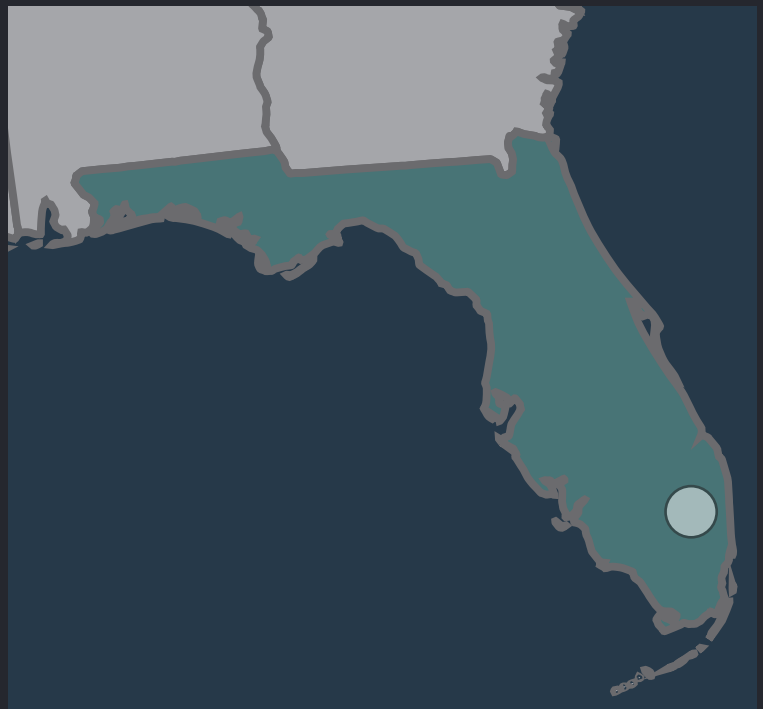
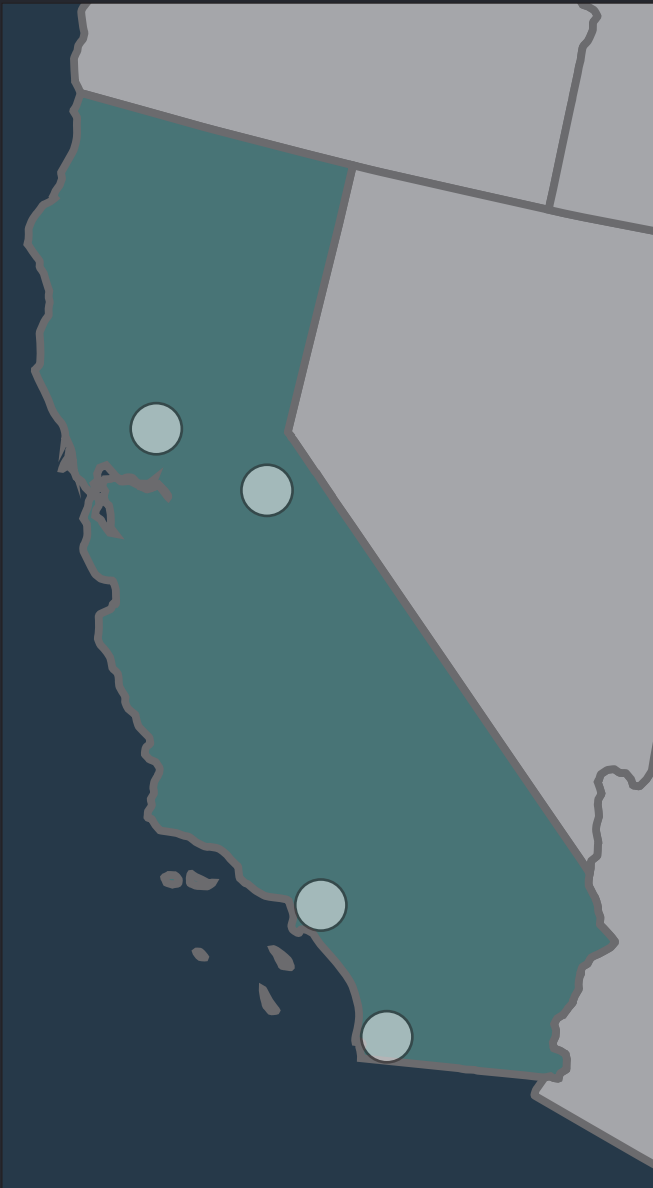


Lessons in Regional Resilience

King County Region

The King County – Cities Climate Collaboration



Lessons in Regional Resilience:

The King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C)

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Case Studies in Regional Collaboration: This report is part of a series of six case studies (<http://www.georgetownclimate.org/reports/lessons-in-regional-resilience.html>) that explore lessons that are being learned by climate collaboratives from around the United States that are bringing together local governments and other stakeholders at the regional level to both reduce carbon pollution (mitigation) and prepare for the impacts of climate change (adaptation). These case studies explore the following collaboratives:

- The Los Angeles Regional Collaborative for Climate Action and Sustainability in California
- The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative in California
- The Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative in California
- The Sierra Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership in California
- The Southeast Florida Climate Change Compact in Florida
- The King County-Cities Climate Collaboration in Washington State

Each case study explores the history and development, structure and decisionmaking methods, funding sources, roles and initiatives of each of these climate collaboratives. A synthesis report also explores lessons that can be learned by comparing the efforts of each collaborative on climate policy in their regions.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2011, a group of cities in King County, Washington joined together in partnership with the County government to form the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C). The nine founding cities – Kirkland, Shoreline, Redmond, Seattle, Mercer Island, Snoqualmie, Issaquah, Renton and Tukwila¹ – and representatives from the County government signed an interlocal agreement, committing themselves to a voluntary but formal collaboration aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions throughout the region. Beginning at its founding and since its inception, much of the K4C’s work has focused on reducing emissions, however, the collaborative has hosted sessions on local climate impacts and preparedness strategies and is supporting other regional efforts to prepare for the impacts of climate change in future phases of work.

