

**King County****Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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October 16, 2023

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

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

I am pleased to transmit legislation related to the Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy (VSHSL). This includes the Implementation Plan 2024-2029 as required by Ordinance 19604, and the following three VSHSL-related proposed Ordinances that would, if enacted, continue the work funded by the VSHSL to support the King County region's veterans, seniors, and resilient communities. This transmittal package includes the following proposed legislation:

- a proposed Ordinance that would, if enacted, adopt the plan to govern the VSHSL's strategies, programs, and expenditures from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2029;
- a proposed Ordinance that would, if enacted, provide supplemental budget appropriation to the VSHSL Fund to support VSHSL programs and activities in 2024;
- a proposed Ordinance that would, if enacted, extend the purposes of King County Code (KCC) 4A.200.747 to allow the VSHSL Fund to be used for the levy passed by voters in August 2023 and all subsequent levy lid lifts related to the same purpose, and
- a proposed Ordinance that would, if enacted, amend KCC 2A.300.540 to extend the VSHSL Advisory Board in accordance with Ordinance 19604 and implement changes to the Code as recommended in the VSHSL Implementation Plan, including separating the Veterans Advisory Board from the VSHSL Board's veterans subcommittee and aligning terms and definitions with Ordinance 19604.

Approval of this proposed legislation would support services to improve overall health and well-being, create thriving communities, and reduce disparities throughout King County, including investing in the people who support those in need.

In May 2023, King County enacted Ordinance 19604, placing the renewal of the VSHSL on the ballot for King County voter consideration. On August 1, 2023, King County voters approved King County Proposition 1 by more than 71 percent, renewing the levy. Ordinance 19604 also required transmittal of an implementation plan to identify and describe how levy

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proceeds would be used to achieve measurable results for veterans, seniors, and resilient communities.

The levy is expected to generate approximately \$551.3 million in revenue between 2024 and 2029, according to the King County Office of Economic and Financial Analysis's August 2023 forecast. The VSHSL funds a wide range of programs that connect veterans, military service members, and their families, as well as individuals and families in need, with affordable housing, employment, behavioral health treatment, and other services and resources to sustain a happy and healthy life.

Specifically, my plan prioritizes the following investments and outcomes for the 2024-2029 VSHSL:

- **Supporting veterans** by building the nation's strongest local veterans program and continuing to reduce veteran homelessness.
- **Expanding accessibility of social connection and other critical supports for seniors** by bolstering senior centers and other services that made a difference to seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Strengthening communities and building resiliency** by deepening investments in the human services workforce and supports for survivors of gender-based violence.

The enclosed plan describes the forecasted expenditure of levy proceeds consistent with Ordinance 19604. It identifies and describes strategies to stabilize the nonprofit human services workforce as well as expand access to counseling and other behavioral health services. The plan also describes a robust framework to assess and report on how well the VSHSL is achieving its results and how it coordinates with other County human services initiatives. The Implementation Plan also describes how the VSHSL's results will be made available digitally to the Council and community, as directed by Ordinance 19604. Lastly, the plan makes recommendations to continue the VSHSL Advisory Board for levy governance.

Thank you for your continued support of the Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy.

If your staff have questions, please contact Leo Flor, Department of Community and Human Services, at 206-477-4384.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff
Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

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Karan Gill, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Penny Lipsou, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Leo Flor, Director, Department of Community and Human Services