



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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December 20, 2023

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 would, if enacted, ratify a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) negotiated by and between King County and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 77, representing employees in the Metro Transit Department for a contractual period of January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2025. Adoption of this proposed Ordinance will enable King County to provide bargained for wages to employees who maintain the electrical systems that support Metro Facilities, including overhead trolley wires, as well as the electrical systems that power Link Light Rail.

This CBA covers 20 job classifications in the Metro Transit Department, in the Transit Facilities, and the Rail Divisions. These valued employees maintain the electrical systems in Metro transit facilities, which include the overhead trolley bus lines throughout the City of Seattle, as well as the Link Light Rail power systems. Their jobs include both high- and low-level voltage work.

Approximately 95 employees are in this bargaining unit. The CBA covers the following classifications: Cable Splicer, Electrician Constructor, Fire Detection Specialist, Line Material Workers I and II, Pole Hauler, Rail Electrical Worker, Transit Facilities Electrician, and Utility Line Worker. Many of these job classifications also have associated Lead and Crew Chief positions.

This bargaining unit maintains its own collective bargaining agreement and has not adopted the Coalition Labor Agreement. It is eligible for interest arbitration under the state collective bargaining statute.

The County was able to secure a significant number of changes to the contract that standardize this agreement with the Coalition Labor Agreement.

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During the term of this agreement, the Rail Division will need to hire additional Rail Electrical Workers to fully staff the expansion of Link Light Rail to Lynnwood, Federal Way, and the Eastside. In addition, the Power Distribution group in the Transit Facilities Division has experienced challenges hiring and retaining workers in a tight labor market. As such, the parties agreed to a nine percent market wage increase, in addition to the standard general wage increases that are being paid to unions that fall under the Coalition Labor Agreement.


Relating to the expansion of light rail in our region, the parties have negotiated a memorandum of agreement, valid for the duration of the new CBA, under which bargaining unit work may be outsourced, if necessary, in connection with the startup of Link Light Rail service to Lynnwood, Federal Way, and the Eastside.

A complete breakdown of the costs associated with this agreement can be found in the accompanying fiscal note, which has been reviewed by the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget. Supplemental budget authority is not needed for this agreement.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance. This important legislation will ratify the negotiated CBA which provides the competitive wages necessary to recruit and retain highly qualified electrical workers in the Metro Transit Department.

If your staff have questions, please contact Megan Pedersen, Director, Office of Labor Relations, at 206-263-2898.

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
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
Megan Pedersen, Director, Office of Labor Relations