

NEW: Unreleased County Records Expose Major Problems at Polyclinic Site

- *Previously undisclosed report reveals poor building conditions and escalating costs*
- *Polyclinic's longtime facility director says County is overpaying for an unsafe, oversized building that could drain funds from other promised crisis centers*

SEATTLE (October 6, 2025) — Newly obtained public records show the former Polyclinic building at 1145 Broadway, the site King County plans to buy for its new Crisis Care Center, is in serious disrepair, is unsafe, and may require tens of millions of dollars in fixes before opening.

This report, never disclosed to the public, reveals major building failures and hidden risks, raising serious questions about King County's Department of Community & Human Services (DCHS) selection of the building and oversight of the Crisis Care Center program.

The Polyclinic's former Facilities Director — who managed the 1145 Broadway building for more than a decade and advises on healthcare real estate — shares the parts of the campus is “obsolete,” and the purchase is “too large” and “too costly” for a crisis clinic. He warns it will consume a disproportionate share of capital funds,” threatening the financial viability of other voter-approved centers across King County.

The March 2025 Property Condition Report (PCR), prepared during the closed-door purchase process, describes the sprawling 115,000-square-foot facility as in “poor condition.” It notes building systems have “exceeded their design life expectancy” and warns of “hidden conditions.” The report concludes maintenance will be costly and that “wide-scale replacement” may be needed instead of incremental repairs.

This report was released publicly for the first time after community disclosure requests. Residents and real estate experts estimate the Polyclinic may need up to \$80 million in upgrades to open. DCHS has yet to release a full accounting of required repairs, leaving the project's true cost, again, unclear.

What the PCR Found

- Active roof leaks throughout the building and evidence of water inside walls.
- Visible mold and excessive moisture throughout interior spaces.
- Cracked masonry and signs of structural distress.
- Aging HVAC systems, windows, and building components at or beyond useful life.
- ADA accessibility issues requiring full upgrades.
- Significant deferred maintenance and systems that have outlived their design life.

What's Still Unknown

The report also flagged multiple serious issues that have not yet been evaluated:

- Full extent of water damage and mold hidden within walls.
- Possible presence of asbestos and hazardous materials, common in 1960s.
- Seismic assessment or retrofit planning, despite the building's location in a moderate-to-high earthquake zone and City code requiring retrofit for this type of use.
- Analysis confirming whether the structure meets life-safety standards for a 24/7 crisis facility.
- County's full accounting for true cost to get building operational.

This startling discovering comes during a time when DCHS faces ongoing criticism for its lack of transparency and failure to safely oversee \$1.8 billion in public funds, according to the King County Auditor's report earlier this year.

Independent Analysis Confirms Higher Costs and Risks

Randal F. Brand, RA, MBA — an independent expert with 40+ years in healthcare facility design and operations and former facilities director of the 1145 Broadway Polyclinic — reviewed the PCR. His findings confirm many deficiencies in the report and identify new risks, including structural, mechanical, and environmental issues that make the building expensive to repair and hard to modernize.

"More than half of the Polyclinic is functionally obsolete, structurally deficient, and prohibitively expensive rehabilitate," said Randal F. Brand, MBA, RA, former Director of Facilities and Support Services for The Polyclinic. "I managed this building for a decade and know it inside and out. Even at the market's peak, developers were only willing to pay in the range of low to mid \$20 million for the site. The County's plan to spend \$41 million is excessive in cost as well as in size as compared to the program needs for a Crisis Care Center and RTF. Together, these factors represent millions in avoidable spending and a poor use of taxpayer funds."

Given his decades of experience managing and accessing healthcare facilities, including the one being considered by the County, he further warned these issues could drive costs far beyond what the County has acknowledged, jeopardizing funding for the other crisis centers voters were promised.

Community Reaction

Residents say the lack of transparency follows a troubling pattern in how this project has been handled.

“Every week we learn something new that should’ve been disclosed months ago,” said Erin Reinhart, a First Hill resident. “No one should have to play detective to see if taxpayer money is being spent wisely. Why wasn’t this report included with the legislative package? Have Councilmembers even seen it? We voted for care and compassion, not a fixer-upper and a middleman profiting from the deal.”

Russell Normann a long-time Capitol Hill business owner said, “It’s as if the County picked the first house on the block, skipped the home inspection, and is now surprised it needs a considerable rebuild and major repairs.”

Community stakeholders are urging the King County Council to pause the project by voting no on funding for the Polyclinic purchase and to delay the Tuesday, October 7 vote for at least 90 days. They are calling for full fiscal due diligence, a public review of costs and safety risks, and evaluation of alternative sites to ensure accountability and that levy funds are used to help people — not wasted on an oversized, outdated property.

About the Coalition:

We are an informal group of residents, workers, schools, businesses, property owners, and nonprofits from Capitol Hill and First Hill. With no formal membership or single leader, we collaborate to ensure our different voices are heard. We support crisis care as an essential service — but it must be done responsibly, transparently, and with real community engagement. Our goal is to ensure King County and City leadership deliver a plan that is financially sound, publicly accountable, and safe for patients, students, nearby vulnerable populations, and the broader community.