In the short time since its founding, the K4C has successfully promoted sustainability efforts in the region. It has expanded from nine original member cities to thirteen, influenced local policy, encouraged greater awareness and discussion around climate change, and supported local, county, and state climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Together, the K4C member cities represent nearly 1.5 million people and 75% of King County’s total population.² Through their outreach and convening efforts, the K4C helped support formal adoption³ of ambitious shared emissions reduction targets for the County and its 39 cities: 25% below the 2007 baseline by 2020, 50% below the 2007 baseline by 2030, and 80% below the 2007 baseline by 2050.⁴

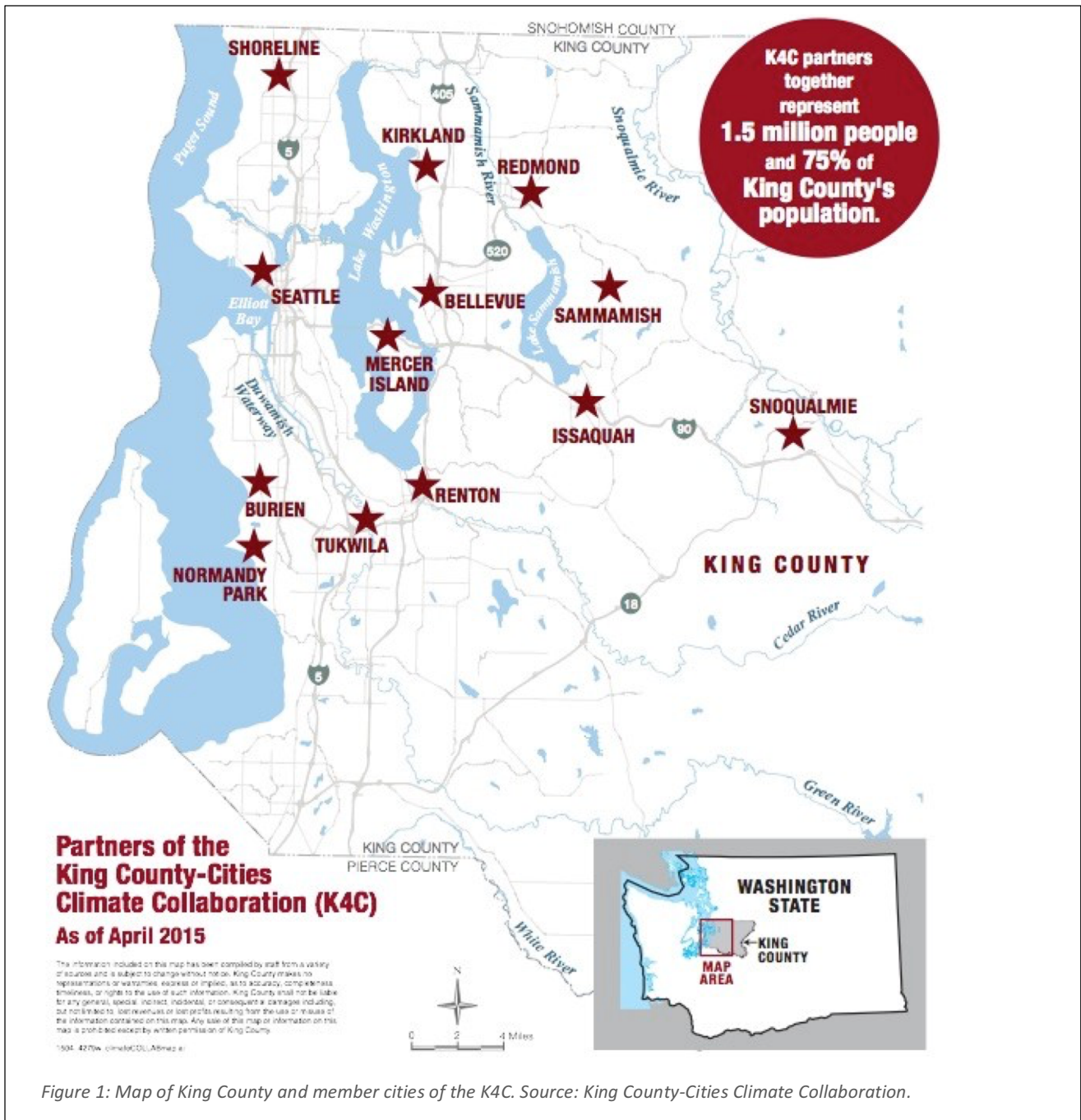
Although the K4C initiative is primarily focused on reducing emissions, the region is also highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The Pacific Northwest region of the United States is home to incredibly diverse ecosystems, rich in natural resources like timber, water, and fertile soils, which support thousands of species of fish and wildlife and the regional economy.⁵ Already, the area has seen sea levels and average annual temperatures rise, summer stream flows decrease, and more frequent and intense wildfires.⁶

Of note, the K4C’s mitigation-focused efforts run parallel to larger adaptation-focused efforts of a regional collaborative led by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), which brings together perspectives from the City of Seattle, the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management, the University of Washington, the Port of Seattle, and King and Pierce Counties in addition to the PSRC.⁷ This group focuses on long-range regional planning, community engagement and coordination across agencies.⁸ As the region’s metropolitan planning organization,⁹ the PSRC uses its network to engage key actors and stakeholders across the region to integrate climate resilience into issues like infrastructure planning and investments at the local level.

This case study aims to draw lessons from the K4C’s development, organization, and successes. The case study begins by looking at the characteristics of King County and the climate change impacts facing the region. Next, it discusses the history of the collaborative and its organizational structure, including decision-making procedures and funding sources. Finally, the case study presents the key roles the K4C has played in the region so far – outreach and advocacy, policy coordination, local capacity building, and funding – and looks at the group’s goals going forward.

THE KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON REGION

*King County, Washington is ecologically and geographically varied. Home to just over two million people, it is the fourteenth most populous county in the country.*¹⁰ Its thirty-nine cities range in size from the smallest, Skykomish (with fewer than 200 people) to the largest, Seattle (with roughly 610,000).¹¹ The region includes a diversity of ecosystems and terrains, including national forests, islands, rivers, lakes, streams, mountains, and saltwater coastlines.¹² As a result, each city faces a slightly different set of risks from climate change and each has its own unique ability to respond.



King County represents nearly 30% of Washington State’s population and is responsible for 25% of the state’s GHG emissions.¹³ The goals of the K4C collaborative are focused on reducing GHG emissions.

Although the collaborative has focused less on adaptation and resilience, the County has documented the toll that climate change has already taken on the region, and the increasing impacts that the region is anticipated to experience in the future, including increasing threats to public and private property, resource-based economies, and health and quality of life.¹⁴ The changes that the region has already seen and the major effects of climate change on King County include:

- **Rising temperatures:** Regional air and water temperatures are rising, and heat waves have become more frequent.¹⁵ By mid-century, the average year in the Puget Sound region is projected to be between 4.2 and 5.5 degrees Fahrenheit warmer (depending on GHG emissions), relative to a 1970-1999 baseline.¹⁶ In addition to driving other significant impacts, increasing temperatures will continue to threaten salmon habitats and other sensitive ecosystems.¹⁷
- **Altered precipitation patterns:** The Puget Sound region is projected to experience more frequent and intense heavy rainfall events and a greater proportion of winter precipitation falling as rain rather than snow, causing an overall decline in snowpack.¹⁸ Already, all major rivers in King County have shown stronger stream flows and higher flooding rates in the fall and winter.¹⁹ Increasing frequency and intensity of storm events will put infrastructure and resources in the Puget Sound area at greater risk of flooding,²⁰ and changing precipitation patterns may also increase risk of landslide and erosion during parts of the year.²¹ In the summer, lower streamflows from declining snowpack melt will further strain water availability and affect agricultural, energy, residential, and industrial uses.²²

