

March 8, 2018

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

Dear Councilmember McDermott:

This letter transmits a motion that will provide guidance for King County to establish a department of local services.

King County is the local service provider for the quarter-million people who live in the unincorporated areas. Creating a new department that is solely dedicated to improving local services and planning for the future would offer residents a forum to elevate their ideas, needs, and concerns to a cabinet level central point of contact dedicated to helping them navigate the existing web of departments and divisions. It could also bring them to the table with business, labor, elected officials, other service providers, and stakeholders as we work together to improve service and set the foundation for a sustainable future in unincorporated King County.

The proposed department of local services would provide a single, focused point of accountability that has not previously existed on the Executive side of County government. It would work closely with members of the County Council who represent these urban and rural unincorporated areas to improve the way we provide direct and contracted services, including roads, public safety, clean water, and access to opportunity.

This effort came as a result of the local services initiative I initiated in the fall of 2017 to explore new and better ways to serve the people of unincorporated King County. The development of a department of local services would focus on:

- Improving the coordination of local services by King County agencies through increased collaboration;
- Strengthening and expanding partnerships between the County, communities, and other entities;

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- Improving the delivery, responsiveness, and quality of local services to the people, businesses, and communities of unincorporated King County through unified accountability;
- Improving local services through robust employee engagement while embracing equity and social justice and continuous improvement;
- Strengthening unincorporated communities by supporting local planning and community initiatives; and
- Pursuing innovative funding strategies.

This effort aligns with the King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan by focusing on collaborating with other County and external service providers to deliver equitable operations, programs, and services. It also aligns with the overall King County Strategic Plan Goal of Efficient, Accountable Regional and Local Government. Finally, this new way of providing services to our residents and communities in unincorporated King County will move us closer to delivering the best run local government.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Harold Taniguchi, Department of Transportation Director, at 206-477-3809.

Sincerely,

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers  
ATTN: Grant Lahmann, Chief of Staff to Chair McDermott  
Jeff Muhm, Director of Council Initiatives  
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council  
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget  
Harold S. Taniguchi, Director, Department of Transportation (DOT)