



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800

Seattle, WA 98104-1818

206-263-9600 Fax 206-296-0194

TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov

March 24, 2021

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

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits a proposed emergency supplemental appropriation ordinance that, if enacted, would authorize King County to continue to fund critical COVID-19 response efforts. The proposal includes \$600 million in revenue-backed expenditures.

In March 2020, our Proclamation of Emergency in response to COVID-19 enabled us to enact extraordinary measures to fight the pandemic. This is the seventh COVID-19 supplemental appropriation request I have transmitted to the King County Council. The King County Council approved COVID-19 supplemental budget requests have provided funding for economic recovery, community health and safety measures, and the County's COVID-19 response operations.

On March 11, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act. Of the \$1.9 trillion package, King County is expected to receive approximately \$437 million in federal Local Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Funds (LCFRF). The enclosed budget ordinance proposes a \$600 million COVID supplemental budget that includes \$336.9 million of federal LCFRF American Rescue Plan Act funds; \$247 million in state and FEMA funds; and \$15 million from the County's General Fund.

This budget proposal enables us to continue work that has saved lives. It reflects King County's transition from COVID response, to recovery, to rebound. By focusing on public health, community supports, jobs and economic recovery, we make the most of this unprecedented investment. This proposal positions us to make permanent and positive differences in people's lives, particularly those most often marginalized: those living in homelessness; at-risk youth, and those living in underserved areas. In addition, these funds prioritize and boost economic recovery for small business in unincorporated King County; for

arts reopening and artist recovery funds; and investments to clear the permitting backlog and support new construction in the unincorporated areas. These funds will be used in four areas:

Continued public health response/vaccination/county operations:

- \$116 million for stepped-up vaccination program, including additional mass vaccination sites in addition to the existing sites in Kent and Auburn, more pop up sites, and scheduling software.
- \$82 million for contact tracing, mobile health units and other public health work.
- \$11 million for ongoing judicial system operations.
- \$32 million to continue isolation and quarantine facilities, related mitigation, and provide hotel rooms for individuals previously staying in homeless shelters.
- \$8.5 million for the Office of Equity and Social Justice to continue focusing on digital equity, technical assistance, anti-hate and anti-bias grants.

Community supports-rental assistance, child care, behavioral health:

- \$100 million for rental assistance through a state Department of Commerce grant.
- \$62.5 million for emergency homelessness response and related behavioral health services, including outreach, health and treatment services, housing or enhanced shelter, and economic and housing supports. These programs will bring inside and provide safe and healthy settings for at least 500 people living outside or in vehicles in downtown Seattle and the urban unincorporated areas of the county.
- \$18 million for additional behavioral health services, including services at supportive housing sites and behavioral health services targeted for youth and rural residents.
- \$6 million for child care services, including continuing funding for essential worker childcare vouchers and a new grant program for child care providers to make facilities COVID-safe.
- \$6 million for food security, including funding a food hub and supporting community-based organizations to purchase culturally-appropriate foods from local markets and farms and distribute it to residents.
- \$500,000 to support increased Affordable Care Act enrollment to reduce recent increases in the rate of uninsured individuals.

Economic and Arts Recovery:

- \$25.6 million for BIPOC business and economic resiliency fund, to be allocated by a community-led process.
- \$20 million for arts, cultural and science organizations.
- \$10.4 million new construction apprenticeship and job training programs to expand pipelines in priority hire zip codes.
- \$4 million for launching for a state registered behavioral health apprenticeship program.
- \$5 million to continue small business grants in unincorporated King County.
- \$5.8 for artist recovery fund, administered by 4Culture.
- \$3 million to reinvigorate King County film industry to bring hundreds of local jobs.
- \$4 million for backlog of permits in Department of Local Services in unincorporated King County.

King County Jobs and Housing program:

This new program creates over 300 temporary jobs, recruiting people from County shelters and emergency housing program to fill them. Jobs include short-term temporary positions in King County Parks, Noxious Weed Program, Facilities Management Division, Roads Division, and County partners. It expands the existing Conservation Corps clean-up crews dispatched to White Center, Fall City, and Skyway.

Please note that these proposed appropriation requests rely on initial estimates of costs, which may be revised, and that the County is actively seeking state and federal reimbursement for all COVID-19 related expenses. In addition, the LCFRF funds must be expended by 2024.

The federal LCFRF funds can currently be used for four broad categories:

1. To respond to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19 or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses and nonprofits, or aid to industries such as tourism, travel and hospitality.
2. To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers of the county that are performing such essential work, or by providing grants to eligible employers that have eligible workers who perform essential work.
3. For the provision of government services to the extent of reduction in revenue due to the public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year of the county prior to the emergency.
4. To make necessary investments in water, sewer or broadband infrastructure.

Before any LCFRF funds are expended, and in accordance with the fiscal stewardship goals, the County will conduct a comprehensive assessment of program eligibility: verifying that anticipated expenditures are appropriate; assess whether competitive procurement processes are required; conduct a risk assessment, and contract for the funds with eligible organizations. Each of these steps may require adjustments to the programs approved and will impact how quickly the County can implement these programs. In addition, all programs will undergo a thorough legal review to make certain that the programs are eligible based on federal guidance.

This work furthers the King County Strategic Plan goal to improve the health and well-being of people in our community.

I certify that funds are available.

As we enter a new phase of our COVID-19 response recovery with increased access to vaccinations, this proposed budget supplemental helps to sustain our communities and employees to rebound. The funds continue our public health response and support increasing

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vaccinations. These funds invest in King County's crucial anti-racist-work and support vital economic recovery efforts.

Thank you for your partnership and consideration of this proposed ordinance. If your staff have questions, please contact Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, at 206-263-9687.

Sincerely,



for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council
Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Karan Gill, Director, Council Relations, Office of the Executive
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget