

THURSTON COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

UPDATED FOR 2019/2020



truth



justice



professionalism



accountability



integrity

Adopted July 17, 2018

CONTRIBUTORS

This plan was developed through the contributions of individuals from the following offices and departments:

OFFICES

Assessor
Auditor
Board of County Commissioners
Coroner
County Clerk
District Court
Prosecuting Attorney
Sheriff
Superior Court
Treasurer

DEPARTMENTS

Central Services
Community Planning and Economic Development
Emergency Services
Human Resources
Pretrial Services
Public Defense
Public Health and Social Services
Public Works



“Helping Communities and Organizations Create Their Best Futures”

Founded in 1988, we are an interdisciplinary strategy and analysis firm providing integrated, creative and analytically rigorous approaches to complex policy and planning decisions. Our team of strategic planners, policy and financial analysts, economists, cartographers, information designers and facilitators work together to bring new ideas, clarity, and robust frameworks to the development of analytically-based and action-oriented plans.

Brian Murphy, Project Director
Jennifer Tippins, Project Manager
Kristin Maidt, Analyst

2200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1000
Seattle, WA 98121
P (206) 324-8760
www.berkconsulting.com

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	4
Vision, Mission, Values.....	5
Desired Future	6
Our Current Focus	8
Summary of Initiatives.....	10
Initiatives	13
Implementation	40



INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan will serve as guidance for Thurston County to develop the 2019/2020 biennial budget and future budget cycles. The plan reflects the values, concerns, and hopes of Thurston County residents, as well as those of Elected Officials and County staff.

In addition to this specific context, it is also informed by the role of county government, including obligations, constraints, and aspirations common to many counties across Washington state. As identified throughout the document, Thurston County is responsible for the delivery of core services that are mandated by state or federal law. In addition, the County aspires to provide additional services that, while they are discretionary, significantly benefit the region's residents, business owners, and visitors. In the delivery of both mandatory and discretionary services, Thurston County may be a direct service provider, particularly in unincorporated areas of the county, or a regional partner supporting city-provided services.

The County's ability to provide high quality services is challenged by significant fiscal constraints. Limitations on property tax increases means that the cost of providing service is growing at a rate faster than county revenues, leaving Thurston County with fewer resources each year to deliver the same services. While cities may face a similar challenge, they have access to a broader range of potential revenue sources; the County's principal revenue sources are limited to property and sales tax. Additionally, annexations and incorporations have reduced Thurston County's tax base, as previously unincorporated areas now contribute tax revenue to support city services. The County has taken many steps over the years to address these constraints, including the elimination of discretionary programs, significant staff reductions, and the consolidation of some departments.

While these fiscal restrictions present a real challenge, Thurston County continuously strives to provide residents with quality services and steer towards a shared vision of the county as "a vibrant community ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of generations to live, work, and play." This strategic plan is designed to advance this vision by establishing:

- A shared understanding of **what we are working towards**: our desired future.
- Clear identification of **mandatory services** and **essential support services** that the County must provide.
- **Short-term community priorities** based on input from community members and stakeholders.
- **Short-term strategies** that maximize the impact of the County's constrained existing resources.
- **Longer-term strategies** that move us closer to our desired future by leveraging existing and potentially new resources.

VISION, MISSION, VALUES

OUR VISION

Thurston County is a vibrant community ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of generations to live, work, and play.

OUR MISSION

To create a community that promotes health, commerce, and environmental protection with transparency and accountability.

OUR CORE VALUES

Truth	We act with honesty and good judgment.
Justice	We are inclusive, equitable, and consistent.
Integrity	We are ethical and transparent.
Professionalism	We deliver exceptional public service and treat everyone with respect.
Accountability	We take responsibility for our actions and outcomes.



DESIRED FUTURE

The Initiatives in this plan describe efforts to realize our desired future for the Thurston County community in six broad areas described below. These aspirations for the County's desired future build on the ideas in the Vision statement shown on the previous page. Recognizing the County's constrained resources and other limits to its influence. These descriptions should be read as hopes and desires, not promises or accountability measures to gauge our success.

As an overarching concept, Thurston County supports access to opportunities for all, regardless of sex, race, or address. We strive to diminish inequities in health outcomes and access to housing, economic opportunities, and a healthy environment.

THRIVING INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES

Thurston County is striving to support positive health outcomes for all by addressing the social determinants of health that currently lead to significant health inequities. We will seek to provide access to affordable, adequate, and safe housing for all, as we know that a safe place to sleep is essential for well-being and that a loss of well-being can also cause a loss of housing. The County is working to be prepared for emergencies and disasters, with disaster resilient businesses, residents, and County government, as well as a responsive and effective emergency medical services system. Our desired natural environment will support healthy people and communities by providing clean, safe water to drink and air to breathe, as well as access to opportunities for physical recreation and the enjoyment of nature.

