

June 25, 2026

**OFFICE OF THE HEARING EXAMINER
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE KING COUNTY COUNCIL ON
PETITION FOR ROAD VACATION**

SUBJECT: Department of Local Services file no. **V-2776**
Proposed ordinance no. **2026-0120**

ALEXIS AND DEVIN JONES AND GARTH COOK

Road Vacation Petition

Location: County Road No. 393/SJ Twiss Rd, Enumclaw

Petitioner: **Garth Cook**
1897 Pierce St
Daniel Island, SC 29492
Email: granotco@outlook.com

Petitioners: **Devin and Alexis Jones**
26306 203rd Ave SE
Covington, WA 98042
Telephone: (509) 460-1704
Email: alexis.jones@goblusky.com; devin.g.jones.22@gmail.com

King County: Department of Local Services
represented by **John Bryan**
919 SW Grady Way Suite 300
Renton, WA 98057
Telephone: (206) 477-2594
Email: jobryan@kingcounty.gov

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Overview

1. Alexis and Devin Jones and Garth Cook petition the County to vacate an approximately 21,900 square-foot area of public right-of-way at County Road No. 393/SJ Twiss Rd, Enumclaw. The Department of Local Services, Road Services Division (Roads), recommends vacation and waiver of compensation.
2. On June 17, 2026, we conducted a remote public hearing on behalf of the King County Council. We left the record open for Mr. Cook to submit additional information regarding the proposed vacation's impact on his access easement, as well as to enable Roads to correct omissions in the previously submitted compensation estimates. We closed the hearing record on June 18, 2026.
3. After hearing the witnesses' testimony, reviewing the exhibits admitted into evidence, considering the parties' arguments, and applying the relevant law, **we recommend that Council grant the road vacation petition without compensation from the Petitioners.**

Background

4. Chapter 36.87 RCW sets the legal framework for county road vacations, augmented by Ch. 14.40 KCC which establishes the road vacation procedures in King County. To vacate a county road, state law requires factual findings that: (1) the road is useless to the county road system, and (2) the public will be benefited by the vacation. If those two conditions are met, then the Council has the discretion to vacate the road.
5. If the Council concludes that vacation of the right-of-way is warranted, State law allows the Council to require those benefiting from the vacation to compensate the county, up to the appraised value of the vacated road. The Council may reduce the compensation amount to account for the value of the transfer of liability or risk, the increased value to the public in property taxes, the avoided costs for management or maintenance, and any limits on development or future public benefit.
6. The legal description of the King County property proposed to be vacated is:

That portion of King County Road No. 393 lying within King County Testamentary Lot Division No. L11M0033 as recorded under King County Recording Number 20120411900001;

AND

That portion of King County Road No. 393 lying within the North 157 feet of the South 457 feet of the Southwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 18, Township 20 North, Range 7 East, W.M.

Ex. D10.

7. Legal notice for the public hearing was provided on May 22, 2026, and published in accordance with requirements of RCW 36.87.060. Exs. D20-D21.

Is Vacation Warranted?

8. A petitioner has the burden to show that the “road is [1] useless as part of the county road system and [2] that the public will be benefitted by its vacation and abandonment.” RCW 36.87.020. “A county right of way may be considered useless if it is not necessary to serve an essential role in the public road network or if it would better serve the public interest in private ownership.” KCC 14.40.0102.B. Petition denial is mandatory where a petitioner fails to meet their burden, and approval is discretionary where a petitioner establishes uselessness and public benefit. RCW 36.87.060(1).
9. The subject right-of-way was established as a County road in 1894 and updated in 1904. Ex. D7. There is no record of the subject right-of-way segment being opened, used, improved or maintained by King County as part of the county road system. Ex. D1; Bryan Testimony.
10. There was testimony and evidence from Mr. Cook that he holds an access easement that crosses the right-of-way. Ex. D25; Cook Testimony. As a condition of this recommendation, the Examiner required that Mr. Cook submit an acknowledgment that the right-of-way vacation could impact the continuity of his easement. Ex. D26.
11. The potentially impacted portion of the easement, however, is entirely within the boundaries of Mr. Cook’s property and the only parcels that benefit from the current easement are owned by Mr. Cook. Therefore, there appears to be no adverse impact to Mr. Cook, his property rights, or access to the parcels he owns along the northern segment of the easement.
12. There were no public comments submitted prior to the hearing or public testimony at the hearing. Ex. D1-002; Ex. D16. There was no objection to the application from other County agencies or utilities. The only comments were from DLS raising concerns about access to Mr. Cook’s parcels to the north of the right-of-way, and a question as to the public benefit that would result from the vacation.
13. As discussed above, Mr. Cook will have control of access to each of his properties regardless of the existence of the right-of way. Mr. Cook has acknowledged, on the record and through a written submission, that he supports the right-of-way vacation although he recognizes that the continuity of his access easement may be impacted if the application is approved by Council. Ex. D26.
14. In response to the DLS comment regarding public benefit, Roads’ position is that the approval of this petition will reduce maintenance responsibilities and potential liabilities by vacating an area that has been determined to have no use to the County Road system and this constitutes a public benefit.