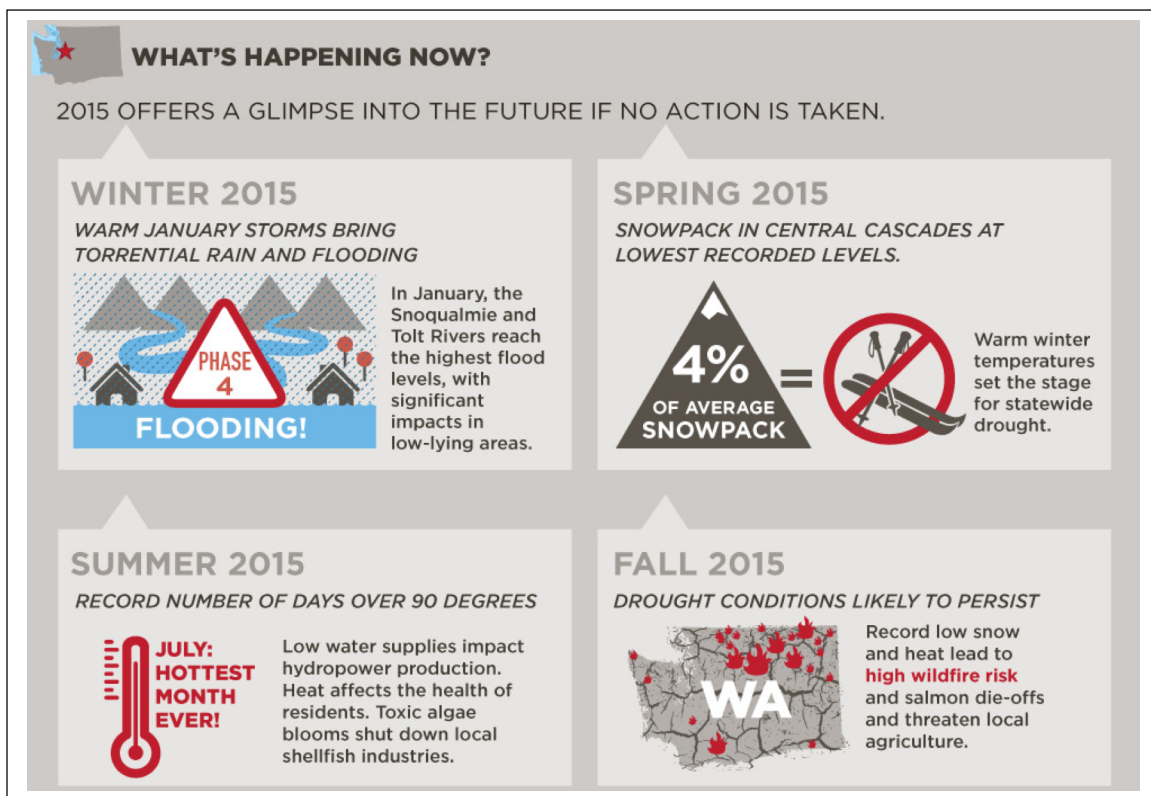


Figure 2: King County climate change infographic detailing significant impacts observed in the region in 2015, which may provide a view of future conditions. Source: King County, <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/priorities/climate-change/infographic.aspx>.

- **Sea-Level Rise:** Puget Sound has risen more than eight inches in the last century.²³ Experts believe the Sound could see an additional one- to four-foot rise by 2100.²⁴ As sea levels continue to rise, beaches, wetlands, and tidal flats will erode or become permanently inundated, affecting the thousands of species who depend on shoreline habitats. Coastal property and infrastructure will become increasingly vulnerable to erosion and flooding.²⁵

- *Wildfire risk and impacts on forests:* Forests are an important feature of the region’s ecology; already, between higher temperatures and drier summer conditions, wildfires have increased four-fold across Washington State since the 1980s.²⁶ Climate change is projected to alter the distribution of tree species, insects, and fungal pathogens, and is projected to increase risk of large wildfires.²⁷ Changes to growth and distribution of forests in the Puget Sound region may affect timber and bioenergy markets, while more severe wildfires will exacerbate respiratory and cardiovascular disease in affected populations.²⁸

HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLABORATION

*The K4C is a partnership between King County and thirteen local city governments, who are working together to develop a set of shared goals and actions tailored to each city’s particular needs and abilities to reduce carbon emissions from buildings, transportation, land use, and energy supply.*²⁹ Each member city signs the group’s Interlocal Agreement, pledging staff time and financial contributions each year to support the group and coordinate mitigation efforts across the region.

The K4C’s efforts to reduce GHG emissions in King County began as several smaller and more localized efforts. In 2011, Linda Lyshall, a graduate student out of Antioch University, began a research project looking at King County cities and their individual climate change and mitigation activities.³⁰ Her research noted a great deal of sustainability activity in the cities that participated in her study, but little coordination among them.³¹ Building on these existing county and local efforts, Lyshall asked representatives from each city she contacted if they would be interested in working in a collaborative process to expand climate change mitigation activity in the region.³² Lyshall convened the group in a series of workshops, helping the group to prioritize and refine their goals. The beginning of the K4C built strongly off an existing network of cities collaborating on green building strategies through King County’s GreenTools Program. One component of the GreenTools program was the Sustainable Cities Roundtable series, a bi-monthly gathering begun in 2009 to focus on green building initiatives.³³ The more the local groups talked, the more they realized the benefits of collaborating at the regional scale, including more efficient use and distribution of scarce resources, funding, and technical support. When Lyshall’s research ended, the County government, with support and leadership by the GreenTools program, took on a larger role in driving the group and providing coordination and guidance to continue the efforts.³⁴

In 2012, the King County Growth Management Planning Council turned to the K4C for support in setting county-wide GHG reduction targets and in developing a plan on how to achieve those goals.³⁵ With this specific project to bring them together, the elected officials from King County and the nine participating cities began to get more involved and more interested in formalizing the collaboration.³⁶ Together, they developed an “Interlocal Agreement” where each city signed the agreement pledging to collaborate. The Interlocal Agreement also set out the collaborative’s bylaws and formalized an organizational structure for the K4C.³⁷ According to this document, the goal of the organization was to build a “cleaner, stronger, and more resilient regional economy.”³⁸ Upon signing, elected officials from each city agreed to dedicate funding and staff time to contribute to the collaborative. They further expanded the Sustainable Cities Roundtable series to include climate change-focused topics such as local impacts of climate change, energy, transportation, and broader GHG reduction strategies, as well.³⁹