A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY THAT BENEFITS ALL

Thurston County has a diverse economy, including state and local government, national and international trade, agriculture and farming, tourism, and natural resource development. Our desired future economy will offer more equitable access to opportunities for employment and alleviate poverty, with more residents able to find living wage jobs without driving outside the county to reach their place of employment. The County's long-term planning, infrastructure investments, and direct services support economic development indirectly by serving businesses as well as residents. While the County's direct investments to support economic development are currently used to fund the work of key partners, our desire is to take a more hands-on and proactive role in shaping the region's economy in the future.

A HEALTHY NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Thurston County residents value balancing growth and development with protecting the County's natural beauty and landscapes. We believe that we can grow in a responsible and sustainable manner through sound planning and effective investment. Our vision is for a thriving, safe, natural environment simultaneous with a healthy, prosperous economy. We are working to be resilient in the face of climate change and contribute to regional efforts to maintain a stable climate.

RESPONSIVE LAW, JUSTICE, AND PUBLIC SAFETY

We aspire to ensure all residents, business owners, and visitors feel safe anywhere they go in Thurston County. We will continue to prioritize public safety, as well as progressive criminal justice reform and alternative dispute services that reduce the number and disproportionality of individuals entering the justice system, and reduce recidivism among those that do.

EFFECTIVE COUNTY GOVERNANCE

The County will continue to facilitate fair, secure, and transparent elections to fill elected offices and provide diverse opportunities for community and civic engagement to ensure resident voices are heard. We will continue to provide trusted property assessment and tax collection services and the skillful management of County resources. Ensuring the financial health of the County is a top priority and we will strive to find ways to sustainably fund the core services the County provides for the benefit of all our residents, businesses, and visitors.

AN EFFECTIVE COUNTY ORGANIZATION

The Thurston County organization seeks to deliver the people, resources, capacities, and tools necessary to carry out the roles and responsibilities of government and to provide the level of service our residents deserve. We work both independently and through a rich and collaborative network of regional partnerships. We are striving to achieve robust communications and secure information technology systems to connect offices and departments across the County; clean, efficient, and safe facilities that serve employees and customers well; and the retention and cultivation of our most critical resource: a highly qualified and dedicated workforce.



OUR CURRENT FOCUS

FULFILLING OUR ROLE AS A COUNTY

Thurston County is mandated by federal or state statute to fulfill certain functions as a county. These Mandatory Services, as well as the essential support services that enable us to provide them, are described for each Initiative listed on the following pages.

2019/2020 PRIORITIES

The following themes were identified as priority areas of focus for 2019 and 2020 based on input from the public, partner organizations, and members of the Executive Team and Deputies. These areas of emphasis mean related Initiatives will be prioritized in the 2019/2020 time period, as indicated on pages 10 and 11. Refreshed priorities will be generated in the future through additional input from the public and key stakeholders.

Facilitating access to housing.

Increasing economic opportunity.

Guiding sustainable growth and development.

Championing public safety and criminal justice reform.

Securing appropriate funding levels for the provision of high quality core services that benefit all residents.

STRAWBERRIES

FARM
STAND
OPEN

↑ ↑ U-PICK ↑ ↑
1/8 mi. Big Field on LEFT

SUMMARY OF INITIATIVES

Initiative	Thriving Individuals, Families and Communities	A Prosperous Economy that Benefits All	A Healthy Natural and Built Environment	Responsive Law, Justice, and Public Safety	Effective County Governance	Effective County Organization
1. Improve health outcomes for all.	✓	✓		✓		
2. Improve community health, wellness, and safety.*	✓	✓		✓		
3. Collaborate with community partners to reduce homelessness and implement Thurston Thrives housing strategies.*	✓	✓	✓	✓		
4. Strengthen emergency management planning and community disaster preparedness.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5. Strengthen emergency medical services provided county-wide by Medic One and area hospitals.	✓	✓		✓		
6. Proactively shape a strong, diverse economy that provides equitable access to opportunity.*	✓	✓	✓	✓		
7. Balance development with the preservation of the County's rural character, natural areas, and open spaces.*		✓	✓			
8. Support robust and well-maintained infrastructure systems for a thriving community.	✓	✓	✓			
9. Support environmental health and climate stabilization.	✓	✓	✓			
10. Ensure safe and equitable access to the legal system, its programs, and services.*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* = Prioritized for 2019/2020 based on input from the community and Executive Team and Deputies.

