

King County Councilmember

Kathy Lambert

District 3

Winter 2007



Navigating the recent floods and snow storms

Recent flooding and snow storms provided an opportunity for King County residents to demonstrate their caring and resourcefulness in helping each other to survive. My thanks go out to all of you for your patience and determination to ride out the flood waters and snowy roads.

We especially thank those who worked overtime responding to emergency needs while keeping our communities safe—city officials, fire district volunteers, Roads Division crews, Water & Land Resources staff, CERT teams, utility crews, the Sheriff's Office, and administrators in the Parks and Solid Waste divisions—and mostly, to all of the citizens working together.

King County's Snoqualmie Valley was hardest hit by November's record rainfall. Preliminary damage estimates exceed \$36 million. King County responded to the emergency in several ways:

Garbage. King County Solid Waste Division offered free dumping of flood-damaged debris at King County transfer stations over several weekends. Additional dumpsters were provided by Allied Waste garbage company for areas with restricted access, such as Upper Preston, Shamrock Park in North Bend, and Skykomish.

Roads. More than 40 King County roads were closed temporarily by flooding, and Upper Preston Bridge and 312th Southeast in Preston were closed for two weeks due to washouts. Crews from the King County Roads Division worked around the clock for three days to build a new one-lane access road around the landslide that closed 312th.

Election. High water from the flooding Snoqualmie and Tolt rivers blocked all access roads to Carnation and Duvall on General Election Day, November 7. Unable to deliver the ballots to King County's Election Annex, poll workers and King County's Elections Office coordinated with the mayors and police chief to establish a chain of custody and secure the ballots overnight in the police station evidence room.

Repairs. Residents can make emergency structural repairs without a building permit, but they are asked to notify the King County Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) in advance and to obtain a permit later. Call (206) 296-6600 for more information.



Council unanimously adopts 2007 King County budget



Once again, I had the privilege to serve on the Budget Leadership Team (above). The adopted Council budget is \$40 million less than the Executive's proposed budget. It strengthens council policy oversight, spends less, saves more, and sticks to the Council's established "Priorities for People."

This budget honors our commitment to those who have served in our military. It also offers help to those in need of affordable housing.

We are expanding the Jail Learning Center, an alternative to secure detention for low-risk offenders that teaches skills to help former inmates succeed in life and not re-offend.

I also am pleased that we funded a waste-to-energy study. New technology will allow us to dispose of our garbage while creating energy and mix 99% of the resulting inert ash with gravel for use on road construction. We can turn our garbage into a resource!

*Merry Christmas, happy holidays,
and best wishes for the New Year!*



Kathy Lambert

King County Councilmember - District 3

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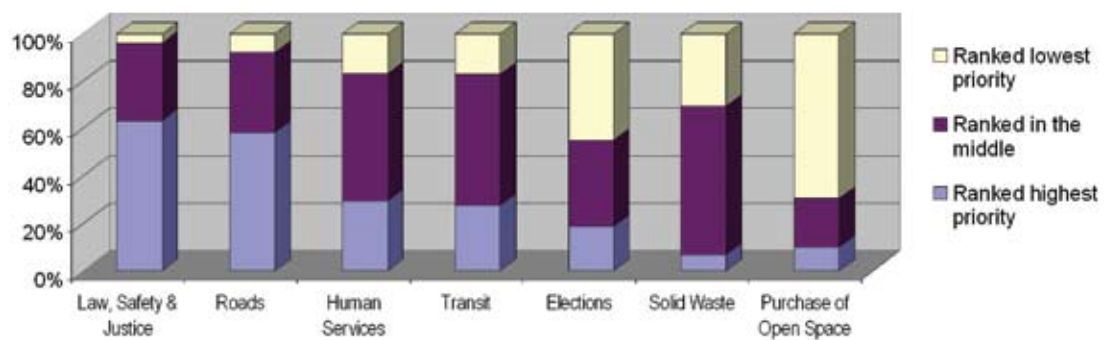
Responses to our budget questionnaire

I would like to thank the 443 people who took the time to respond to the budget survey from my last newsletter. Here is what you said...

Currently, capital projects in King County mandate that 1% of the budget be allocated to the arts. When asked if there should be a monetary dollar cap on this mandate, 77% said "Yes" we should cap this spending, and 23% said "No."

Concerning the purchase of additional open space in King County, 68% felt we have enough (or too much) public owned land. Of the 32% who would like to see additional government land purchases, the thoughts ranged from only purchasing public land for roads and neighborhood parks to purchasing as much open space as possible.

How you ranked County budget priorities



The chart above shows your feedback on the importance of these county priorities.

Many people asked why education was not included on our list of priorities. Education is not funded through county tax dollars but through local levies, as well as state and federal tax dollars. The county does collect the 52% of your property taxes that fund education, but this money is passed through to the school districts and is not considered county money, nor is it a county issue.

Councilmember Lambert and staff visit salmon hatchery in Issaquah



Councilmember Lambert and staff members Christine Jensen, Rob Christopher, and Grace Reamer recently learned more about the county-wide environmental education programs provided by the Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery during their tour of the 70-year-old hatchery.

Retired County vans benefit Skykomish, Eastside, and Latino programs

Young people and those with disabilities in King County will find it easier to get around thanks to donations of retired vans from the King County Vanpool Program. Among the recipients of this year's vans donations are three organizations recommended by Councilmember Lambert.

The Redmond Sammamish Boys & Girls Clubs' van will help support expanded school-break and summer programs for low-income and disadvantaged youth.

Consejo Counseling & Referral Services will use their van to transport clients to counseling and medical appointments, deliver food to clients with limited mobility, and transport youth to and from after-school programs.

Finally, the Town of Skykomish will use their van to provide transportation along Highway 2, as these north-east King County communities currently have no in-town transit service. Regular van service will enable residents to get to medical appointments, grocery stores, and connect with Community Transit buses in Gold Bar.