

INVERS



Moving **beyond** fixed hours and key boxes

How King County Modernized Its Motor Pool and Enabled 24/7 Vehicle Access

King County Fleet Services – Seattle, Washington
in partnership with WeGo





King County’s central motor pool serves over 800 of its 18,000 employees with a shared fleet of just 30 vehicles. This remarkable efficiency didn’t happen by chance; it’s the product of nearly two decades of smart modernization and a bold commitment to rethinking how government fleets operate.

A motor pool that runs without anyone running it

There was a time when getting a county vehicle meant planning your day around a garage schedule. The downtown Seattle office opened at 7:00 a.m., closed for lunch, and shut down at 3:30 p.m. A staff member ran the key wall. Employees who needed a vehicle outside those hours had no recourse. During peak times, lineups were routine.

For a county covering nearly 2,300 square miles, the limitations were real. Field staff couldn’t pick up vehicles early enough to reach remote sites. Evening workers had no after-hours option. Every access issue, every key problem, every scheduling conflict routed through one person at one desk.



We could only issue motor pool vehicles from one garage, that forced people to come into the downtown core in Seattle just to pick one up.

~ Chauntelle Hellner
Director of Fleet Services, King County

As demand grew and county operations expanded, the model began to actively limit what the program could deliver.

A technology relationship that grew with the fleet

King County’s path to automation didn’t begin with a sweeping overhaul. It started with a key box.

In 2007, the county adopted the INVERS KeyManager, electronic lockboxes that replaced the staffed key wall. Employees retrieved vehicle keys by entering an access code. After-hours pickups became possible.

For a few years, it worked. But the system had its ceiling. Access codes ended up on sticky notes or buried in email threads. Network connectivity issues, particularly in covered parkades, occasionally knocked a box offline, forcing vehicles back to the main garage. The KeyManager did what the technology of its era could do.

By June 2011, King County introduced the INVERS iBoxx, a standalone system that connected directly to the vehicle to enable keyless access, vehicle tracking, and monitoring. Where the KeyManager required physical infrastructure at each location, the iBoxx didn’t, enabling the fleet to be extended to remote offices and off-site locations. A pilot of nine vehicles grew to over 20.

The next step came when INVERS introduced the CloudBoxx, a hardware platform that enabled fully keyless, app-based vehicle sharing. When King County was presented with the option to transition in 2022, Chauntelle’s team saw it as an opportunity to move beyond keys entirely. "We saw it as a chance to take the next step."



800+

county employees served



30

shared vehicles across 5 locations



24/7

keyless vehicle access



95%

user satisfaction rate

Modernizing the fleet

Working with INVERS hardware and WeGo's reservation platform, King County deployed a fully automated, app-based motor pool. Employees reserve vehicles through the WeGo app, walk to the car, and unlock it via Bluetooth. No key box, no access code, no staff involvement at any point in the process.

Peter de Jong, Managing Director at WeGo, explains that reliability, not just convenience, was the design priority. The INVERS hardware connects directly to the vehicle's central locking system and immobilizer. A car cannot be driven without an active reservation, adding a layer of theft protection built into the workflow.

Bluetooth access operates locally between the driver's phone and the in-vehicle hardware, eliminating one of the most common failure points in keyless fleet systems.

"The lock/unlock works with Bluetooth, locally from phone to hardware in the car," Peter said. "That means it always works, even in underground parking with no cellular reception."

The same hardware handles GPS positioning, eliminating the need for separate tracking devices. Location, usage, and trip data are all visible in a single dashboard. Fleet administrators can assist users or adjust reservations remotely, from a smartphone.



A reservation system must be robust and reliable, else it will not be trusted by drivers. User satisfaction and usage numbers tell us that the trust was achieved.

~ Peter de Jong
Managing Director, WeGo

What changed on the ground



Access hours

The most immediate change: time restrictions disappeared. County employees can now reserve and access vehicles at any hour, every day of the week. Field staff can pick up vehicles before dawn. Late-shift workers can return or retrieve a car without waiting for office hours.

"That has been a huge benefit to the overall experience of our user base," Chauntelle said.



Location expansion

With access no longer tied to staffed locations, King County expanded from one downtown garage to five county sites. Fleet repositioning now happens the same day, driven by real utilization data.





Key logistics

Under the KeyManager system, closing a reservation required the user to remember their access code. Without it, the vehicle sat in limbo: physically in the lot, unavailable to anyone else, still accumulating rental time. Drop boxes offered a workaround, but Chauntelle's team processed those returns manually, roughly three times a week.

The CloudBoxx system eliminated that friction entirely. Keys stay in the glove box. There is no distribution process, no drop box to check, no code management.



Staff capacity

The administrator who once spent significant portions of the day managing key logistics now conducts vehicle checks, handles customer support from a smartphone, and responds to user issues in the field. The job didn't disappear; it changed, freeing capacity for better use.



When two seven-passenger vans sat underused at one site, our team moved them around the same day. It's super seamless. We look at the utilization and adjust based on what we think our customers need.

~ Chauntelle Hellner
Director of Fleet Services, King County

Getting 800 people to trust a new system

The county's team paid as much attention to change management as to the technology itself. They developed a multi-format training program, recognizing that users have different learning styles and that reluctance to change is normal.

Virtual training sessions became the source material for on-demand video modules built into King County's HR learning system, with completion tracked. In-vehicle QR codes, printed user guides, and pamphlets covered users who needed quick reference support at the car. "The flexibility in that training was super important for our customers," Chauntelle said.

Many users arrived skeptical, but the system proved easier than most users expected. Five months after launch, a user satisfaction survey returned a 95% positive response rate. A follow-up survey in 2025 is tracking similarly.

Today, nearly all 800 users access vehicles through the mobile app. Two users access vehicles via key fob through the desktop portal, an accommodation that the system handles without special configuration.

Building toward a broader fleet transformation

The central motor pool is one piece of a larger picture. King County also operates dozens of smaller vehicle pools assigned to individual agencies, each managed separately, each carrying its own overhead and vehicles that often sit idle more than they're used.

Chauntelle's team is now using telematics data to map usage patterns across those pools, identify consolidation opportunities, and build the business case for expanding the shared, keyless model where the numbers support it.

The opportunity, Chauntelle said, is still ahead.

King County started with a key wall. Then a key box. Now, a system that runs without keys at all. The direction has been consistent throughout. The pace is picking up.



Scan to read King County's success story online.