



Legislation Text

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AN ORDINANCE relating to an agreement for joint light rail and bus operations in the downtown Seattle transit tunnel with the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority; adopting an agreement between and among King County, the city of Seattle and the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Findings:

A. The Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (“Metro”) constructed the downtown Seattle transit tunnel, which opened for service in 1990, to provide additional capacity for buses in downtown Seattle, and to provide for the downtown segment of a future rail system.

B. In 1994, King County assumed the rights, powers, functions and obligations of Metro, consequently all the powers and functions of Metro have been vested by state law in the legislative authority of King County.

C. The city of Seattle owns the right of way for the tunnel and downtown streets.

D. The King County council, in Motion 10448, passed April 27, 1998, authorized the King County executive to enter into a memorandum of understanding establishing a cooperative relationship between the Central Puget Sound Transit Authority (Sound Transit) and King County. The memorandum of understanding notes that Sound Transit will use the tunnel as an integral part of its light rail program and that King County and Sound Transit will reach agreement on the amount of compensation for any combination of use, operation and ownership, and on the appropriate terms of use for the tunnel.

E. Sound Transit proposes that the tunnel be used for joint operation of transit buses and the fourteen-

mile initial segment of the voter-approved Central Link light rail system (light rail). When light rail train volumes expand sufficiently, following extension of the light rail system to the north and south, the tunnel will be converted to exclusive light rail use.

F. The King County council, in Ordinance 13857, passed by the council and approved by the executive and enacted May 24, 2000, approved the downtown Seattle transit tunnel transfer agreement, which provided for the sale of the tunnel to Sound Transit for exclusive use by light rail. Sound Transit in Resolution R2000-09 and the city of Seattle in Ordinance 119949 also agreed to this transfer agreement.

G. All three parties agree that the transfer agreement should be terminated and a new agreement approved to permit joint rail and bus operations in the tunnel, including continued ownership and use of the tunnel by King County, and development of an operating and maintenance agreement for light rail between King County and Sound Transit.

H. The three parties have been working together to reach agreement on issues regarding use, operations, and sharing of costs of the tunnel and on accommodating the impacts of tunnel construction including increased bus traffic on downtown surface streets.

I. In support of county government and its existing public institutions, Sound Transit shall make regular payments to the County equivalent to a percentage of the bond payments due on the County's outstanding long-term transit debt.

J. The Sound Transit board in Resolution R-2001-16 adopted an initial segment for the light rail system that called for joint operations in the downtown Seattle transit tunnel.

K. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires that Sound Transit demonstrate that the initial segment of the light rail system can be constructed as planned and approved in the Record of Decision for the project as issued by the FTA on May 8, 2002. The Record of Decision calls for joint operations in the downtown Seattle transit tunnel.

L. All three parties must execute an agreement specifying the terms, conditions and consideration for

joint operations in the tunnel.

M. King County supports the development of the regional transit system with the expectation that all transit users, including light rail, bus, commuter rail, vanpool, rideshare and paratransit riders, will benefit from its services. An agreement with Sound Transit for joint operation of bus and light rail services furthers the goal of completing the regional transit system.

SECTION 2. King County approves the joint operations agreement for the downtown Seattle transit tunnel under the terms and conditions as substantially in the form of Attachment A to this ordinance, the three-party agreement between King County, the city of Seattle and the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority and authorizes the execution of the agreement.

SECTION 3. The county executive is authorized to execute the necessary documents to approve the agreement for joint light rail and bus operations in the

downtown Seattle transit tunnel, substantially in the form attached as listed in Attachment A to this ordinance.

None