

**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**  
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

<b>AGENDA TITLE:</b> King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Renewal Discussion
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b> City Managers Office / Community Services
<b>PRESENTED BY:</b> Scott MacColl, Rob Beem

**PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:**

The King County Veterans and Human Services Levy is up for renewal this year. King County has to decide whether to place the proposition on the ballot in either the primary or general election this year. If they choose the primary, the County Council must vote by late May to put the levy renewal on the ballot. This issue was an agenda item at King County's Regional Policy Committee (RPC) on March 9<sup>th</sup>, and will come before both the RPC and the Suburban Cities Association (SCA) Public Issues Committee (PIC) in the next month for policy direction on the potential ballot.

There are three main policy questions related to the levy potentially going on the ballot: 1) Does Council want to endorse or support renewal of the levy; 2) If so, would Council support keeping the levy rate constant over the life of the levy, or adjust for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U); and 3) is whether the levy and implementing plans should be required to specifically identify and address the service needs of veterans and low income families living in North King County (NKC) to ensure that they are adequately responding to the needs of residents and taxpayers in North King County.

The SCA PIC will be asked to take a position on the issue of the levy rate and of the notion of underserved areas at their meeting next month, and the RPC will be 'briefed' on the discussions of the County Council on this issue, and will expect to provide input at that time. Deputy Mayor Hall is an alternate for the RPC, and will be able to voice his opinion with the SCA caucus. The SCA RPC caucus will bring forward a policy position to the SCA PIC which will bind the SCA caucus members in any future discussion with the County on this issue.

This issue will require resolution in a relatively short time period as the County wants to maintain the possibility of placing the levy on the August ballot. Council policy direction would provide Deputy Mayor Hall and Councilmember Winstead authority to advocate a policy position at the Regional Policy Committee and the Suburban Cities Association Public Issues Committee, respectively.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is not providing a recommendation; rather Council discussion and policy direction will provide both Councilmembers and staff direction with their respective regional committee.

Approved By:      City Manager \_\_\_\_ City Attorney \_\_\_\_

## INTRODUCTION

The Veterans and Human Services Levy was passed by the voters of King County in November 2005 to generate much needed funding to help veterans, military personnel and their families and other individuals and families in need across the county through a variety of housing and supportive services. The levy allocated approximately \$13.3 million per year for six years to implement housing and human services for these two broad groups. One half of these revenues are targeted for veterans and their families, and the remaining half was dedicated to other King County residents in need of human services. The levy remains in effect through the end of 2011.

## BACKGROUND

The King County Veterans and Human Services Levy is up for renewal this year. King County has to decide whether to place the proposition on the ballot in either the primary or general election this year. If they choose the primary, the County Council must vote by late May to put the levy renewal on the ballot. This issue was an agenda item at King County's Regional Policy Committee (RPC) on March 9<sup>th</sup>, and will come before both the RPC and the Suburban Cities Association (SCA) Public Issues Committee (PIC) in the next month for policy direction on the potential ballot.

There are three main policy questions related to the levy potentially going on the ballot: 1) Does Council want to endorse or support renewal of the levy; 2) If so, would Council support keeping the levy rate constant over the life of the levy, or adjust the levy to keep up with inflation (by using the Consumer Price Index (CPI)); and 3) is whether the Levy and implementing plans should be required to specifically identify and address the service needs of veterans and low income families living in North King County (NKC) to ensure that the levy funds are adequately responding to the needs of residents and taxpayers in North King County.

- 1) Support for renewal of the levy – when the original levy was passed in 2005, the highest levels of support outside of Seattle are in North King County. Shoreline voters approved the levy at over 62%, showing a broad base of support for this levy. Additionally, Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, Bothell and Kenmore constitute four of the top seven highest approval rates in King County for the original levy (See Attachment A).
- 2) Should the levy include an annual increase per year to adjust for inflation using the CPI? The County proposed an amendment to the levy to include an annual increase in the levy not to exceed inflation (the Seattle CPI-U) – otherwise the levy would not keep up with inflation and would buy fewer services each year of the levy. This concept is almost identical to the annual increase included in Shoreline's Proposition 1 passed by the voters last fall. As funds are scarce, the potential problem outlined in policy question three below is exacerbated by a continually shrinking fund source.
- 3) Levy funding based on where the needs are identified: The policy question is whether the Levy and implementing plans should be required to specifically identify and address the service needs of veterans and low income families living

in North King County (NKC) to ensure that they are adequately responding to the needs of residents and taxpayers in North King County.

There is a requirement to track and report the location of residence by sub-region of people served with Levy funds. These data indicate that 2% of the services are delivered through satellite sites in NKC and 3% of all clients served reside in NKC (See Attachment B for the Levy funded NKC Service Providers). There are no specific strategies in the Levy implementation plans that address the needs of those living in NKC. The vast majority of services are delivered in and to residents of Seattle and South King County.

North King County (the Shoreline and Northshore School Districts) is home to about 6% of the overall population in all of King County and 7% of the civilian veterans. Rates of poverty for the total population in the two school districts are 6.8% in Shoreline and 5.4% in Northshore. We also know that 17% of NKC residents, or 21,954 people, are receiving one or more DSHS services. The community clinic in Bothell, HealthPoint, reported serving 250 military families in 2010 even though they did not receive any Levy funding. While some are being served through levy funded activities, the number served is not proportional to the overall population nor is it the result of any focused programs or activity in North King County. While there are debates about relative levels of need in different areas of the County, clearly there are low income individuals and families in need residing in NKC.

When the Levy was first developed it was largely marketed and planned as an addition to an existing set of services. In an effort to avoid duplication, to encourage cooperation and efficiency, and to ensure that Levy funds are put out into the community rapidly, the strategies that implemented the Levy for the most part call for augmenting existing services. A practical impact of this strategy is to reinforce any existing biases in the current service delivery system. The result is that areas that are largely under-served, like North King County, continue to be under-served.

Local service providers report limited success in accessing Levy funds. The Center for Human Services did receive funding to augment an existing home visiting program for young families and they accessed training offered through a county wide organization. They have not been successful in receiving any support for veterans and military families. Because they do not operate county wide nor do they have a focus on areas like housing they do not qualify for the RFP's that have been let by the County. It is therefore not surprising that we hear reports that north end agencies are not applying for funds. Attachment A shows the various different Veterans and Human Services Levy Programs in North King County.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is not providing a recommendation; rather Council discussion and policy direction will provide both Councilmembers and staff direction with their respective regional committee.

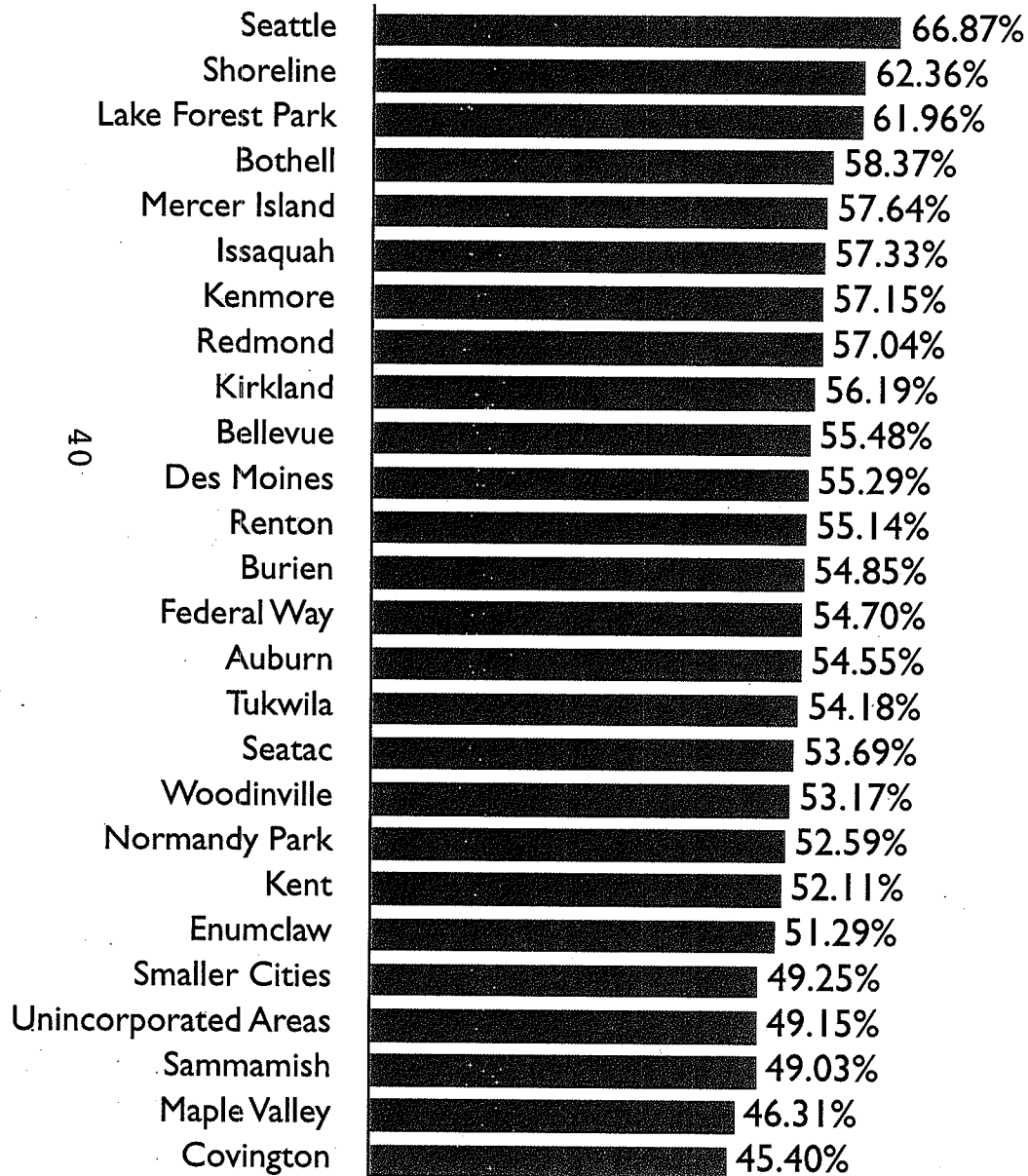
## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Proposition One Geography

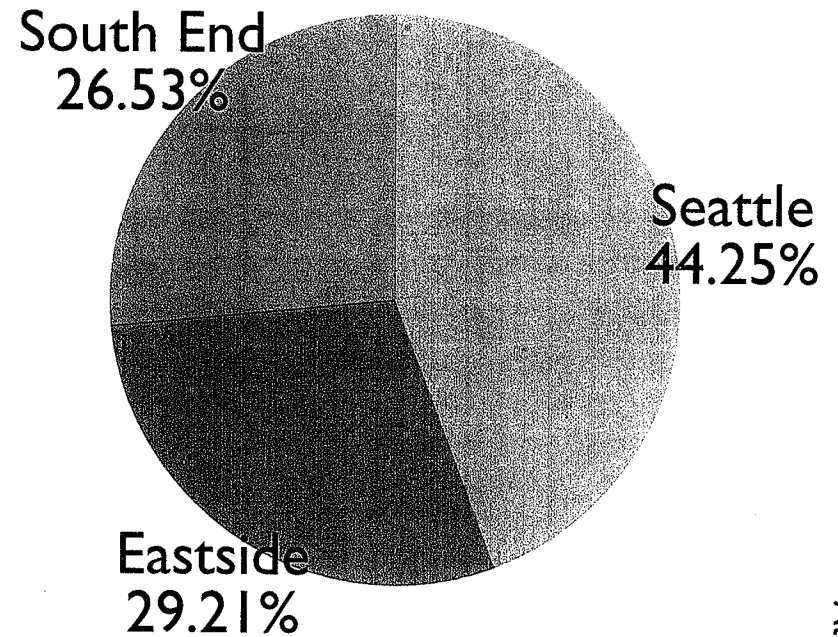
Attachment B: Veterans and Human Service Levy Programs in North King County

# Proposition One Geography

## Vote to approve by city



## Source of votes to approve



Seattle data in pie chart includes the city of Shoreline.

