



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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July 11, 2024

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits a proposed Ordinance that, if enacted, would authorize King County's condemnation of real property in the city of Renton in order to obtain easements and other rights in property for the construction of the Rapid Ride I Line. Metro has determined that acquiring the property is critical to the successful implementation of the I Line. Despite making reasonable efforts over 23 months to meaningfully engage the property owner in negotiations and acquire the property through such negotiations, Metro has reached impasse with the property owner.

The King County Council adopted the Locally Preferred Alternative for the I Line project via Ordinance 19098, which set forth the locations of critical project improvements, including passenger facilities and pedestrian safety improvements. The I Line project was identified as a critical project for Metro by connecting economically and racially diverse communities in South King County to employment opportunities, commercial and retail centers, and recreational activities. The property acquisition at issue is necessary to construct one of a pair of station stops and a critical pedestrian mid-block crossing improvement requested by the City of Renton and by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

The property rights necessary for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the RapidRide station include 114 square feet of public right of way as a fee acquisition, and 1,397 square feet of temporary construction easement. Metro staff and consultant efforts to acquire this property through negotiated settlement spanned more than 23 months, with more than 20 attempts made to communicate with the property owners. The property owners have been unresponsive to overtures to engage since July 2023. The Metro will continue to attempt to

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engage the property owner and still hopes to acquire the property through negotiated settlement even as it seeks approval of the proposed condemnation Ordinance.

The Federal Transit Administration is a major funding partner for I Line through its Capital Investment Grant Program, providing \$80M for the project. As such, Metro has committed to a schedule to begin construction in early 2025 and complete the project by 2027. All necessary property rights, including for this property, must be acquired before permits are issued and construction started.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance. If your staff have questions, please contact Mark Ellerbrook, Division Director, Metro Transit Department, at 206-477-6109.

Sincerely,



for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff
Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council
Karan Gill, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Penny Lipsou, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive
Michelle Allison, General Manager, Metro Transit Department
Mark Ellerbrook, Division Director, Capital Division, Metro Transit Department