

# WORKPLAN

*Adopted by the Task Force on 16 May 2005*

## ***TASK FORCE'S PURPOSES:***

1. Recommend to the King County Executive short- and long-term strategies to improve the County's elections processes.
2. Help restore public confidence and trust in the County's elections system.
3. Produce a set of recommendations that could help build a foundation for King County to have a model election system in the country.

## ***TASK FORCE MEMBERS' INTERESTS:***

1. Restore integrity to the elections process by ensuring that every valid vote counts.
2. Restore public confidence and trust in the elections process.
3. Provide an independent voice in assessing and recommending changes to King County's election processes.
4. Focus on the most important and vital issues to make a meaningful, significant and enduring contribution to election reform in King County and public discourse about it.
5. Learn from the experiences and practices of other similar jurisdictions around the State and nation so that we incorporate best practices into our elections system.
6. Ensure a healthy, robust discussion and debate among the Task Force members that produces recommendations that are more creative than any one of us could have developed.
7. Conduct an open, transparent process that helps to begin healing divisions within the community and restoring the public's faith in the franchise of voting.
8. Coordinate with the work of the County Council-appointed auditor and Citizens' Election Oversight Committee (CEOC), and the County's Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division to ensure that all issues, interests, concerns and needs related to our system of elections are addressed.
9. Work with King County to ensure that sufficient resources are provided so that the County and its citizens get the kind of elections they want and expect.

## ***SCOPE OF ISSUES:***

### **POLICY**

**The external environment in which the Elections Division operates and must respond to in order to succeed.**

- interpretation, impacts and implementation of federal and state policies and laws
- interpretation, impacts and implementation of King County policies, laws, rules and procedures
- lessons learned from other jurisdictions in Washington State and across the nation
- reforms under consideration and/or being implemented at the State and County levels
- strategies for adopting and implementing the Task Force's recommendations

### **MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND CONTROLS**

**The internal environment which characterizes the Elections Division and for which the division is responsible and accountable, including both "technical" and "social" factors.**

- vision, mission and goals
- organizational culture
- decision-making structure and implementation
- leadership of the Elections Division
- staff expertise, skills and customer service
- allocation of resources
- managing, motivating and maintaining volunteers

### **OPERATIONS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**The technical operations of the elections system in King County and the capacity of the Elections Division to operate successfully.**

- technical practices and procedures of conducting elections in King County
- facilities and technology
- quality control and performance improvement to ensure accurate implementation
- performance measurements to ensure accountability and guide revisions

### **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

**The relationship of the Elections Division with the public and other key stakeholders, and the role of the Independent Task Force on Elections in restoring public confidence and trust in the elections processes.**

- restoring public trust in King county's elections process, including key messages, communications and education
- establishing credibility of the Independent Task Force on Elections, including key messages, communications strategies and methods, and education
- involving key stakeholders in the Task Force's work
- involving key stakeholders in strengthening the elections process

**APPROACH TO ADDRESSING THE ISSUES — THE PHASES OF THE PROCESS:**

**1. Fact-finding**

- Through a series of interviews with experts and KC elections staff and in the first two public Task Force meetings, identify and discuss problems related to King County's elections process, and reach consensus among Task Force members on which issues and problems the Task Force will address.
- *Completion date: 3 June 2005 (the Task Force's second meeting)*

**2. Analyze Gaps**

- Identify and analyze the gaps between what is expected and what is being delivered. What are the expectations of the public, elected officials and other key stakeholders for the conduct of elections in King County? What are the current results? What are the gaps between those expectations and results? What factors are contributing to the gaps?
- *Completion date: 17 June 2005 (the Task Force's third meeting)*

**3. Develop and Assess Alternatives**

- Identify, discuss and analyze various election models, including feasibility, desirability and trade-offs, for achieving the interests of the public and other key stakeholders in the conduct of elections in King County.
- *Completion date: 30 June 2005 (the Task Force's fourth meeting)*

**4. Agree on Recommendations**

- Reach agreement on recommendations to propose to the King County Executive for restoring integrity in the County's elections process and rebuilding public confidence in it.
- *Completion date: 15 July 2005 (the Task Force's fifth meeting)*

**5. Finalize and Submit Report**

- Reach agreement on the content of a final report to the King County Executive which includes the Task Force's recommendations. Submit that report to the Executive.
- *Completion date: 29 July 2005 (the Task Force's sixth and final meeting)*