## **Attachment B: Veterans and Human Service Levy Programs in North King County**

The purpose of this report is to identify the provider agencies in North King County funded under the Veterans and Human Service Levy, (VHS) the services provided and the number of residents served by the Veterans and Human Service Levy. The data was derived from the Veterans and Human Service Levy Mid Point Evaluation, prepared by the King County Department of Community and Human Services and from human service agency contractors.

### **Background:**

The population of North King County was about 6% of King County's population in 2009. There are an estimated 11,000 veterans residing in North King County, about 7% of the 147,000 civilian veterans in King County in 2004.<sup>1</sup> The VHS Levy was approved by voters in 2005. It has provided about \$13 million per year through 2011. The revenue is split equally between veterans, military personnel and their families (Veterans Levy Fund) and other individuals and families in need (Human Services Fund).

The King County Council established three overall goals for the levy in the implementing ordinance:

1. Reduce homelessness;
2. Reduce emergency medical and criminal justice involvement;
3. Increase self-sufficiency both for veterans and military personnel in need and their families and for other individuals and families in need.

The ordinance also called for the development of a Service Improvement Plan (SIP) with five overarching strategies:

1. Enhance services and access for veterans, military personnel, and their families;
2. End homelessness through outreach, prevention, permanent supportive housing, and employment;
3. Increase access to behavioral health;
4. Strengthen families at risk;
5. Increase the effectiveness of resource management and evaluation.

### **Plan Strategies Affecting North King County**

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<sup>1</sup> North Urban Human Services Alliance, Report to Decision Makers on Human Service Needs in North King County, 2010

**Strategy 1. Activity 1A** Expand geographic range of King County Veterans' Program – Increase availability of services outside the City of Seattle, via new office site at Work Source Renton and mobile outreach for North and East King County.

The satellite sites provide outreach, assessment, case management, service linkage, and financial assistance to veterans, active-duty military, and their families. Outreach and community education are the first steps as each new satellite site is opened. Once clients are determined to be eligible for service, a full assessment is conducted to determine what services are needed. The program directly provides case management, and financial assistance while referring clients to other needed services including housing, benefits, counseling, medical care, and substance abuse treatment.

**Results in North King County**

The satellite outreach sites in North King County are the Shoreline/Lake Forest Park Senior Center and the Northshore Senior Center. An outreach person visits the two sites once a month. A service site, located at Community Psychiatric Clinic in Lake City is the closest satellite office with the services described above. A total of 14 North King County clients were seen from July 08 to December 09. Across all sites, financial assistance was the most sought service, and \$11,435 was awarded for assistance with rent, mortgage, food and utility bills.

**Strategy 1, Activity 1.D: U.S. National Guard Family Assistance Coordinator**

A specialist assessed household needs and provided outreach, information and referral and advocacy to reduce the impact of service on members and families of U.S. National Guard and Reserves.

**Results in North King County**

3% of the families and individuals served

**Strategy 1.2.** Increase capacity for Veterans Incarceration Project, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Counseling, financial aid, employment services etc.

Compass Center contracted with TRAC Associates to provide employment counseling using Veteran employment specialists at the Shoreline Veterans Center. Employment counseling was attached to supportive housing and other services.

**Results in North King County**

\_\_\_\_\_ insert when available.

**Strategy 1, Activity 2.C: Contracted Veterans Incarcerated Program**

Assist incarcerated veterans to overcome factors contributing to jail use and promote long-term health and stability upon release.

**Results in North King County**

4.1% of enrolled clients from North King County



### **Strategy 1, Activity 2.D.2 Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project**

The objective is to improve the lives of vulnerable , homeless veterans by helping them attain and maintain a stable life and reintegrate into the community. Two outcomes for the project were the number of clients who retain employment for 90 days and the number of clients who retain housing for 90 days.