Initiative	Thriving Individuals, Families and Communities	A Prosperous Economy that Benefits All	A Healthy Natural and Built Environment	Responsive Law, Justice, and Public Safety	Effective County Governance	Effective County Organization
11. Design and deliver innovative services through continued justice system reform to maximize community safety, rehabilitation, accountability, and cost effectiveness.*	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
12. Enhance effective and timely law enforcement responses to protect public safety.*	✓	✓		✓		
13. Increase opportunities for informed and effective civic engagement.	✓	✓			✓	
14. Strengthen sound financial management practices.*			✓	✓	✓	✓
15. Diversify County revenue sources to guard against economic cycles.*				✓	✓	✓
16. Provide safe, secure, accessible, and functional facilities to effectively house County services and the associated workforce.				✓	✓	✓
17. Make strategic investments in information technology systems and infrastructure.					✓	✓
18. Develop, hire, and retain a quality, stable, diverse, and thriving workforce.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* = Prioritized for 2019/2020 based on input from the community and Executive Team and Deputies.

[page intentionally left blank]



INITIATIVES

INITIATIVE 1.

Improve health outcomes for all.



COUNTY ROLE

The County's provision of its public health functions is a Mandatory Service.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

More people live longer, healthier lives because they take care of themselves.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Invest in Foundational Public Health Services, including communicable disease control, chronic disease and injury prevention, environmental public health, maternal child and family health, and access to and linkage with clinical care.Prevent tobacco and vaping use in Thurston County by focusing on youth and areas which the County and Board of Health can impact.Focus on addressing social determinants of health through Thurston Thrives.Promote equity through training, education, and data.Target investments in programs that support school-aged youth.Increase access and health outreach throughout Thurston County, with a focus on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Chronic disease prevention and obesity prevention.» Maternal/child health and improved breastfeeding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional resources are desired to address these critical issues in our community.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Achieve accreditation through the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO).Implement an equity plan to further reduce health disparities.Continue to advance and evolve the short-term efforts listed above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional resources are desired to address these critical issues in our community.



INITIATIVE 2.

Improve community health, wellness, and safety.



COUNTY ROLE

The County's provision of its public health functions is a Mandatory Service. The Thurston County Board of Health declared the opioid epidemic (and homelessness) to be a public health crisis in June 2018.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

All members of the Thurston County community achieve the highest level of health and wellbeing.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Play a leadership role in efforts by Thurston Thrives and the Cascade Pacific Action Alliance (CPAA), which brings strategies and resources.• Deploy available resources and seek new resources and strategies to address the opioid epidemic.<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Advance coordinated efforts by the Law and Justice Council; Thurston County Public Health and Social Services; and the Legislature.» Convene a Thurston County Opioid Response Task Force to develop and implement a community-driven Opioid Response Plan that addresses prescribing practices, access to treatment, overdose prevention and treatment, and reducing risk and stigma for disproportionately impacted communities.• Partner with behavioral health organizations and use the Treatment Sales Tax to increase programs that support those with mental health and substance use disorders.• Increase efforts regarding suicide prevention and invest in programs that improve the mental health and wellbeing of adults and children• Coordinate and target efforts across public health and criminal justice partners to share data and develop strategies to reduce incidents and impacts of domestic violence (related to Initiative 11).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional resources are desired to address these critical issues in our community.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to advance and evolve the short-term efforts listed above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional resources are desired to address these critical issues in our community.



INITIATIVE 3.

Collaborate with community partners to reduce homelessness and implement Thurston Thrives housing strategies.



COUNTY ROLE

Since 2013, the County has been a vital partner in a collective impact effort of public, private, and non-profit sectors to address housing challenges through the Thurston Thrives Housing Action Team and Coordinating Council. The Thurston County Board of Health declared homelessness (and the opioid epidemic) to be a public health crisis in June 2018. The County will provide support and leadership in effective community-wide collaborative coordination, planning, and policy efforts to end this crisis and to implement actions that will reduce homelessness, increase affordable housing development opportunities, and address the health, safety, social, economic, and environmental impacts of homelessness.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Access to affordable, adequate, and safe housing for all, including affordable housing for low-income families and the working poor, and housing stability for struggling homeowners, renters, and individuals who are homeless. The Thurston County Homeless Housing and Services System is well-coordinated and efficient, provides a pathway to housing stability, reduces the length and frequency of homeless episodes, and helps the most vulnerable be safe.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the newly created Office of Housing and Homeless Prevention to pursue targeted solutions such as improved hygiene, sanitation, vaccination, access to healthcare, and healthy shelter and housing that will prevent and reduce public health hazards associated with the homelessness crisis. • Continue to collaborate with community partners through the Thurston Thrives Housing Action Team “Incentive Housing” subgroup to incentivize market rate builders to participate in affordable housing to increase high-density, well-designed mixed-income housing. • Convene the Hazardous Weather Task Force and implement a county-wide Hazardous Weather “Code Blue” Plan to prevent death and illness related to hazardous weather conditions for vulnerable unsheltered populations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identify and allocate resources in partnership with nonprofits and local municipalities to increase shelter capacity. » Identify funding to support the activation of Code Blue as needed. • Hire a homeless response coordinator to serve the entire county and work in partnership with the City of Olympia homeless response coordinator and staff from other jurisdictions to implement actions recommended in the Thurston County Homeless Housing Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional resources are desired to address these critical issues in our community.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options to maximize the impact of existing and potential new revenue sources to address affordable housing, including coordinating existing resources and the best use of Medicaid waiver dollars. • Prioritize, evaluate, and take proactive steps to address the underlying causes of homelessness—including housing affordability, domestic violence, behavioral and physical health, and health equity concerns and solutions that reduce racial, gender, and ethnic disparities within the population of persons experiencing homelessness—and fully implement the approved fair housing plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional resources are desired to address these critical issues in our community.

