



## Legislation Text

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**MEMO TO:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Mayor Birney

**SUBJECT:**

Updated King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) Letter of Joint Commitments and Environmental Sustainability Action Plan Briefing

**I. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Staff Report

**II. DEPARTMENT CONTACTS**

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**III. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND**

K4C Letter of Joint Commitments

This item presents an opportunity for the Council to adopt a refreshed set of joint climate commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as part of the City's ongoing multiyear participation in the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration.

Due to recent climate-related policy advances made in Olympia, along with the unexpected weakening of some federal emissions programs, and new technical developments, member cities decided in early 2019 to refresh the original 2014 commitments. The updated Joint Commitments document is very similar to the original 2014 commitments. Differences consist mostly of: clarifications of certain phrases; more inclusive language; acknowledgment of new State legislation; and three new sections addressing (a) new technology (e.g. electric vehicles), (b) city operations, and (c) the need for climate change preparedness. In order to make the most effective use of time, staff often pursues much of the City's greenhouse gas reduction ("GHG") work via participation in programs coordinated by the K4C. Due to the interconnected nature of emissions, K4C actions can include local GHG initiatives with various partner cities, as well as advocacy before State agencies or at the State Legislature, or action through sign-on letters.

The City of Redmond was a founding member of the K4C in 2011 and formalized its participation via an ongoing interlocal agreement. In 2014, more than a dozen K4C members, including Redmond, were seeking a more unified platform to guide GHG reductions and developed a set of voluntary shared actions that would accelerate progress towards a clean and sustainable future. These principles - the “Joint Commitments” - are focused on practical, near-term, collaborative opportunities between cities and King County, and were built on the significant work that many cities and the County were already undertaking. The original Joint Commitments document from 2014 was endorsed by Redmond, King County, and 11 other member cities (Shoreline, Seattle, Issaquah, Kirkland, Sammamish, Snoqualmie, Tukwila, Renton, Mercer Island, Bellevue, and Burien). Today there are 18 partners in the K4C - 16 cities, King County, and the Port of Seattle. Eight of those cities (including Redmond) and King County have signed the Updated Letter of Joint Commitments.

The 2019 refreshed Joint Commitments document has an overarching goal of achieving “Shared countywide GHG reduction targets that reduce countywide sources of GHG emissions by at least 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050, compared to a 2007 baseline.”

While all partners support the shared vision that the Commitments represent, it is not the intention that each partner will or can pursue every action. Instead, each partner actively pursues “strategies where action, investment, and policy will have the most impact and influence.” To emphasize this concept, it has been moved up the list of foundational principles in the document’s preamble. In other words, actions and programs will look different for every member city, and the Joint Commitments are a collective vision, not a County mandate.

At the same time, it’s also important to note that the overarching GHG goals of the Joint Commitments align with several goals or programs already underway in the City. Multiple resolutions were adopted to advance climate action planning consistent with regional goals.

- Resolution 1356, Authorizing the Mayor to sign the K4C Climate Pledge to advance regional collaboration in addressing climate change (June 2011)
- Resolution 1387 (AM), Supporting the Climate Action Implementation Plan’s Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy Consumption Reduction Strategies (May 2013)
- Resolution 1402, Authorizing Participation in Puget Sound Energy’s Green Power Challenge Program (March 2014)
- Resolution 1413, Adoption of a City Climate Action Implementation Plan (September 2014)
- Resolution 1416, Authorizing the Mayor to Sign the K4C Joint Letter of Commitments: Climate Change Actions in King County (November 2014)
- Resolution 1436, Adoption of Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Targets (November 2015)
- Resolution 1476, Affirming A Commitment to Climate Action through Support of Paris Climate Agreement (July 2017)
- Resolution 1500, Authorizing the City’s Participation in Puget Sound Energy’s Green Direct Program (August 2018)

The King County Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC), which is a formal body of elected officials from across King County, also voted in 2014 to adopt a shared target to reduce countywide

sources of GHG's. The GMPC relied on the K4C to provide scientific background and support for developing these targets.

In addition, last year the Washington State Legislature passed, and the Governor signed into law, bills that will transition the electricity sector to clean sources by 2045, accelerate efficiency in the built environment, and reduce transportation-related emissions.

The broad partnership represented by the K4C (which now also includes the Port of Seattle) is virtually unprecedented nationwide and is recognized as a very effective means by which to organize multi-jurisdictional GHG reduction work. Through its membership, Redmond has been able to amplify its influence and successfully advocate for, or implement, a range of progressive environmental measures.

#### Environmental Sustainability Action Plan

The development of the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (Sustainability Plan) integrates K4C policy commitments into the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction strategy and further supports the City's commitment to preserving a healthy and sustainable environment for all. In late April and early May, City staff hosted virtual stakeholder workshops to collect feedback on the list of proposed actions and develop an implementation plan. This feedback will inform the draft Sustainability Plan document, which is currently in development. Next steps for the project include:

- June 2020: On-line Open House to receive input on the draft Sustainability Plan
- June 23, 2020: Council Study Session to review the draft Sustainability Plan
- July/August: Council adoption of final draft Sustainability Plan

#### **IV. PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS HELD**

At the April 21, 2020, Council Meeting, Council voted to allow the Mayor to sign the Updated Letter of Joint Commitments. They requested the Mayor bring an update on changes from the original Joint Commitments.

#### **V. IMPACT**

##### **A. Service/Delivery:**

There are no service/delivery impacts with signing the updated Joint Commitments.

##### **B. Fiscal Note:**

There are no fiscal impacts associated with signing the updated Joint Commitments.

#### **VI. ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The Council has already directed the Mayor to sign the Updated Letter of Joint Commitments. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an informational briefing and there are no staff recommendations. The Mayor signed the Updated Joint Commitments on May 19, 2020.

**VII. TIME CONSTRAINTS**

There are no time constraints.

**VIII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Updated K4C Letter of Joint Commitments
- B. Presentation
- C. K4C Initiatives