Since formalizing, the K4C has further expanded its efforts. Thanks to outreach efforts of elected officials and staff presentations held across the region, the group has grown from nine member cities to thirteen.⁴⁰ It has further held a series of Elected Official Summits for both members and potential members. These meetings offer an opportunity to set shared GHG reduction targets, make commitments towards reaching them, and to learn from the emissions reductions actions that each jurisdiction is implementing.⁴¹ Further, the group has taken on partnerships with local non-profit organizations like Climate Solutions⁴² and the Cascadia Green Building Council to increase the technical capacity the collaborative can provide to member cities.⁴³

The K4C Interlocal Agreement

The K4C gets its legal authority to organize from the Revised Code of Washington Chapter 39.34, the Interlocal Cooperation Act. Essentially, the Act allows any public agency to collaborate with any other public agency in order to exercise its powers, privileges, and authority more effectively. The stated purpose of the Act is to:

permit local governmental units to make the most efficient use of their powers by enabling them to cooperate with other localities on a basis of mutual advantage and thereby to provide services and facilities in a manner and pursuant to forms of governmental organization that will accord best with geographic, economic, population and other factors influencing the needs and development of local communities.⁴⁴

In accordance with the law, the K4C partners each sign the group’s “Interlocal Agreement” document outlining the collaborative’s purpose, duration, administrative structure, responsibilities, financing mechanisms, and termination procedures.⁴⁵ Each member city also goes through a local ratification process, often involving a local city council vote to authorize the mayor or city manager to sign the agreement.

The K4C Interlocal Agreement outlines the organizational structure for the collaborative and its stated purpose. The Agreement describes the four main efforts that each participating member voluntarily agrees to undertake:⁴⁶

- **Outreach:** Develop, refine, and utilize messaging and tools for climate change outreach to engage decision-makers, other cities, and the general public.
- **Coordination:** Collaborate on adopting consistent standards, benchmarks, strategies, and overall goals related to responding to climate change.
- **Solutions:** Share local success stories, challenges, data, and products that support and enhance climate mitigation efforts by all partners.
- **Funding and resources:** Collaborate to secure grant funding and other shared resource opportunities to support climate-related projects and programs.

The collaboration is not intended to supplant, diminish, or supersede the authority of any of its members – merely to bring the power of the collective group of municipalities to its initiatives. All the tools and strategies developed for the group are optional for cities and counties to adopt as they choose.⁴⁷ K4C representatives note that while keeping these projects voluntary may result in some uneven contributions by different cities, it is also one of the great strengths of the group overall. The Interlocal Agreement notes that each city is in a very different place, with different demographics, populations, and needs. Allowing each city to choose which projects to take on encourages greater participation across a variety of cities, rather than alienating those with fewer resources to dedicate to larger initiatives.⁴⁸

Administration and Decision-Making

The K4C relies on staff from its city and county members to engage in collaborative decision-making and to help advance initiatives of the collaborative. The K4C has no dedicated full-time staff; rather, each city and the County selects a designee (generally from the city planning department)⁴⁹ and an alternate to serve as its representatives to the full collaboration. These designees meet and choose leaders who oversee the group’s meetings, draw up agendas, and provide leadership.⁵⁰ The full group of representatives (collectively, the “steering committee”) operates on a voting system, in which each designee gets an equal vote and no binding action can be voted on unless a majority is present.⁵¹ Most of the group’s decisions are made unanimously, especially as the group has grown and solidified in recent years.⁵² When disagreements do arise (most often around how to spend its limited funds) they are generally worked out in smaller working groups, roundtables, or subcommittees before they reach the full steering committee.⁵³

The steering committee has the power to hire contractors, vendors, and consultants (for example, Climate Solutions) through the County to help them accomplish the group’s goals.⁵⁴ Per the Interlocal Agreement, the designees must convene and report on at least a quarterly basis to make sure they stay on task,⁵⁵ though the group generally meets on a bi-monthly basis.⁵⁶ The group must also complete a work plan and budget each year in conjunction with each city’s budget planning calendar.⁵⁷ The County representative serves as the treasurer and contracting agent for any outside contracts the group enters into in pursuit of its mission.⁵⁸

Representatives participate in different K4C committees and subcommittees. Membership in these subcommittees is voluntary and the exact time commitment each staff member contributes varies based on interest and capacity.⁵⁹ Each subcommittee meets about twice each month,⁶⁰ and reports to the full steering committee on a quarterly basis. Current subcommittees include:⁶¹

- *Clean Energy Transition Plan*: This subcommittee is investigating approaches for transitioning away from coal power and replacing it with green energy. The subcommittee is examining how King County can get 90% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030.⁶² The subcommittee plans to work alongside Puget Sound Energy (PSE, the region’s main energy utility serving 4 million people across 10 counties in the Puget Sound Region) and Seattle City Light on this effort. The group is looking at the relative benefits and costs of different resources (solar, wind, etc.), physical constraints such as available space, and how much buy-in there will be for a transition to clean energy long-term.
- *Commercial Energy Benchmarking*: This subcommittee is looking at ordinances that have passed in large cities like Boston and San Francisco that require buildings above a certain square footage to report on their energy use. It is considering how similar policies and supporting programs could be implemented by municipalities in King County. Ordinances adopted by King County jurisdictions would likely begin with municipal buildings at first, and then allow for voluntary reporting by non-municipal entities. Mandates and reporting for all new buildings would only be implemented after these transitional steps were taken.
- *Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging*: This subcommittee has a goal to recruit at least one workplace per K4C city to participate in the US Department of Energy’s “EV Workplace Charging Challenge,” a pledge that encourages employers to install EV charging stations for employee use.⁶³ K4C EV workplace charging “ambassadors” from the K4C jurisdictions participate in this subcommittee and are responsible for reaching out to recruit potential workplaces to the Challenge.⁶⁴

New King County cities are welcome – and encouraged – to join the collaborative any time. The group recruits new member cities through outreach to local elected officials and city councils, discussing the group’s mission, successes, and shared goals.

Funding

The K4C’s primary funding comes from the annual membership dues contributed by each member city based on its population. The group’s Interlocal Agreement sets out the baseline minimum contribution from each member. The smallest cities in the collaborative (Normandy Park with a population of 6,335 and Snoqualmie with a population of 10,670) contribute \$700 each year, while the largest (Seattle with a population of over 600,000) contributes \$5,000. The King County government itself pledges \$10,000 each year, as well.⁶⁵ Any vote to increase the amount of funding required by each member is only binding on the parties that vote in favor of the measure – those who vote against will not have their pledges raised without their consent.⁶⁶ The group has collectively applied for a small number of grants, but has not been successful so far.⁶⁷ These funds collected through membership dues are used both for K4C initiatives and projects and for hiring outside consultants, like Climate Solutions, to help inform their initiatives.

