



## King County Executive News

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Feb. 8, 2011

### King County exploring cost-neutral solutions for needed replacement of Youth Services Center

#### Asking private developers to offer ideas for new Alder facility

*This is a joint press release.*

King County Executive Dow Constantine and Metropolitan King County Councilmember Bob Ferguson called today for a new approach in the on-going effort to replace the dilapidated Youth Services Center.

The County Facilities Management Division is scheduled next month to issue a Request for Qualifications/Concepts, inviting ideas from private developers for creative, cost-neutral solutions for a new juvenile justice facility.

"All options must be on the table to better serve the justice needs of children and families in King County," said Councilmember Bob Ferguson, Chair of the Law, Justice, Health and Human Services Committee. "The state of the current facility is unacceptable, and I will continue to push options until we find a solution. For example, surplus County property could be traded with an interested developer in exchange for a replacement facility."

The Youth Services Center, located in Seattle on 12th and Alder, provides juvenile justice services for all of King County and family support for those navigating the legal system.

"Last year we worked with the community to explore options for replacement of the Youth Services Center and the surrounding county-owned site. But with no revenues for the project, we have to get creative," said King County Executive Dow Constantine. "We're asking the development community to come to us with ideas we might not have recognized before. I hope their suggestions will help us find a way to address juvenile justice needs while fulfilling the community's vision."

The new concept and RFQ process will be discussed at today's Law, Justice, Health and Human Services Committee as part of a briefing on the court's operations by Superior Court Presiding Judge Richard McDermott.

"The youth and families we serve need a facility that provides safety, support and proper access to the justice system," said Judge Richard McDermott, Presiding Judge of the King County Superior Court. "The Court is excited and enthusiastic to be actively involved with the Executive and the Council in planning to meet the needs of our population."

A new Youth Services Center was identified in 2008 as King County's highest priority capital project. The current facility lacks adequate space for attorneys and caseworkers to meet privately with clients and poses a number of potential safety and health concerns.

The facility has significant maintenance needs, with many major building systems beyond the end of their useful life. Water leakage, problems with the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, and elevator malfunctions plague the facility on a regular basis. Since 2006, the County has spent millions addressing ongoing mold and moisture problems lingering from flood damage that occurred during an unprecedented rain storm in 2006.

Most recently, court operations at the facility were suspended for two days last October when a water main broke outside of the Alder Building. During the 2010 facility redesign process, PCBs were detected in the exterior window caulking of the Alder Building, which has required the relocation of employees and court services while the County removes the hazardous materials.

To date, proposals to fund replacement of the Youth Services Center have been unsuccessful. Last year, Ferguson sponsored an amendment, supported by the Executive, to include financing for the facility replacement in the unsuccessful King County Proposition 1--the criminal justice sales tax.

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