



Legislation Text

File #: 2009-0537, **Version:** 1

A MOTION expressing the intent to authorize a levy and collection of a property tax of five and one-half cents per one thousand dollars assessed value, with the first one cent for expanding transit capacity along the State Route 520, and the remainder for supporting the operation, maintenance and capital needs of the King County Metro public transportation, primarily for the implementation of RapidRide service throughout King County.

WHEREAS, in 2006, Ordinance 15582 was passed by the King County council and the subsequent Transit Now proposition was approved by voters. Ordinance 15582 authorized an additional sales and use tax of one-tenth of one percent for public transportation program improvements over a ten-year period as outlined in Attachment A to Ordinance 15582, and

WHEREAS, from 2007-2009, the public transportation improvements described in Attachment A to Ordinance 15582 were implemented by the King County transit division ("King County Metro") according to the approved phasing plan identified in the King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016, adopted by Ordinance 15963, and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2008 and continuing into 2009, the local and national economic crisis led to a dramatic decline in sales tax revenue, a primary source of funding for King County Metro, and

WHEREAS, King County Metro sales tax receipts are expected to continue to decline through the 2010-2011 biennium and beyond before growth in the economy will return sales tax revenues to 2008 levels and such a decline will result in a significant gap between the cost to operate and maintain the King County Metro public transportation system, as well as grow the system as contemplated by Ordinance 15582 and the 2007-2016

Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, and

WHEREAS, in April 2009, recognizing the need for additional funding to support the operations, maintenance and capital needs of King County Metro's public transportation system, the state legislature passed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5433, which became Chapter 551, Laws of Washington 2009, authorizing counties with a population of one million five hundred thousand or more to implement an additional regular property tax levy not to exceed seven and one-half cents per thousand dollars of assessed value of property in the county, and

WHEREAS, the state legislature directed that the first one cent per thousand dollars of assessed value of property in the county be used for expanding transit capacity along State Route 520 corridor to meet growing ridership demand, an action that is expected to provide for an additional one million new transit riders per year in the corridor, while the remainder may be used for supporting other transit-related expenditures, and

WHEREAS, the RapidRide bus rapid transit program created by Transit Now represents a new service type and brand within the family of services provided Metro Transit and is designed to be a distinct, frequent and reliable transit option for millions of riders annually, and

WHEREAS, an additional RapidRide line providing important east/west service improvements for south King County, to be called RapidRide F Line, would connect the downtown transit centers in Burien and Renton via the International Boulevard Link Light Rail station as well as the Tukwila Sounder station providing expanded local and regional connections to Sound Transit's regional rail investments, and is expected to achieve a fifty percent increase in ridership along the corridor and compete very well for additional federal funding, and

WHEREAS, the county desires to promote adequate, stable public funding for public transportation services in King County, including the continued implementation and expansion of the RapidRide program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

The council intends to levy a property tax at a rate of five and one half cents per one thousand dollars of

assessed value as granted by the state legislature for the purpose of funding the operations, maintenance and capital needs of the King County Metro public transportation system, primarily for the implementation of RapidRide service throughout King County. As directed by the state legislature, the first one cent per thousand of assessed value of this property tax will be used for expanding transit capacity along State Route 520 by adding core and other supporting bus routes, in support of the Lake Washington Urban Partnership and the remainder will be used for transit-related expenditures to help maintain public transportation service and operation, while also allowing the implementation of a new RapidRide Line F along with the existing planned RapidRide program, with the service characteristics and elements identified in Attachment A to Ordinance 15582 adopted by the King County Council September 11, 2006, and signed by the King County executive September 12, 2006.

none