KEY ROLES AND INITIATIVES

The four roles the K4C is playing in the region can be broadly organized into four categories, consistent with the collaborative's purpose and scope as laid out in the Intellocal Agreement: (1) outreach and advocacy, (2) policy coordination, (3) local capacity building and solutions, and (4) funding and resources.

Outreach and Advocacy

The collaborative has worked together to coordinate outreach and messaging to local organizations, businesses, and state and federal lawmakers. Their process is relatively organic: staff members work together to craft a message and then circulate it to elected officials from each member city for their approval. The drafters are generally careful not to overstate the group's intent, and member cities are free to decide for themselves whether or not to sign onto each message presented for their consideration. Examples of past efforts include:

- K4C members have issued letters in July 2013 and February 2016 to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, commenting on Puget Sound Energy's (the region's main energy utility) Integrated Resource Plan for providing energy to customers in the future. These letters have emphasized the need to address the impacts of continued reliance on coal on the environment and public health, and the need for greater emphasis on renewable sources of electricity generation.⁶⁸
- In December 2013, members of the group sent a letter to the Washington State Climate Legislative and Executive Working Group (established by the state legislature to recommend emissions reduction strategies), urging bold climate action, substantial reduction targets, and a market-based approach to dealing with greenhouse gases.⁶⁹
- In December 2014, the K4C and other jurisdictions across Washington State issued a media statement, welcoming Governor Jay Inslee's climate change proposal, including his call for limits and a price on carbon pollution, his commitment to addressing climate impacts on vulnerable populations, and his plans to invest in energy efficiency, renewable resources, and clean transportation.⁷⁰

Policy Coordination

According to its mission statement, the K4C representatives work together to "adopt consistent standards, benchmarks, strategies, and overall goals related to responding to climate change."⁷¹ Most notably, in July 2014, the K4C helped push the County's Growth Management Planning Council to adopt a countywide GHG emissions reduction goal of: 25% below the 2007 baseline level by 2020; 50% by 2030; and 80% by 2050.⁷² Since then, the group has developed *Joint County-City Climate Commitments* that provide the basis for driving the collaborative's policy initiatives going forward.

To identify pathways for meeting the countywide emission reduction goals, the K4C partnered with Climate Solutions' New Energy Cities program, which helps small- to medium-sized Northwest communities reduce greenhouse gas emissions.⁷³ The K4C commissioned a carbon wedge analysis⁷⁴ by New Energy Cities on policy pathways to achieve the intermediate-term goal of reducing emissions 50% by 2030. .⁷⁵ Broadly, these pathways include:

- A 15% reduction in GHG emissions intensity from cars and light trucks and a 20% reduction in vehicle miles traveled;
- A 20% increase in renewable energy use countywide; and
- A 25% reduction in building energy use for existing buildings, plus net-zero emissions for new buildings by 2030.⁷⁶

Informed by this analysis, the K4C developed *Joint County-City Climate Commitments* (“joint commitments”) in January 2015, outlining specific policy and programmatic commitments to help advance each broader pathway (e.g., transportation, energy supply, etc.). The K4C also developed *Principles for Collaboration*, laying out guiding principles that recognize the importance of partnerships and the ability of collaboration to enhance the impact of individual local strategies.

As of December 2016, twelve of the thirteen member cities in the K4C, plus the County, have formally adopted the joint commitments and collaboration principles, through their elected officials’ signing of a letter of commitment.⁷⁷ The joint commitments are designed so that cities can tailor their actions as appropriate for their individual jurisdictions to achieve the targets. Further, by sharing best practices sharing and facilitating networking among the cities,⁷⁸ the K4C encourages local governments to incorporate these and similar goals into their own local planning initiatives. Several examples of previous and ongoing local efforts are described below.

- King County released an update to its Strategic Climate Action Plan in November 2015, which includes five goal areas for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that are framed around the pathways identified in the K4C joint commitments.⁷⁹
- The City of Kirkland updated its local comprehensive plan, including a number of climate change policies in its Environment Element that aim to advance work towards the regional targets and joint commitments developed by the K4C.⁸⁰
- The City of Shoreline is implementing a local Climate Action Plan in conjunction with the King County Climate Action Plan, featuring specific greenhouse gas reduction targets and information for community members and local businesses on how to do their part.⁸¹
- The City of Tukwila is on track to meet its own goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with all city operations by 55% by 2020.⁸²
- Several K4C jurisdictions have already participated in the Regional Code Collaboration, an effort of the Sustainable Cities Roundtable’s Green Building Task Force to identify opportunities for updating and developing green codes,⁸³ which can help cities and the County achieve green building and energy efficiency targets.

The three K4C subcommittees (EV Charging, Clean Energy Transition Plan, and Commercial Energy Benchmarking) are also working on identifying solutions and developing partnerships to advance the recommendations outlined in the joint commitments. For example, in January 2016 the Commercial Energy Benchmarking Subcommittee presented research and recommendations to the K4C steering committee on policy and program options for building energy benchmarking, and recommended steps for K4C member jurisdictions to take to implement such a program.⁸⁴ The joint commitments continue to provide a strong basis for coordination among K4C member jurisdictions and to drive the direction of the group’s efforts going forward into 2017.

Local Capacity Building and Solutions

The group has developed a number of mechanisms for sharing best practices, strategies, and ideas for reducing greenhouse gases and increasing sustainability:

- *Workshops and trainings:* In partnership with the King County government’s GreenTools program, the K4C has continued and expanded the “Sustainable Cities Roundtable” series around which the group originally formed. These workshops and trainings allow local government officials to share ideas and speak to national experts. In 2015 and 2016 the group held roundtable events centered on themes like equity and social justice, urban agriculture, and zero net energy buildings.⁸⁵

- *Sharing information and best practices:* The group has developed a dashboard for member cities to share information about projects underway and to share the results of emissions reduction efforts and effects on local economies.⁸⁶
- *Elected Officials Summits:* The collaborative has hosted five Elected Officials Summits, in which mayors and city representatives from the member cities can meet to discuss progress and best practices in person. The joint commitments were adopted at the January 2015 Summit; the most recent of these meetings was held in April 2016 and focused on recent developments at the local and state level, and recommendations for local green building and energy efficiency policies and programs.⁸⁷ Organizers of the K4C observe that the Elected Officials Summits are useful for inspiring “friendly peer competition” among the cities.