INITIATIVE 4.

Strengthen emergency management planning and community disaster preparedness.



COUNTY ROLE

The County's emergency management functions are a Mandatory Service.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Residents, businesses, and the County itself are prepared to respond well to natural or man-made disasters or emergencies.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen plans and capabilities for the County to respond effectively to disaster incidents.<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Establish Thurston County Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Governance (COG) plans to ensure effective County functioning following a disaster.» Ensure the region's ability to provide post-disaster shelter options.» Strengthen the region's ability to recover critical infrastructure capability after a disaster.• Support community disaster preparedness and resiliency by engaging residents and businesses to encourage their participation.• Increase the County's ability to communicate in a timely manner with members of the public in the case of a disaster or public health emergency by encouraging participation in Thurston Community Alert (TC Alert).• Complete a draft community Recovery Framework.• Collaborate with Public Health Emergency Preparedness to plan for and prepare for disasters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current resource levels are sufficient to pursue the identified short-term strategies.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow our resources and partnerships.• Continue educational outreach to regional residents and businesses, including CPR education and training.• Finalize the community Recovery Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a sustainable funding model for Emergency Management Services.

INITIATIVE 5.

Strengthen emergency medical services provided county-wide by Medic One and area hospitals.



COUNTY ROLE

As a Mandatory Service, the County provides emergency medical services through Medic One and collaboration with regional hospitals.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Residents county-wide have access to emergency medical services and hospitals, and receive emergency care in a timely manner. This helps more people live longer, healthier lives because they receive the right care at the right place at the right time.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce demands on Emergency Medical Services by supporting the ability of Public Health and Social Services to provide community-based medicine.• Ensure training for Emergency Medical Technicians and paramedics meets the growing and changing medical requirements.• Evaluate needs and options for increasing the capacity of the region's hospitals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current resource levels are sufficient to pursue the identified short-term strategies.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure Medic One capacity by adding more medic units and assisting fire agencies with volunteer retention.• Determine when the renewal of the Medic One levy should be scheduled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expansion of Medic One would require substantial additional funding.

INITIATIVE 6.

Proactively shape a strong, diverse economy that provides equitable access to opportunity.



COUNTY ROLE

The County is required by state law to support economic development. This Mandatory Service is provided largely through contracts and partnerships with the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC), Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), the Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB), and the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

People are economically secure. The Thurston economy is diversified and resilient, supports living wages, and creates equitable opportunities for economic prosperity at all levels and stages of career development.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate the County's role and purpose in economic development.• Continue to support regional economic development efforts by the Thurston Economic Development Council, Thurston Regional Planning Council, Visitor Convention Bureau, and the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council.• Coordinate County investments and plans to promote economic growth, including transportation and utility infrastructure investments, land use planning, and permitting (coordinate with Initiatives 8 and 9).• Partner with local agencies and tribes to advance economic development initiatives in the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current resource levels are sufficient, but limited, to pursue the identified short-term strategies.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Move the County into a leadership role in regional economic development, emphasizing the creation of equitable economic opportunities and the alleviation of poverty.• Strengthen Thurston County tourism.• Create messaging so people and businesses think of Thurston County first.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional resources will be needed to support increased County investment and staff participation in economic and workforce development efforts.



INITIATIVE 7.

Balance development with the preservation of the county's rural character, natural areas, and open spaces.



COUNTY ROLE

The County is required to maintain a current Comprehensive Plan in accordance with state law and to conduct short-term planning and permitting. These Mandatory Services ensure that land uses comply with the Washington State Growth Management Act and the vision and desires of county residents. As part of this process, the County engages community members, business owners, and developers in ongoing dialogue about the county's planning and permitting functions in the process of planning for the longer-term future of the county's land base.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Growth is directed toward currently developed areas, preserving the county's natural areas and rural character. Sound planning supports the development of the desired Thurston County economy (see **Initiative 7**).

