



September 25, 2015

The Honorable Larry Phillips
Chair, King County Council
516 Third Ave, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Phillips:

I am writing in support of the ordinance authorizing the purchase and sale agreement for the former Tall Chief Golf Course, a piece of legislation that will permanently protect farmland and increase active farming in King County.

The American Farmland Trust is represented on the County Executive's Kitchen Cabinet, and participated in the development of King County's Local Food Initiative. We recognize the critical role the County plays in protecting agricultural lands that are under the threat of development and supporting agricultural production in King County.

The ordinance authorizing the sale of a 191-acre Tall Chief property will achieve both of these critical policy objectives. By transferring the property to a well established farming family, it will restore agricultural production on the site and the property will be protected by an agricultural conservation easement that will permanently preserve the property as a farm.

Additionally, the Kitchen Cabinet, a 36-member advisory panel of public and private expert stakeholders specializing in the local food system and food access have recommended a target to add 400 acres of food farm production per year over the next 10 years in King County. The sale of Tall Chief will assist in implementing the targets and action established in the Local Food Initiative.

As the Regional Director of an organization committed to preserving farmland throughout the Pacific Northwest I want to convey the strong support of American Farmland Trust for this legislation.

Sincerely,



Heidi Eisenhour
Pacific Northwest Director
American Farmland Trust

cc: King County Councilmembers
Dow Constantine, County Executive



September 29, 2015

The Honorable Larry Phillips
Chair, King County Council
516 Third Ave, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Phillips:

I am writing in support of the ordinance authorizing the purchase and sale agreement for the former Tall Chief Golf Course, a piece of legislation that will permanently protect farmland and increase active farming in King County.

The Northwest Agriculture Business Center is represented on the County Executive's Kitchen Cabinet, and participated in the development of King County's Local Food Initiative. We recognize the critical role the County plays in supporting agricultural production in King County and growing the regional agriculture economy.

NABC has a close working partnership with King County, and was asked to participate on the review panel for the Proposals for Tall Chief. Lucy Norris, NABC's former Director of Marketing, served on the review panel along with several other agricultural community representatives. We found the review process to be extremely rigorous, and that it engaged a broad spectrum of the agricultural community. I believe that the outcome of the process will yield significant new agricultural production in the Snoqualmie Valley, and broad benefits to farmers in the valley.

As the Executive Director of an organization committed to expanding the regions economy, I want to convey the strong support of the Northwest Agriculture Business Center for this legislation.

Sincerely,

David Bauermeister, Executive Director
Northwest Agriculture Business Center

cc: King County Councilmembers
Dow Constantine, County Executive

October 1, 2015

The Honorable Larry Phillips
Chair, King County Council
516 Third Ave, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Phillips:

I am writing in support of the ordinance authorizing the purchase and sale agreement for the former Tall Chief Golf Course, a piece of legislation that brings approximately 80 acres of unused farmland back into production and permanently protects all of the farm and forestland on the property.

Seattle Tilth is a non-profit committed to providing opportunities for people to take part in rebuilding an equitable and sustainable local food system. Over the past two years we have been seeking to expand our farm incubator programs into the Snoqualmie Valley and we were one of three respondents to the County's Request for Proposals (RFP) to transform the Tall Chief property to active agricultural production.

While ultimately the County chose one of the other three respondents, the Keller family, we are committed to working with the County to ensure that our vision of a farm incubator program in the Snoqualmie Valley becomes a reality. Ironically, the legislation currently before the County can help make that vision a reality.

Seattle Tilth and King County have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that commits both parties to work toward that goal. (Copy Attached). The MOU allocates the proceeds from the sale of the Tall Chief property to pay for acquisition of another property, subject to Council approval, for Seattle Tilth to lease in the Snoqualmie Valley to establish a farm incubator program.

Certainly Seattle Tilth would have loved to have had our proposal selected by the review panel and the County. However, by selling Tall Chief to the Keller family, King County is ensuring the continued operation of one of the County's anchor dairy farms, 80 acres of new agricultural production, permanent preservation of the entire property, and is generating significant revenue that can be applied to acquisition of other farmland in the Snoqualmie Valley for Seattle Tilth and other farmers to utilize.

I believe that the legislation before you represents the best possible outcome that we could have hoped for from this process.

Sincerely,



Andrea Dwyer, Executive Director

cc: King County Councilmembers
Dow Constantine, County Executive