



King County

Kathy Lambert

Councilmember, District 3

Metropolitan King County Council

September 21, 2021

King County Districting Committee
Chair Anne Schindler
516 3rd Ave #1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Chair Schindler,

The process of redistricting our county council boundaries every 10 years is not an easy task. The resulting boundaries have significant consequences for residents' representation at their local and regional government. Thank you for your time and commitment to an open process with public engagement and diverse constituent input. On your schedule, I see 21 completed listening sessions throughout the summer where you heard people from so many walks of life, ethnic groups, and geographic areas share their thoughts about what makes their communities unique. I appreciate your work towards keeping these communities together as much as possible and not divided over multiple districts. Boundaries created in a collaborative manner like this help us as elected officials provide fair and accurate representation for our constituents.

State law provides a strong foundation for the redistricting process. In addition to the legal requirements, there are a few other items you could consider to help create fair and equitable representation for communities across the county.

First, please consider that residents of unincorporated King County often share similar interests and concerns as neighboring municipalities. For example, the residents of the Sammamish Valley adjacent to the city of Woodinville, share similar community values and interests as residents of Woodinville. Yet the two areas are served by three different council members. These adjacent areas, and other areas like it, would be best served by a single council representative.

Additionally, when a municipality is divided between multiple elected officials it becomes more complicated to represent the residents of that jurisdiction. I understand that it is impossible for some larger cities to be served by a single council member, but residents of these cities would greatly benefit from consolidating their council representation into the least number of council members feasible.

When it is necessary to divide a jurisdiction please strive to do so in a way that fosters the most meaningful environment for representation. For example, to the greatest extent possible, divide a jurisdiction as equally as possible between the council districts. On occasion, past redistricting efforts have left a handful of precincts to one council member while the rest of the city is served

by a different member. This practice can unintentionally create a scenario in which residents of these few precincts feel left out from other important conversations that impact their community.

Finally, I understand that District 3 currently needs to contract by 8,717 residents. There are several strategies you could employ to meet this target. One I have already mentioned, residents of unincorporated King County outside of Woodinville would greatly benefit from having the same representative as residents of Woodinville.

Issaquah has been identified as a regional growth center by Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and is planned to be a part of the East Link Light Rail Line. As these changes come to fruition, Issaquah and Bellevue will be even more similarly situated with their community interests. It may be worth exploring if Issaquah residents have community interests that would benefit from being in the same council district(s) as Bellevue.

If these changes were adopted, and additional balancing is necessary, the committee could explore adding additional Redmond residents. Current District 3 boundaries could more closely follow natural features from Lake Sammamish, Marymoor Park, municipal boundaries, topography (like Education Hill), and major roadways.

Thank you for your dedication to fair and equitable representation for King County residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Lambert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Lambert
King County Council
District 3

CC:
Patrick Hamacher
Erin Arya