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the permitting process to be more transparent and consistent for all users, including residents, businesses, and developers.• Review and update ordinances, regulations, and fee structure in the permit and planning code to ensure business services and costs are clear to the public and support the financial health of the County.• Safeguard and manage nature preserves and historical sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology investment to upgrade permitting system.• Additional staff would help to expand public engagement and increase speed of review time and implementation of strategies.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate options for zoning for commercial growth.• Partner with the agricultural community to develop innovative land use opportunities.• Strengthen sustainable development policies.• Improve the County's offerings of parks and recreation opportunities to better meet the desires of a growing population.• Improve the operation and maintenance of parks, trails, nature preserves, and recreation programs in a safe, clean, and environmentally responsible manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a sustainable fiscal plan for building and operating county parks and recreation offerings.



INITIATIVE 8.

Support robust and well-maintained infrastructure systems for a thriving community.



COUNTY ROLE

As a Mandatory Service, the County maintains current infrastructure and builds new infrastructure in line with forecasted population and business growth. As the population grows and economic opportunities increase, so does the reliance on the infrastructure that supports this growth.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Individual communities are well-connected and provide abundant opportunities for physical activity. Strategic infrastructure investments support the development of the desired Thurston County economy (see **Initiative 7**).

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a comprehensive asset management program to optimize performance of infrastructure assets and maximize return on investment, including transportation, solid waste, stormwater, water & sewer systems.• Invest in infrastructure to meet current and future needs.• Focus on mobility and plan for future commercial growth through partnerships and additional investment in the County transportation system.• Plan and implement measures to ensure the fiscal and operational viability of the County's solid waste facilities to meet public demand for services now and into the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current resource levels are sufficient to pursue the identified short-term strategies.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop regional solutions for congestion and safety.• Improve the County's regional trail system to connect the county's urban and rural communities, and to provide a safe alternative to motorized transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased funding needed for development, maintenance, and operations.

INITIATIVE 9.

Support environmental health and climate stabilization.



COUNTY ROLE

The County is mandated to enforce clean water and air regulations. While not mandated, climate stabilization is critical to the county's social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

The environment of our community contributes to everyone's health.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate community members and businesses on how to improve air quality, promote cleaner alternatives, and ensure compliance efforts are transparent and consistent for citizens.• Adapt and mitigate for climate change impacts through environmental policies and efforts to reduce climate changing emissions.• Continue to participate in newly adopted regional plan and climate change strategy with Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater.• Focus on clean water education and promotion to protect and restore drinking and groundwater quality; monitor and maintain storm and surface water quality so streams, lakes, and water sources maintain quality ecosystems; and improve septic systems so waste water is properly treated and cleaned for re-use or discharge.• Increase waste diversion rates through reduce/reuse/recycle education and outreach efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staffing to align and communicate.• Sustainable funding to monitor water quality and identify and respond to sources of pollution.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a single, unified common-sense voice from all County departments on compliance issues.• Strengthen sustainable development policies (see Initiative 8).• Explore implementation of a tiered water pricing structure.• Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, achieve a stable climate, and be resilient in the face of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional tools needed to improve data and analytic capacity.



INITIATIVE 10.

Ensure safe and equitable access to the legal system, its programs, and services.

COUNTY ROLE

The Courts and provisions of the Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defender, and County Clerk's Office are Mandatory Services of the County, while the provision of Pretrial Services and probation are essential support services.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Our legal system values collaboration, prevention, fairness, timeliness, responsiveness, professionalism, innovation, and integration. Access to the legal system and functions provided by these services should be safe, equitable, and effective. All people will be respected and honored by having an opportunity to have their legal rights addressed through due process.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strive to meet current workload demands on the legal system.• Strengthen our ability to provide services in multiple languages or via interpretation.• Leverage technology to provide efficient, effective, and timely services.• Plan for and conduct public outreach related to the need for a new courthouse facility to protect the safety of all and support efficient and accessible operations.• Enable parties to navigate family civil and law cases (related to Initiative 3).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting immediate law and justice demands on the court system may require increased staff capacity.• Resources will be necessary to provide self-help centers, plain language online forms and information, and various collaborative approaches.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in the County's facility improvement efforts and promote the importance of easy access to the courts and legal system's programs and services.• Continue to ensure equality in the court system through increased access to justice, validated risk and needs assessments, improvement in jury pool representation, conducting educational programs, and promoting the availability of legal representation for the poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A voter-approved mechanism will be necessary to support desired additional resources.

INITIATIVE 11.

Design and deliver innovative services through continued justice system reform to maximize community safety, rehabilitation, accountability, and cost effectiveness.

