

King County Councilmember

Kathy Lambert

District 3

Fall 2006



A quick guide to understanding the King County budget

This “big picture” look will help you understand both the King County budget and the process the Metropolitan King County Council undertakes during its annual scrutiny and adoption of a new budget for the upcoming year.

The King County Executive submitted his budget proposal on October 16th. The County Council is now holding public hearings and meetings to review and make changes to the proposal. Traditionally, the Council adopts the final county budget just before Thanksgiving.

Here are some important background and facts about the King County budget:

- Thankfully, state law requires that all counties write balanced budgets. The revenue structure to support the public services provided by King County government remains the same as it has been since the farm-based economy of the 1850's, with state law strictly prescribing the county's tax sources.
- Today, King County is the 13th most populous county in the nation, with nearly 1.8 million residents, and it is the second largest provider of government services in the State of Washington.
- More than three-fourths of the county budget is by law dedicated to specific programs. These “dedicated funds” cannot be used for other purposes.
- The county's General Fund supports the day-to-day operations of county services that are largely unsupported by dedicated revenues.
- King County receives an average of just 15 cents or about 1/6th of your property tax dollar to provide regional services.

Learn more about the budget

- Visit www.metrokc.gov/council/budget
- Read the report of the Budget Advisory Task Force at www.metrokc.gov/exec/batf

Please complete, detach, and mail me this survey. Thank you!

There are a lot of hard budgeting choices. Please let me know your opinion.

1. Currently, capital projects in King County mandate that 1% of the total budget costs be allocated to fund the arts. On projects that reach into billions of dollars like the Brightwater Waste Treatment plant, 1% can reach into tens of millions of dollars.

Do you think there should be a dollar-value cap on the 1% for the arts? Yes No (Please circle)

If yes, at what dollar amount would you cap the arts funding? _____

2. Over 46% of King County land is owned by a government entity, and another 7% is protected through land trusts; so almost 54% of King County land is controlled directly by a government agency. Additionally, there are many rural areas that have open space requirements and required buffer setbacks from streams and wetlands.

Do you think King County needs to continue purchasing land? Yes No

If yes, what percentage of King County should be owned by government entities? _____

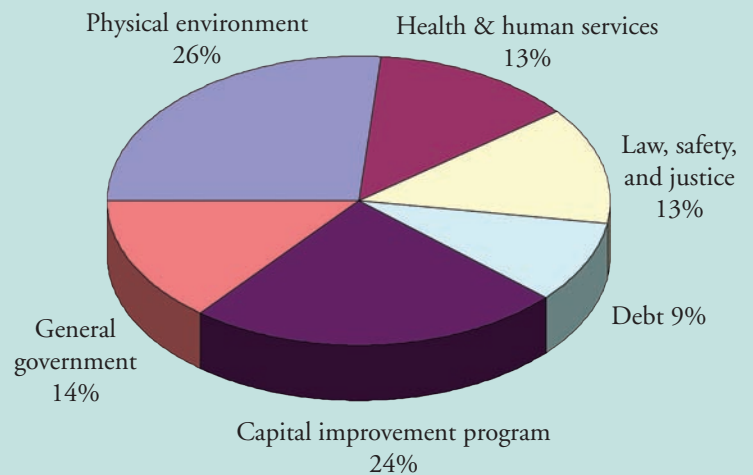
3. Please rank the following in order of importance to you:

- ___ Roads
- ___ Transit
- ___ Law, safety & justice
- ___ Human services
- ___ Purchasing of open space
- ___ Solid waste
- ___ Elections

4. If you would like to receive periodic updates on county information, please provide me your e-mail address:

Adopted 2006 King County budget

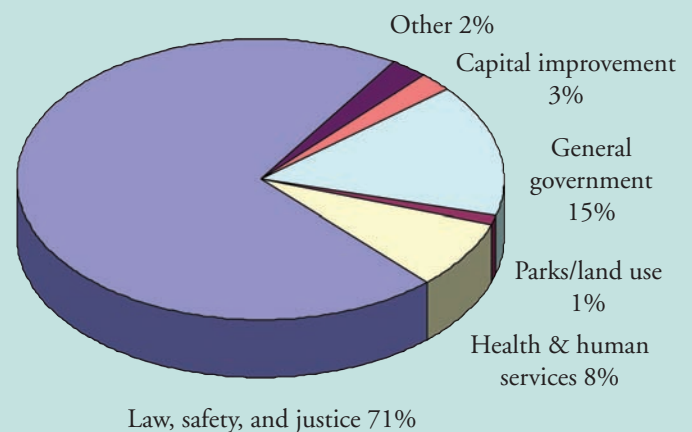
\$3.46 billion



More than three-fourths of the county budget is by law dedicated to specific programs. These “dedicated funds” cannot be used for other purposes.

Adopted 2006 General Fund expenditures

\$580 million (non-dedicated funds)



The General Fund is a portion of the county's budget, representing about 17% of the total budget (first chart). The general fund supports day-to-day operations of county services that are largely unsupported by dedicated revenues.

Over 70% percent of the county's General Fund is devoted to law, safety and justice services. The rest of the budget is directed toward human service programs, parks, and the operation of county government.

Please write any additional comments on the back.

Make your voice heard

King County faces some difficult choices as we balance services with our revenues. Our first step is to review the details of the Executive's Proposed Budget and invite your comments at one of the community meetings. **All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.** You can also watch the meetings on King County Television.



▶ **East King County**
Wednesday, November 1
Kirkland City Hall
123 Third Avenue
Kirkland, WA

▶ **Downtown Seattle**
Thursday, November 2
King County Courthouse, Council Chambers
516 Third Avenue, 10th Floor
Seattle, WA

Kathy Lambert

King County Councilmember - District 3
 King County Courthouse
 516 Third Avenue, Suite 1200
 Seattle, WA 98104-3272

PRSRT STD
 US Postage
PAID
 Seattle, WA
 Permit No. 1788



Special issue on the 2007 King County budget
Please see above for public hearing dates!

Where your property tax dollar goes

Your property tax check is paid to "King County" because property tax collection is a duty of the county treasury. The county treasury disburses property taxes to schools and local governments, including cities and other taxing districts.

King County receives an average of 15 cents or about 1/6th of your property tax dollar to provide regional services.

There are many dedicated funds. For example, sewer bills pay for sewers, and bus fares help pay for buses. Property taxes pay for important services that are not supported otherwise.

The coins below illustrate what your property tax dollar pays for:

Of property taxes paid by the typical homeowner in King County in 2005, the 15% that stays in county government (\$546 on average) paid for the following regional services provided by the county:

Emergency Medical Services	\$78
Parks	\$16
Automated Fingerprint Identification System	\$16
Conservation futures (land purchases)	\$20
Voter-approved bonds	\$57
King County General Fund	\$359*

**Refer to 2006 General Fund graph on reverse*



Schools
52¢
 Local school levies and state school fund



Local services
31¢
 City and local services, including unincorporated roads, fire, libraries, parks, and hospital districts



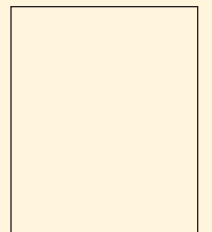
King County
15¢
 King County General Fund & regional services



Port of Seattle
2¢

Please complete the survey on the reverse, detach, and mail. Thank you!

Space for additional comments:



Kathy Lambert
King County Councilmember - District 3
King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104-3272