Funding and Resources

The group allows member cities to pool their financial, staff, and political capital resources together to make a bigger impact than each city could make alone. In addition to the annual membership dues contributed by each member city (which generally go to funding their meetings and hiring outside contractors), the group is continuing to apply for grants as a collective body.⁸⁸

From its earliest days, the K4C also developed locally-focused guidance, case studies, recommendations and resources to help inform city and county development of municipal revolving energy funds which could ensure dedicated funding for energy efficiency, clean energy and related projects.⁸⁹ Several cities and the County have now set up these types of funds; for example, the County can now fund any energy project that can pay itself back within ten years through a dedicated internal fund established solely for that purpose, and is committed to expanding this program to K4C members in 2017.⁹⁰

K4C GOALS GOING FORWARD

To build off their successes thus far, the K4C hopes to ramp up its engagement and policy development. The joint commitments and pathways adopted in January 2015 form the foundation for K4C work going forward. Some of the K4C’s broad focus areas and key policies or projects for members to pursue include:⁹¹

- *Renewable energy supply:* Partner with local utilities and other stakeholders to develop a countywide commitment to renewable energy in areas such as community solar, green power community challenges, streamlined permitting for local renewable energy installations, and renewable energy incentives.
- Many of the participating cities have already held “solarize campaigns,” bringing in solar installers to host information sessions and workshops in the local community, and to offer installation discounts to people who choose to opt in.⁹²
- King County has budgeted \$75,000 of its own funds toward solutions identified through the Clean Energy Transition Plan subcommittee, and many mayors of K4C cities have said they would contribute additional funding to help achieve the subcommittee’s goals, as well.⁹³
- *Green building and energy efficiency:* Promote public building energy benchmarking and voluntary commercial energy benchmarking to increase energy awareness of building owners, managers, and other actors in the real estate market. Work with the Regional Code Collaboration to adopt pathways that lead to “net-zero carbon” buildings through changes in local codes and ordinances.
- *Transportation:* Support the adoption of statewide low carbon fuel standards to reduce pollution from transportation fuels. Partner to secure state authority for funding to sustain and grow local transit service for the County, and provide bike, pedestrian, and mass transit options, including light rail.
- *Land use:* Build more affordable housing closer to mass transit and jobs, focus future development in city centers, and decrease development pressure in rural and natural lands through transferrable development

rights⁹⁴ initiatives. Expand forest and farm stewardship programs and support urban and community farming. Adopt the Puget Sound Regional Council's Growing Transit Communities Compact (for the County or larger cities) or participate in programs and campaigns promoting solutions such as vehicle electrification and carpooling.

- *Government Operations:* Develop and adopt near- and long-term emissions reduction targets for government operations that support the countywide goals.
- *Data-sharing and monitoring:* Build on existing countywide GHG reduction commitments by sharing data between cities and partners, creating a public-facing dashboard to measure progress, and using the information collected to inform local and regional climate action.
- *Climate advocacy:* Advocate for federal, state, and regional science-based limits and market-based pricing on GHG emissions, the funds from which should go to further support GHG reduction efforts like energy efficiency projects, transit service, and forest protection initiatives.
- *Building new partnerships:* Work more closely with utility providers like PSE, local businesses, non-profit organizations, and other public sector agencies (while working within limits of resources).
- *Outreach and engagement:* Engage more deeply with communities of color and low-income, immigrant, and youth populations, who are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and historically less likely to be included.
- *Collaboration:* Increase membership size by adding new member cities, and spreading the network beyond King County out to partners in the City of Tacoma and Snohomish County.

CONCLUSION

The K4C's efforts to advance climate change mitigation policies in the King County region have been very successful, even in just a few short years since its founding. With the aid of highly committed leadership (both from local and county elected officials and the staff representatives to the steering committee), the group has managed to come together to adopt shared and ambitious GHG emissions reduction targets, support technical analysis of the strategies K4C municipalities will need to achieve the targets, and develop and adopt a formal set of joint climate commitments that should ensure progress in years to come. In recognition of the K4C's successes advancing collaborative solutions to carbon pollution, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded the K4C a Climate Leadership Award for Innovative Partnerships in 2016.⁹⁵

Through topic-focused subcommittees, the collaborative is advancing recommendations for how local jurisdictions in the County can align policies on green building, energy efficiency, transportation, and more. The group is also exploring linkages with the Regional Code Collaboration, which builds capacity of its own member jurisdictions by designing model codes to support sustainability goals of local jurisdictions. While limited funding and the voluntary nature of the collaborative's programs can pose certain challenges, the K4C has built consensus and commitment out of what were previously uncoordinated efforts, allowing each member city to have a greater impact and make its own limited resources go farther.

ENDNOTES

*This report was written by Hillary Neger and Annie Bennett. Hillary Neger wrote this report as a Research Assistant for the Georgetown Climate Center. Annie Bennett is an Institute Associate for the Georgetown Climate Center, and helped supervise, revise, and update this work for the ARCCA collaboratives.

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⁵ Mote, P. A.K. Snover, S. Capalbo, S. D. Eigenbrode, P. Glick, J. Littell, R. Raymond, and S. Reeder, 2014: Ch. 21: Northwest. *Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment*, J. M. Melillo, Terese (T.C. Richmond), and G.W. Yohe, Eds., U.S. Global Change Research Program, 487-513. doi: 10.7930/J04Q7RWX.

⁶ Id. [Mote].

⁷ Institute for Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy. http://sustainablecommunitiesleadershipacademy.org/resource_files/documents/Think%20Resiliently,%20Act%20Regionally%20%28web%29%20NO%20BIOS.pdf. 2014.

⁸ Id.

⁹ In order to receive Federal-aid surface transportation funding, urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more (as designated by the US Census Bureau) must have a designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) that undertakes planning processes for transportation investments. Legislation and Regulations: Planning Policy and Guidance. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/metropolitan/legislation_and_regulations/.

¹⁰ King County by the numbers. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/about/region/environment/natural-features.aspx>. Accessed June 2015.

¹¹ 2010 Census Data – King County Population by Name and by City. http://your.kingcounty.gov/districting/Population_Cities_Table_v20110511.pdf Accessed 12 July 2015.

¹² Getting to Know King County. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/PSB/Demographics/KCGrowthReport/GettingToKnowKC.aspx>.

¹³ Quigley, Eileen V. "Getting Serious About Reducing Carbon Emissions." Climate Solutions, 14 Jan. 2014. Web. Accessed 02 June 2015. <http://climatesolutions.org/article/1421974293-king-county-wa-not-messing-around>. See also Quigley, Eileen V. "King County Executive Laser-Focused on Climate Change and Equity." Climate Solutions, 12 Feb. 2014. Web. Accessed 03 June 2015. <http://climatesolutions.org/article/king-county-executive-laser-focused-climate-change-and-equity>

¹⁴ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Joint Letter of Commitment: Climate Change Action in King County. Adopted January 2015.

¹⁵ Five of the top ten hottest years in the region have occurred in the past two decades, while all of the top ten coldest years occurred prior to 1991. Kunkel, K.E., L.E. Stevens, S.E. Stevens, L. Sun, E. Janssen, D. Wuebbles, K.T. Redmond, and J.G. Dobson, 2013: Regional Climate Trends and Scenarios for the U.S. National Climate Assessment. Part 6. Climate of the Northwest U.S.. NOAA Technical Report NESDIS 142-6, 75 pp.

