



King County

Parks and Recreation Division
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
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February 7, 2018

Steven V. King, Executive Director and Secretary
Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. S.W.
P.O. Box 47250
Olympia, Washington 98504-7250
records@utc.wa.gov

Dear Mr. King:

I am writing in reference to Declaratory Order U-180068 (Puget Sound Energy Declaratory Order - Interurban South).

I respectfully encourage your commission to approve the order as written for the purposes of operating, maintaining, and improving the Interurban Trail. The Interurban Trail was constructed in the 1970s and early 1980's along Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) utility corridor through a partnership with King County and our partner cities of Algona, Auburn, Kent, Pacific and Tukwila. PSE provided King County a "recreational easement" to use the corridor for recreational trail purposes, and our cities agreed to maintain the trail. The 25-year agreement between King County and PSE was executed on November 1, 1977, and terminated in 2002.

The order in front of your commission allows King County, our partner cities, and PSE to continue and to reauthorize our long and fruitful partnership. We are very committed to seeing this action move forward because the Interurban Trail is an invaluable asset in south King County for recreation and non-motorized commuting, linking our cities along a nearly 15-mile-long corridor. Because of its relatively straight alignment, south county bicycle commuters find the trail indispensable for work trips to and from Seattle and other nearby cities. Recent estimates indicate that the trail is used to make hundreds of thousands of bicycle and pedestrian trips each year.

Not only is the Interurban Trail a very popular multi-use path and greenway, it adds value to our communities by improving our health, spurring economic development, and job creation, protecting our environment and creating powerful connections within, to, and across our communities. The Interurban Trail also improves our mobility by providing easy access to both Sounder and Link light rail stations.

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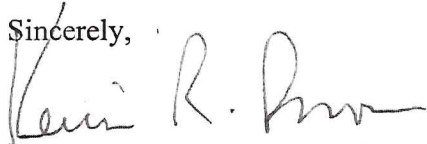
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When the agreement was first approved in the late 1970's, King County Parks built the Interurban Trail and our city partners maintained the trail. The Interurban Trail is now decades old and we are concerned about the current condition of the trail. Many segments are in need of major maintenance with failing pavement, unsafe railroad crossings, worn-out amenities, and winter flooding issues. King County Parks and our partner cities are anxious to upgrade and to repair the trail, but cannot proceed without a new long-term agreement. A new agreement would allow King County Parks to work with our partner cities to upgrade and improve the trail. We have been working collaboratively with PSE for over a decade on a new agreement that would allow for these necessary upgrades while continuing to preserve the underlying ownership and integrity of the corridor by PSE.

We strongly encourage the commission to approve the action before you and allow for us to improve this incredible community asset in south King County. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kevin Brown
Division Director

Enclosures: Photos of trail condition
Original PSE Recreational Easement

cc: Julien Loh, Local Government Affairs and Public Policy Manager, Puget Sound
Energy
The Honorable Allan Ekberg, Mayor, City of Tukwila
The Honorable Nancy Backus, Mayor, City of Auburn
The Honorable Dana Ralph, Mayor, City of Kent
Monica Leers, Capital Planning and Land Management Section Manager, Parks and
Recreation Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, King County