COUNTY ROLE

While Thurston County is mandated to provide courts and related services, it is also committed to pursuing innovative justice initiatives designed to keep individuals out of the justice system and to supporting the success of individuals seeking stabilize their lives in the community.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

People are safe where-ever they live, work, and play in Thurston County; individuals are held accountable for criminal conduct; and legal rights and due process for all people are respected and honored.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to develop and implement system best practices and model programs including: First Look, Felony Leadership Improvement Project (FLIP), the Trueblood grant (to divert certain incarcerated populations to be released from the jail during the pendency of their criminal case), and Triage (the County's mental health facility).• Focus jail resources on higher risk populations by conducting a full pretrial screening on all individuals arrested prior to their preliminary hearing, including utilization of a validated risk assessment tool.• Increase collaboration between departments and offices for prevention and diversion.• Partner with the business community on potential job programs.• Strengthen the communication between the partners for prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional resources will be necessary to implement justice reform initiatives.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand our innovative services by providing additional supports for individuals seeking to reenter society after incarceration.• Seek to decrease number of people entering the justice system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional funding would be needed to support program expansions.

INITIATIVE 12.

Enhance effective and timely law enforcement responses to protect public safety.



COUNTY ROLE

The provision of law enforcement services through the Sheriff's Office and county jail is a Mandatory Service.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

People are safe wherever they live, work, visit, and play in Thurston County.

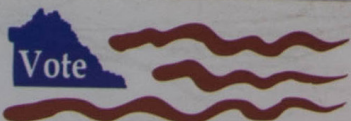
STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the training and tools available for staff to meet current challenges, such as engaging with homeless and mentally ill populations, including Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion and Sequential Intercept Model (SIMS).• Improve response times to Priority 1 and Priority 2 calls for service by adjusting the Police Allocation Model and adding staff capacity.• Start expansion of the Thurston County jail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional officers are needed to meet desired response times for Priority 1 and 2 calls.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen our ability to fight career criminals through expanded use of technology and crime analysts.• Increase resources for treating, housing, and interacting with mentally ill individuals, seeking to keep them out of the criminal justice system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A voter-approved mechanism will be necessary to provide desired additional services and resources.

**Official
Ballot
Drop Box**

**This Box will be open 20
days prior to an
election. At this time
there is not an election
in this area.**

**WARNING: Tampering
with this box is a crime.**



Thurston County Elections

**Questions? Comments? Concerns? Contact us
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW, Olympia
(360) 786-5408**

www.thurstonvotes.org

INITIATIVE 13.

Increase opportunities for informed and effective civic engagement.



COUNTY ROLE

The provision of secure and fair elections is a Mandatory Service. Engagement with citizens is an essential support service that supports the democratic process.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

Thurston County residents and business owners have great confidence in their county government security of their elections. They feel capable of staying abreast of and contributing to elections and current civic conversations.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance mapping tools and accuracy for re-precincting of voters.• Identify and retain cybersecurity resources to ensure election security.• Create a communications plan that addresses how to describe the role of county government, the good work the County is doing, and budget constraints.• Expand public engagement with the use of online forums.• Modernize the usability, accessibility, and customer centered design of the Thurston County website.• Re-energize County boards and commissions.• Continue to advance the County's desire to be a performance-driven organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional resources are desired to support enhanced community engagement.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create an open data platform that makes the County's processes and data available to the public.• Create a centrally located and secure election and ballot processing center to achieve efficiencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investment will be required for desired improvements to web- and facility-based services.

INITIATIVE 14.

Strengthen sound financial management practices.



COUNTY ROLE

The effective management of county funding, including property assessment and tax collection, is an essential support service that enables the County to provide the Mandatory Services listed throughout this document.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

The County has a strong culture focused on fiscal responsibility and manages resources to ensure a sustainable revenue and expenditure outlook.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set standards for the regular monitoring and evaluation of all funds.• Establish a procedure for reviewing, evaluating, and updating policies and ordinances.• Replace the County's outdated and insufficient Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to better support essential support services such as accounting, budgeting, contract management, and human resources management.• Build Lean process improvement methodology capability to make more effective and efficient use of limited resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant funding will be required for ERP system replacement.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a centralized procurement office to make County purchasing activities more efficient and cost-effective, to better leverage County spending in the marketplace, and to achieve greater consistency and compliance with procurement laws and standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation of a centralized procurement office will require short-term investment, with long-term savings.

INITIATIVE 15.

Diversify County revenue sources to guard against economic cycles.