¹⁶ Mauger, G.S., J.H. Casola, H.A. Morgan, R.L. Strauch, B. Jones, B. Curry, T.M. Busch Isaksen, L. Whitely Binder, M.B. Krosby, and A.K. Snover, 2015. State of Knowledge: Climate Change in Puget Sound. Report prepared for the Puget Sound Partnership and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Climate Impacts Group, University of Washington, Seattle. Doi:10.7915/CIG93777D. Available at http://ces.washington.edu/picea/mauger/ps-sok/ps-sok_cover_and_execsumm_2015.pdf.

¹⁷ In 2012, more than 80% of streams and rivers in King County exceeded the state's temperature standards for protecting salmon habitats. Confronting Climate Change. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/priorities/climate-change.aspx>. Accessed 03 June 2015. Increasing water temperatures also lead to more acidic oceans, which in turn threaten fisheries – an important economic driver for the region. *Washington State Maritime Cluster Economic Impact Study*. Workforce Development Council of Seattle and King County. November 2013. <http://www.kingcountymaritime.com/economic-studies/>.

¹⁸ Mauger, G.S., J.H. Casola, H.A. Morgan, R.L. Strauch, B. Jones, B. Curry, T.M. Busch Isaksen, L. Whitely Binder, M.B. Krosby, and A.K. Snover, 2015. State of Knowledge: Climate Change in Puget Sound. Report prepared for the Puget Sound Partnership and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Climate Impacts Group, University of Washington, Seattle. Doi:10.7915/CIG93777D. Available at http://ces.washington.edu/picea/mauger/ps-sok/ps-sok_cover_and_execsumm_2015.pdf. Snowpack – an important source of water resources in Washington – decreased in the Cascade Mountain Range by 25% from the 1950s to the 2000s, affecting both the local ski season (an important economic driver) and water availability. Confronting Climate Change. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/priorities/climate-change.aspx>.

¹⁹ Confronting Climate Change. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/priorities/climate-change.aspx>. Accessed 03 June 2015.

²⁰ \$29 billion worth of roads and buildings in the Puget Sound area are at risk of flooding as severe storm patterns increase in frequency and intensity. <http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/archive-documents/dnrp/climate-change/pdf/2014-KC-Climate-Change-Infographic.pdf>. In the second half of the 21st century, increases of 5 to 10% in storm intensity are projected for northeastern Washington, and in the Seattle area, the magnitude of a 24-hour storm is projected to increase 14 to 28%. "Preparing for a Changing Climate: Washington State's Integrated Climate Response Strategy." State of Washington Department of Ecology, April 2012. Available at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/1201004.pdf>. Accessed October 2015.

²¹ Mauger, G.S., J.H. Casola, H.A. Morgan, R.L. Strauch, B. Jones, B. Curry, T.M. Busch Isaksen, L. Whitely Binder, M.B. Krosby, and A.K. Snover, 2015. State of Knowledge: Climate Change in Puget Sound. Report prepared for the Puget Sound Partnership and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Climate Impacts Group, University of Washington, Seattle. Doi:10.7915/CIG93777D. Available at http://ces.washington.edu/picea/mauger/ps-sok/ps-sok_cover_and_execsumm_2015.pdf.

²² With increasing demand and decreasing supply, policymakers will be forced to weigh tradeoffs between preserving natural habitats and providing for a range of uses (agriculture, energy, residential and industrial uses). Mote, P. A.K. Snover, S. Capalbo, S. D. Eigenbrode, P. Glick, J. Littell, R. Raymondi, and S. Reeder, 2014: Ch. 21: Northwest. *Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment*, J. M. Melillo, Terese (T.C. Richmond), and G.W. Yohe, Eds., U.S. Global Change Research Program, 487-513. doi: 10.7930/J04Q7RWX

²³ Confronting Climate Change. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/priorities/climate-change.aspx>. Accessed 03 June 2015.

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- ²⁶ <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/priorities/climate-change/infographic.aspx>. Accessed 02 June 2015.
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- ³⁰ Interview with Matt Kuharic, Co-Chair of K4C (July 30, 2015).
- ³¹ Lyshall, Linda J. (2011). *Collaboration and Climate Action at the Local Scale*. Antioch University, available at https://etd.ohiolink.edu/ap/10?0::NO:10:P10_ACCESSION_NUM:antioch1303754240#abstract-files.
- ³² Id.
- ³³ Id. The Sustainable Cities Roundtable held meetings every other month, bringing in experts for education and training series for local leaders. The K4C began running a parallel, peer program (the Sustainable Cities Roundtable series) in opposite months, providing expertise and standardizing messaging across participating cities. Interview with Nicole Sanders, Co-Chair of K4C (October 21, 2015).
- ³⁴ Interview with Nicole Sanders, Co-Chair of K4C (October 21, 2015).
- ³⁵ Id.
- ³⁶ Id. Working on this project also largely set the stage for the group's primary focus on energy emissions and reduction.
- ³⁷ The authority to enter into an "interlocal agreement" is derived from the RCW 39.34.010.
- ³⁸ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration. 2012.
- ³⁹ Interview with Matt Kuharic, Co-Chair of K4C (July 30, 2015).
- ⁴⁰ Interview with Nicole Sanders, Co-Chair of K4C (October 21, 2015).
- ⁴¹ Id.
- ⁴² Climate Solutions is a clean energy non-profit based in the Pacific Northwest, aimed at catalyzing practical and profitable solutions to climate change. It began partnering with the K4C in 2013 when the County requested an energy map and a carbon wedge analysis to help them achieve their GHG goals. Climate Solutions was also involved in helping the K4C draft and adopt their Joint Commitments agreement, encourage the GMPC to adopt the group's GHG targets, and approach other non-member cities about how to reach the targets once adopted. Interview with Elizabeth Willmott, Climate Solutions (October 19, 2015).
- ⁴³ Interview with Matt Kuharic, Co-Chair of K4C (July 30, 2015).

