularly in the Agricultural and  
743                   Forest Production Districts.
- 744
- 745    ~~((ED-603                   King County should partner with other Puget Sound counties and businesses to~~  
746    ~~analyze the need and possible sites for regional agricultural (such as beef and~~  
747    ~~poultry) and forest product processing. King County recognizes the importance~~

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748 ~~of food and forest processing for the regional economy and should partner with~~  
 749 ~~regional communities, governments and residents to ensure that the challenges~~  
 750 ~~and opportunities within this industry are analyzed and addressed as needed.))~~

751

752 The ability to bring rural, agricultural, forestry, and value-added products into the urban area and the ability of  
 753 urban residents to utilize the Rural Areas and Natural Resource Lands for education, open space, scenic vistas,  
 754 and a diversity of out((-)door recreation options encourages the urban/rural interdependence and linkage, thus  
 755 enhancing the county's economic base.

756

757 **ED-604** King County ((will)) shall continue to partner with organizations that support  
 758 programs and strategies that strengthen the interdependence and linkage  
 759 between the rural, resource, and urban economies(~~(, such as the Regional Food~~  
 760 ~~Policy Council and Puget Sound Fresh)).~~

761

762 ~~((ED-605) King County recognizes the value of open and green space in promoting social~~  
 763 ~~and economic health and wellness throughout the county. The county will~~  
 764 ~~continue to invest in public lands and partner with organizations that support~~  
 765 ~~and strengthen the linkages between rural, resource and urban communities' use~~  
 766 ~~and maintenance of these open spaces.))~~

767

768 **ED-606** King County ((will)) shall encourage economic analysis and economic  
 769 development of the local food system as called for in the Local Food Initiative.

770