COUNTY ROLE


The County is currently highly dependent on sales and property tax revenues. Diversifying this revenue base will help the County provide Mandatory Services during economic downturns, when these funding sources are particularly hard hit.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

The County has a robust budget stabilization fund in place to ensure the steady and sustainable provision of Mandatory Services in any budgetary environment, including future economic downturns.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begin offering passport services.• Establish a policy to guide development of a fiscal stabilization fund.• Continue to pursue and secure grant funding.• Explore voter approved initiatives to raise revenue.• Advocate for the funding of state and federal mandates that are currently unfunded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current resource levels are sufficient to pursue the identified short-term strategies.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a sustainable funding base to support Mandatory, desired, and essential support services.• Continue to grow the fiscal stabilization fund established in the short-term.• Explore additional opportunities to provide direct services that meet resident needs and generate County revenues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant funding and legislative changes granting counties more flexibility will be required for the sustainable provision of county services.• Significant resources will need to be set aside for a fiscal stabilization fund.

A photograph of a brick wall with large white letters spelling "THURSTON COUNTY COURT" and "2000" below it. The wall is in front of a dense line of evergreen trees. In the foreground, there is a thick layer of green and yellowing ivy. A brick building is partially visible through the trees in the background.

THURSTON COUNTY COURT
2000

INITIATIVE 16.

Provide safe, secure, accessible, and functional facilities to effectively house County services and the associated workforce.

COUNTY ROLE

The provision of safe, secure, accessible, and functional facilities is an essential support service required to effectively serve customers and perform all functions the County is responsible to provide.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

County facilities are safe, comfortable, and efficient for all those who enter, including customers and County staff.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the security of existing County facilities to ensure a safe environment for employees and customers.• Create a plan for the sustainable maintenance and replacement of County facilities.<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Seek to consolidate most County offices located in the existing Courthouse campus into a new Civic Center/Courthouse building.» Assess other County facilities to determine gaps and establish plans to address them accordingly.» Design work space to align with current business needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All items listed to the left will require additional resources.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish and implement a facilities improvement and funding plan to address identified facility needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant capital investments will be needed to achieve our desired future state for County facilities. This will require voter-approved funding.

INITIATIVE 17.

Make strategic investments in information technology systems and infrastructure.



COUNTY ROLE

Information technology is an essential support service that enables the County to function and operate effectively. Investments in IT can result in longer-term gains in effectiveness and efficiency.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

County information technology systems and infrastructure are up-to-date and provide the data and tools necessary to efficiently and securely support the County's work.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create an independent IT Department and continue work of the IT Strategic Plan, including development of a comprehensive Information Technology Plan.• Update aging IT platforms and the County's ability to protect its IT systems against security threats through large IT applications replacement projects (continues into medium-term).• Make a one-time adjustment to align the Assessor parcel layer to spatially accurate aerial images, and then add stronger, more frequent aerial photography.• Increase electronic and mobile tech services for the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant resources will be needed to complete the parcel layer adjustments.
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue implementation of large IT applications replacement projects (begins in short-term).• Continue to update parcel layer imagery more frequently.• Ensure technology security is adaptive to potential new threats and concerns that may arise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant funding will be needed to support necessary IT upgrades.

INITIATIVE 18.

Develop, hire, and retain a quality, stable, diverse, and thriving workforce.



COUNTY ROLE

The ability of the County to function is highly dependent on the quality of its people. Recruiting, retaining, and developing a quality county workforce is an essential support service.

DESIRED FUTURE STATE

The County workforce is well-trained, highly effective, reflects the diversity of the community it serves, and is focused on providing the best quality services for county stakeholders.

STRATEGIES

Short-Term Strategies for 2019/2020	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a comprehensive review of all job classifications and perform a benchmarking analysis of peer employers in the region to ensure we maintain competitive classification, salary, and benefits programs.• Develop a new in-training program to help develop and grow our staff; develop programs to develop staff and increase cross-training and/or lateral movement.• Conduct deliberate succession planning to address pending retirements.• Update the County's personnel policies.• Use employee surveys and focus groups to gather input and foster a positive workplace culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional staff capacity will be needed at the HR Analyst level to support new program development while the County also implements a new Enterprise Resource Program (ERP).
Longer-Term Strategies	Resources Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More data-driven decision making regarding the county workforce, which will be possible with the new ERP system called for in Initiative 15.• Automate on-boarding, evaluations, and feedback.• Develop an internship program to aid in the recruitment of young people early in their careers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional funding will be needed to support program expansions.

IMPLEMENTATION

This plan articulates a vision for Thurston County's desired future. Pursuit of this vision must be advanced year to year and budget cycle to budget cycle using the county's limited resources to address long-term aspirations as well as emergent priorities. With each two-year budget cycle, the County will update its understanding of what is most important to residents and update the Priorities and Initiatives contained in this document. The updated plan will guide budget development, office and department workplans, ongoing coordination across the county organization, and communication of progress with the public.