15. The facts set forth in the record establish that vacation of the right-of-way would have no adverse effect on the provision of access and fire and emergency services to the abutting properties and surrounding area. The right-of-way is not necessary for the present or future public road system for travel or utilities purposes.
16. Based on the above, the Examiner finds that the road is useless to the county road system. The Examiner also finds that the public will benefit from the vacation, with the savings in expected, avoided management and maintenance costs and increased property taxes discussed below. The petitioners have met their burden and approval of the petition is warranted.

What Compensation is Due?

17. Where vacation is appropriate, the county may require compensation up to the appraised value of the vacated road. The King County Assessor determines the road vacation's impact on valuation for each parcel separately.
18. For each affected parcel, the Assessor calculates the increase in property value based on the additional square footage that parcel will receive from the area vacated. This amount is then adjusted to account for the estimated value to the public from avoided liability risk, eliminated management and maintenance costs, along with increased property taxes. RCW 36.87.070; KCC 14.40.020.A.1. The King County Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget (PSB) created a model for calculating these adjustments, updated annually. Roads then applies those figures to each impacted parcel. Exs. D22-24.
19. The analysis provided by the Assessor's Office and Roads indicates that no compensation should be required for approval of the vacation for the three parcels identified in the petition. Ex. D1 at 4; Exs. D22-24.
20. The Examiner agrees with the valuation calculated for the three parcels and supports Roads' recommendation to waive compensation should the vacation be approved.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Examiner recommends that Council APPROVE proposed ordinance no. 2026-0120 to vacate the subject road right-of-way on parcels 132006-9282, 132006-9283, and 182007-9042, with no compensation requirement or contingencies.

DATED June 25, 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Devon Shannon', written over a horizontal line.

Devon Shannon
Hearing Examiner

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

A party may appeal an Examiner report and recommendation by following the steps described in KCC 20.22.230. By **4:30 p.m.** on **July 20, 2026**, an electronic appeal statement must be sent to Clerk.Council@kingcounty.gov, to hearingexaminer@kingcounty.gov, and to the party email addresses on the front page of this report and recommendation. Please consult KCC 20.22.230 for the exact filing requirements.

If a party fails to timely file an appeal, the Council does not have jurisdiction to consider that appeal. Conversely, if the appeal requirements of KCC 20.22.230 are met, the Examiner will notify parties and interested persons and will provide information about next steps in the appeal process.

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 17, 2026, HEARING ON THE ROAD VACATION PETITION OF ALEXIS AND DEVIN JONES AND GARTH COOK, LOCAL SERVICES, ROADS FILE NO. V-2776

Devon Shannon was the Hearing Examiner in this matter. A verbatim recording of the hearing is available in the Hearing Examiner's Office.

The following exhibits were offered and entered into the hearing record:

Exhibit no. D1	Roads Services' staff report to the Hearing Examiner
Exhibit no. D2	Petition to the County Road Engineer for the Vacation of a County Road, received September 24, 2025
Exhibit no. D3	Letter to Petitioners, dated October 1, 2025, acknowledging receipt of Petition.
Exhibit no. D4	King County Assessor's information for Petitioners Devin and Alexis Jones' property, APN 132006-9282
Exhibit no. D5	King County Assessor's information for Petitioner Garth Cook's property, APN 132006-9283
Exhibit no. D6	King County Assessor's information for Petitioners Devin and Alexis Jones' property (formerly owned by Casey and Melody Olson), APN 182007-9042
Exhibit no. D7	Documentation Establishing County Road No. 393 / S.J. Twiss Road (No. 1)
Exhibit no. D8	Documentation Establishing County Road No. 520 / S.J. Twiss Road (No. 2)
Exhibit no. D9	Exhibit map depicting vacation area

Exhibit no. D10	Copy of final notice for agency review, sent on October 31, 2025
Exhibit no. D11	Email exchange with Assessor's Office regarding valuation of vacation area.
Exhibit no. D12	Compensation calculation model spreadsheet for Petitioners' property, APN 132006-9282
Exhibit no. D13	Compensation calculation model spreadsheet for Petitioners' property, APN 132006-9283
Exhibit no. D14	Compensation calculation model spreadsheet for Petitioners' property, APN 182007-9042
Exhibit no. D15	Cover letter to Petitioners dated December 18, 2025, with a copy of the County Road Engineer's Report
Exhibit no. D16	County Road Engineer's Report
Exhibit no. D17	Ordinance transmittal letter dated May 4, 2026, from King County Executive to
Exhibit no. D18	Councilmember Girmay Zahilay, Chair, King County Council Proposed Ordinance
Exhibit no. D19	Email from Casey Olson, assigning the Olsons' petitioner status to the Joneses following the sale of their property to the Joneses
Exhibit no. D20	Declaration of Posting
Exhibit no. D21	Request for publication by Clerk of the Council
Exhibit no. D22	Compensation calculation model spreadsheet for Petitioners' property, APN 132006-9282
Exhibit no. D23	Compensation calculation model spreadsheet for Petitioners' property, APN 132006-9283
Exhibit no. D24	Compensation calculation model spreadsheet for Petitioners' property, APN 182007-9042
Exhibit no. D25	Testamentary Lot Division Map showing easement on Cook Property
Exhibit no. D26	Acknowledgement from Petitioner Cook