



King County | Office of the Executive

Executive Girmay Zahilay

Chinook Building, CNK-EX-0800
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-2391

July 17, 2026

The Honorable Sarah Perry
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Perry:

This letter transmits the Parks Levy Grant Advisory Committee Process report and proposed Ordinance, in response to King County Ordinance 20023, Section 94, Proviso 4.

Approval of this proposed legislation would support the mission of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) by strengthening the administration of grant programs authorized by Ordinance 19922, the 2026-2031 Parks Levy, improving transparency, and advancing equitable access to parks, recreation, and open space investments for King County residents.

This proposed Ordinance provides an updated structure for the Parks Levy Advisory Committee and establishes an enhanced Conflict-of-Interest definition, created in collaboration with the King County Ethics Program, to guide participation in grant program decisions. The legislation formalizes an advisory committee and separate trained grant evaluators, clarifies roles and responsibilities, and aligns the grant-making process with best practices for accountability and public trust.

The enclosed report outlines the proposed Advisory Committee structure, evaluator model, and updates to the Conflict-of-Interest definition and process for the 2026–2031 Parks Levy grant programs. The report includes a description of the 2020–2025 Advisory Committee and Conflict-of-Interest processes, identifies key concerns and lessons learned, and presents recommended changes developed in coordination with the King County Ethics Program. It also details the proposed nomination process for Advisory Committee members, the use of subcommittees, the project evaluation framework for grant applications, and the final award approval process.

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In developing the report and proposed Ordinance, DNRP engaged prior Advisory Committee members, community-based organizations, King County's Ethics Program, and incorporated feedback from the community and program participants involved in Parks Levy grant implementation, to ensure the updated structure reflects both policy requirements and operational best practices inform a more transparent, consistent, and equitable approach to grantmaking.

Thank you for considering this report and proposed Ordinance. The improvements outlined will support the timely and effective distribution of Parks Levy funds and strengthen public confidence in King County's grantmaking processes. If your staff have questions, please contact Warren Jimenez, Director, Parks Division, DNRP, at 206-477-4525.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Girmay Zahilay".

for

Girmay Zahilay

King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Office of the Executive

Jasmin Weaver, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Hyeok Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Executive

Sierra Howlett Browne, Director of Government Relations, Office of the Executive

Garrett Holbrook, Council Relations Manager, Office of the Executive

Mo McBroom, Acting Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Warren Jimenez, Director, Parks Division, DNRP