The table below identifies **2019/2020 Priorities** and **Champions**, who will serve as a point of contact for each Initiative. Champions will be supported by the efforts and activities of offices and departments serving as **Contributors**. Together, Champions, Contributors, and the County overall will report on **Indicators of Success** as markers on the way to realizing the County's desired future.

Initiative	Champion(s)	Contributors	Indicators of Success
1. Improve health outcomes for all.	Public Health and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil and Juvenile Courts • Community Planning and Economic Development • Sheriff's Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved county health rankings • Reduced Adverse childhood experiences • Reduced sexually transmitted diseases • Improved high school graduation rates • Reduced tobacco and vaping use • Reduced obesity
2. Improve community health, wellness, and safety.*	Public Health and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil and Juvenile Courts • Sheriff's Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced incidents of domestic violence • Others to be determined
3. Collaborate with community partners to reduce homelessness and implement Thurston Thrives housing strategies.*	Public Health and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of County Commissioners • Other County departments, including Community Planning and Economic Development • Partners, such as Thurston County Continuum of Care, Thurston Thrives, and other municipalities, nonprofits, healthcare facilities, and community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of people staying in housing for 6 months or longer • Increased number of exits from homelessness to stable housing • Decreased number of people returning to homelessness • Decreased number of unsheltered homeless people

* = Prioritized for 2019/2020 based on input from the community and Executive Team and Deputies.

Initiative	Champion(s)	Contributors	Indicators of Success
4. Strengthen emergency management planning and community disaster preparedness.	Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health and Social Services Leaders in all departments and offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments or offices with completed Continuity of Operations Plans in place Public notification sign-up rate
5. Strengthen emergency medical services provided county-wide by Medic One and area hospitals.	Emergency Services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of 911 emergency medical calls CPR survival rate
6. Proactively shape a strong, diverse economy that provides equitable access to opportunity.*	Community Planning and Economic Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic growth rate Reduced crime and homelessness
7. Balance development with the preservation of the County's rural character, natural areas and open spaces.*	Community Planning and Economic Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accomplishment of County planning and development goals balancing preservation of open space and development
8. Support robust and well-maintained infrastructure systems for a thriving community.	Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Planning and Economic Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share of roads in good and fair condition

* = Prioritized for 2019/2020 based on input from the community and Executive Team and Deputies.

Initiative	Champion(s)	Contributors	Indicators of Success
9. Support environmental health and climate stabilization.	Public Health and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Planning and Economic Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air quality levels Reduced greenhouse gas emissions Group B water systems in compliance Jurisdictions meeting stormwater standards Participation in education sessions Acres of open shellfish harvesting areas Septic system with current inspections Water bodies in compliance with water quality standards Diversion rate Participation in waste reduction programs Number of waste facilities in compliance
10. Ensure safe and equitable access to the legal system, its programs, and services.*	District and Superior Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clerk's Office Prosecuting Attorney's Office Public Defender's Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive trends in public trust and confidence Timely access to court hearings
11. Design and deliver innovative services through continued justice system reform to maximize community safety, rehabilitation, accountability, and cost effectiveness.*	Prosecuting Attorney's Office and Public Defender's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clerk's Office District and Superior Courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced disproportionality Reduced recidivism
12. Enhance effective and timely law enforcement responses to protect public safety.*	Sheriff's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prosecutor's Office Public Health and Social Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced P1 and P2 response times Improved crime rates

* = Prioritized for 2019/2020 based on input from the community and Executive Team and Deputies.

Initiative	Champion(s)	Contributors	Indicators of Success
13. Increase opportunities for informed and effective civic engagement.	Auditor's Office and County Manager's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders in all departments and offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in elections • Participation in County education and engagement opportunities
14. Strengthen sound financial management practices.*	Financial Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders in all departments and offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased productivity of County resources • Sustainable revenue and expenditure outlook
15. Diversify County revenue sources to guard against economic cycles.*	Financial Management Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable and adequate funding for Mandatory Services • Increased number of revenue sources • Balance in budget stabilization fund • Legislation to have the state share in the delivery of mandated services
16. Provide safe, secure, accessible, and functional facilities to effectively house County services and the associated workforce.	Central Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer facility security incidents • Increased investments in preventative maintenance and decreased emergency repairs • Progress towards desired County facilities
17. Make strategic investments in information technology systems and infrastructure.	Central Services <i>(to transition to independent IT Department when established)</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful replacement of aging IT systems • Greater consistency and speed in rolling-out updated technology
18. Develop, hire, and retain a quality, stable, diverse, and thriving workforce.	Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders in all departments and offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate employee turnover rate • High employee satisfaction

* = Prioritized for 2019/2020 based on input from the community and Executive Team and Deputies.

[page intentionally left blank]