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- ⁴⁴ RCW 39.34.010.
- ⁴⁵ RCW 39.34.030.
- ⁴⁶ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration § 1.1. 2012.
- ⁴⁷ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration § 1.3. 2012.
- ⁴⁸ Interview with Nicole Sanders, Co-Chair of K4C (October 21, 2015).
- ⁴⁹ Id.
- ⁵⁰ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration § 2.1. 2012.
- ⁵¹ Id. A $\frac{3}{4}$ supermajority is needed to approve any changes to the group’s workplan or budget.
- ⁵² King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration § 2.1. 2012.
- ⁵³ Id.
- ⁵⁴ Id. at §§ 2.4 and 2.7.
- ⁵⁵ Id. at §§ 2.4-2.5.
- ⁵⁶ Interview with Nicole Sanders, Co-Chair of K4C (October 21, 2015).
- ⁵⁷ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration § 2.6. 2012.
- ⁵⁸ Id. § 2.7.
- ⁵⁹ Interview with Matt Kuharic, Co-Chair of K4C (July 30, 2015).
- ⁶⁰ Id.
- ⁶¹ Interview with Nicole Sanders, Co-Chair of K4C (October 21, 2015); Interview with Elizabeth Willmott, Climate Solutions (October 19, 2015). The group also has also been somewhat involved in a Regional Code Collaboration working group. This group is looking at model building codes at the state level for loopholes allowing for large heat and energy losses and ways to allow for more green energy building, though this is not an official K4C subcommittee.
- ⁶² Interview with Elizabeth Willmott, Climate Solutions (October 19, 2015).
- ⁶³ Federal Department of Energy program encouraging employers of all sizes across the country to provide workplace charging stations for their employees. <http://www.energy.gov/eere/vehicles/workplace-charging-challenge-join-challenge>. Accessed October 30, 2015.
- ⁶⁴ Electric Vehicle Workplace Charging Challenge. Guide for the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C). http://www.cleancities.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/WCC-how-to-for-K4C_FINAL.pdf.
- ⁶⁵ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Interlocal Agreement for Climate Collaboration § 4.3. 2012.
- ⁶⁶ Id. § 2.2.
- ⁶⁷ Interview with Matt Kuharic, Co-Chair of K4C (July 30, 2015).
- ⁶⁸ Letter from King County, Issaquah, Redmond, Snoqualmie, Kirkland and Renton to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. 30 July 2013. http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/natural-resources/climate/KC-Cities-PSE-Comments_20130731.pdf. Letter from King County, Issaquah, Mercer Island, Redmond, Snoqualmie, and Tukwila to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. 3 February 2016. <http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/climate/documents/2016-KC-Cities-PSE-IRP-letter.pdf>.
- ⁶⁹ Letter from King County, Mercer Island, Issaquah, Seattle, Snoqualmie, Tukwila, Kirkland, Shoreline and Sammamish to the Washington State Climate Legislative and Executive Workgroup. 5 Dec. 2013. http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/natural-resources/climate/KingCountyCitiesCLEWLetter_12052013.pdf.

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- ⁷⁰ Media Statement. 17 Dec 2014. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/News/release/2014/December/17-governor-climate-package.aspx>.
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- ⁷² Regional leaders unite in call to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in King County. King County, 23 July 2014. Web. Accessed 02 February 2016. http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/News/release/2014/July/23_greenhouse-gas-targets.aspx; Letter from King County Executive Dow Constantine to Washington Governor Jay Inslee. November 2014.
- ⁷³ Climate Solutions: New Energy Cities. “Our Mission.” Web. Accessed 17 June 2015. <http://climatesolutions.org/programs/nec/about>.
- ⁷⁴ Willmott, Elizabeth. “50x30 Carbon Reduction: What Would It Take?” Climate Solutions, 24 June 2014. Web. Accessed 03 June 2015. <http://climatesolutions.org/article/50x30-carbon-reduction-ambitious-achievable>.
- ⁷⁵ Interview with Elizabeth Willmott, Climate Solutions (October 19, 2015).
- ⁷⁶ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Joint Letter of Commitment: Climate Change Action in King County. Adopted January 2015. Available at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrc/library/dnrc-directors-office/climate/2016-K4C-LetterOfCommitments.pdf>.
- ⁷⁷ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Joint Letter of Commitment: Climate Change Action in King County. Adopted January 2015. Available at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrc/library/dnrc-directors-office/climate/2016-K4C-LetterOfCommitments.pdf>.
- ⁷⁸ Interview with Elizabeth Willmott, Climate Solutions (October 19, 2015).
- ⁷⁹ 2015 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan. Approved November 2015. Available at: http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrc/climate/documents/2015_King_County_SCAP-Full_Plan.pdf.
- ⁸⁰ Environment Element Draft (see Climate Change). Kirkland 2035, Comprehensive Plan Update. City of Kirkland. <http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/Kirkland+2035+City+Council/Exhibit+5+Environment+Element.pdf>. Adopted 8 December 2015. http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Residents/Community/Kirkland2035/Comprehensive_Plan_Update/Final_Adoption_of_Comprehensive_Plan_Update.htm.
- ⁸¹ Shoreline Climate Action Plan. September 2013. <http://www.cityofshoreline.com/home/showdocument?id=14091>
- ⁸² KC Cities Climate Collaboration Elected Officials Summit.” YouTube, 21 Jan. 2015. Web. Accessed 04 June 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7weyFZvc5c>.
- ⁸³ Southard, Patti; Petrie, Kathleen; Stewart, Justus. “The Regional Code Collaboration: Municipal Cooperation to Advance Sustainability.” King County GreenTools. Available at: <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/greenbuilding/documents/regional-code-collaboration-white-paper.pdf>.
- ⁸⁴ Building Energy Benchmarking Policy, Program, and Partnership Options. Memorandum from K4C Commercial Energy Benchmarking Subcommittee & New Energy Cities to King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Steering Committee. 22 January 2016. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/environment/climate/documents/pdf/K4C-BuildingEnergyBenchmarkingReport.ashx?la=en>.
- ⁸⁵ GreenTools Sustainable Cities Roundtable Schedule. Web. Accessed 10 July 2015; 16 January 2017. <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/greenbuilding/roundtable.asp>.
- ⁸⁶ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration. Web. Accessed 6 December 2016. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/climate/other-governments/climate-pledge.aspx>.

⁸⁷ Id. See also K4C Elected Official Summit: Green Building and Energy Efficiency. 7 April 2016.

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/environment/climate/documents/pdf/K4C-04072016-ElectedOfficialsSummit-Notes.ashx?la=en>.

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⁸⁹ Id.

⁹⁰ Interview with Matt Kuharic, Co-Chair of K4C (July 30, 2015).

⁹¹ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration Joint Letter of Commitment: Climate Change Action in King County. Adopted January 2015.

⁹² Interview with Nicole Sanders, Co-Chair of K4C (October 21, 2015).

⁹³ Id.

⁹⁴ Transferable development rights (TDRs) create market incentives for shifting development to certain preferred areas. Local governments use zoning ordinances to discourage development in certain neighborhoods or regions (“sending areas”) with financial compensation and allowing property owners to exceed development densities, floor areas, or building heights in others (“receiving areas”).

⁹⁵ King County-Cities Climate Collaboration wins national 2016 Climate Leadership Award. 9 March 2016. King County. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/newsroom/newsreleases/2016/March/09-Climate-Leadership-Award.aspx>.

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