#### **Results in North King County**

317 people were served county-wide with levy funding between 2007 and 2009 and 2% of those served were from North King County.

### **Strategy 1, Activity 2.E: Veterans Conservation Corps**

A program to provide job placement, employer training and individual training services in energy conservation and management, environmental restoration and stewardship. The goal is to provide access to living-wage jobs.

#### **Results in North King County**

10% of clients served were from North King County.

### **Overarching Strategy Two: Homelessness**

#### **Strategy 2.3 Landlord Risk Reduction**

Risk reduction fund to persuade landlords to rent to higher risk tenants, making it easier for them to find housing. The fund is a damage reserve fund that reimburses landlords for excessive damages beyond that covered by a security deposit.

#### **Results in North King County**

For calendar year 2009, 4% of the clients served came from North King County.

### **Strategy 2, Activity 7: Increase funding for the housing stability program**

This program helps renters and home owners avoid eviction.

#### **Results for North King County**

7% of clients were from North King County.

**Strategy 2, Activity 8:** Linking educational, vocational and employment to housing and supportive services for at-risk and formerly homeless individuals. Projects use employment- focused case management services, customized to client needs and goals . Performance measures include increasing paid employment or increasing the number in job training programs.

### **Results in North King County**

6% of clients served were from North King County.

### **Overarching Strategy Three: Behavioral Health**

#### **Strategy 3, Activity 1. A. Increased access to behavioral health through Community Clinic Providers (non-veterans)**

The goal is to integrate mental health services into primary care settings, including community clinic sites.

### **Results for North King County**

3.8% of clients were from North King County, but no service sites were in North King County.

#### **Strategy 3, Activity 1.B Increased access to behavioral health through Community Health Clinic providers (veterans)**

### **Results for North King County**

HealthPoint received no levy funding for the North King County Clinic from the VHS but nevertheless served 250 military families and 131 military personnel in 2010.

### **Overarching Strategy Four: Strengthening Families**

#### **Strategy 4.3A: Healthy Start Home Visiting Services**

Home visiting program targeting low income first-time mothers aimed at promoting family stability and effective child development.

### **Results in North King County**

Center for Human Services and Northshore Youth and Family Services participated as contractors in this program. No data available on numbers served for North King County.

#### **Strategy 4. Activity 3D: Increased training on child development for caregivers and informal supports.**

Expand curricula and training programs for those who care for children (formal and informal caregivers) to increase access to child care that is provided in culturally and linguistically relevant ways and aids healthy early child development; provides supports for immigrant and refugee families

### **Results in North King County**

The Center for Human Services' *Play and Learn* groups at four elementary schools, Third Place Commons, The Shoreline Children's Center, and the Shoreline Family Support Center were provided technical assistance and evaluation by Child Care Resources with Levy funding.

#### **Strategy 4, Activity 3.B: Cultural Navigator**

Program targets limited speaking and non-English speaking families and individuals with goal of improving access to appropriate services and navigate through those service systems. Closest location to North King County was Mini City Hall in Bellevue.

#### **Results in North King County**

1% of clients using the program were from North King County.

#### **Strategy 4, Activity 3.C: Promoting First Relationships**

A train-the-trainer program to increase school readiness, social emotional development of children and the nurturing and caring of caregivers.

#### **Results in North King County**

Center for Human Services received \$34,085 in 2010 for training their staff in the Promoting First Relationships Train the Trainer Program. The PFR program is a University of Washington based project that strengthens families by supporting healthy interactions between parent and child in the early months and years of life.

#### **Summary**

Total clients seen by the King Veterans Program from North King County, including the satellite sites, were: 62 in 2007, 60 in 2008 and 76 in 2009. Veterans served at satellites are not as likely to be homeless as KCVP clients in general (10 percent vs.35 percent) and more likely to be married or living in a family. Overall 3% of clients served by the Veterans and Human Service Levy reside in North King County and 2% of the services were delivered through sites in North King County.