



## Legislation Text

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AN ORDINANCE outlining the intended sequencing of steps to acquire property interests needed for the RapidRide I Line project; and authorizing the condemnation of real property to obtain fee title, easements, and other rights in property for the construction of the RapidRide I Line in the cities of Renton, Kent, and Auburn.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1.

A. The RapidRide I Line ("RRIL") project will provide high-quality bus rapid transit service connecting Renton, Kent, and Auburn, and connect to the regional transit network to improve access to destinations across the region. The property rights that are the subject of this ordinance must be acquired to construct the RRIL project and associated facilities. The acquisition of property rights is for a public purpose.

B. The RRIL project is one part of a larger system-wide approach to improve transit access in South King County, and will increase transit speed, reliability, and passenger carrying capacity in three of some of the largest and most diverse communities in the Seattle area. The RRIL project will serve the transportation needs of communities that have been historically underserved, which are South King County communities, which have some of the highest proportions of low-income and minority populations in King County, and the RRIL project will deliver improved services along with increased passenger comfort on that corridor, similar to what is experienced in areas already served by RapidRide or Link service.

C. Ordinance 18449, enacted February 1, 2017, adopted the King County Metro long-range transit service and capital plan, METRO CONNECTS, which identifies an expanded network of future RapidRide

lines for implementation, including the RRIL project.

D. Ordinance 19098, enacted May 8, 2020, approved the Locally Preferred Alternative for the RRIL project, including the route alignment and station locations.

E. The RRIL project will meet goals set forth in the King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan by linking economically and racially diverse communities, and by connecting neighborhoods to employment opportunities, commercial and retail centers, and recreational activities.

F. The RRIL project is partly funded by a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts grant. FTA grant conditions require that the RRIL project provide transit service at levels specified in the grant agreement, for a defined period. If completion of the RRIL project is delayed because the metro transit department is unable to timely obtain the real property and property interests needed to construct the RRIL project as designed, millions of dollars of FTA grant funding could be at risk, and in addition, the RRIL project's projected ridership and speed improvement outcomes could be undermined due to escalated costs, which would reduce the scope of improvements that can be built with available RRIL project funding.

G. Under chapter 8.12 RCW, chapter 36.56 RCW, RCW 35.58.240, and RCW 35.58.320, King County is authorized to acquire, damage, and condemn real property for public use for public transportation facilities.

H. To construct the RRIL project, it is necessary for King County to condemn and damage certain lands, property rights and rights in property. The acquisition of such property rights and rights in property is for a public purpose.

I. The King County council finds that public necessity, convenience, and welfare require that the RRIL project be constructed and that certain properties, property rights and rights in property be condemned, appropriated, taken, and damaged for the purpose of construction, operation, and maintenance of the RRIL project.

SECTION 2. The King County council deems it necessary for the proposed public purpose and in the best interest of the residents of King County that the properties, property rights and rights in property identified

in Attachment A to this ordinance, including being condemned, appropriated, taken, and damaged, for the purpose of constructing, installing, operating, maintaining, repairing, and replacing facilities for the RRIL project, subject to the making or paying of just compensation to the owners therein in the manner provided by law.

SECTION 3. Condemnation proceedings are hereby authorized to acquire property interests and property rights and rights in property substantially as identified in Attachment A to this ordinance for the purpose of the RRIL project.

SECTION 4. King County shall first initiate or complete independent, certified appraisals to determine the fair market value of property or property interests to be acquired, and then enter into or continue voluntary negotiations with the owners of the property described in Attachment A to this ordinance. Condemnation proceedings should be initiated only after the department determines that voluntary negotiations have failed to reach agreement in a timely manner on a purchase price for property, property rights and rights in property described in Attachment A to this ordinance.

SECTION 5. Subject to the appraisal and negotiation requirements in Section 4 of this ordinance, the attorneys for King County are hereby authorized and directed to begin to prosecute the proceedings provided by law to condemn, take, damage, and appropriate the land and other property interests, property rights, and rights in property necessary to carry out this ordinance.