

**Central Services Center**

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September 12, 2014

Members, Budget and Fiscal Management Committee
Metropolitan King County Council
516 Third Ave., Rm. 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Chair McDermott and Members of the Committee:

The Tahoma School District (the “District”) submits this letter to respectfully request your support of Proposed Ordinance 2014-0332, relating to King County’s sale to the District of a portion of the Summit Pit property. Thank you for your consideration of this ordinance. As you know, the District plans to construct a new comprehensive high school and regional learning center on the property. When complete, this school will meet a critical school facility need and serve as a leading example of cooperative planning amongst local governments.

Our community is eager for the school to open. The District’s voters overwhelmingly supported the 2013 bond measure to fund construction of the new high school at this location. We learned that the planned location of this school, in a strategic location within the District that complements the surrounding land uses, was significant to our community. This project is a high priority for the residents and businesses in our community.

The timely completion of this high school is critical for purposes of meeting the District’s enrollment needs. The District has experienced healthy enrollment gains in each of the last six years and prior to that time. Over the next six years, we expect to grow by more than 1,000 new students. At the same time, our facilities are currently over capacity at all grade levels. The new high school will provide us with desperately needed secondary capacity and allow us to reconfigure grade levels and take advantage of space freed up at the existing high school building. To meet these needs, the new high school must open by the fall of 2017.

The District is investing significant resources in moving forward with project and permit planning pending closing of the sale of the property. To maintain the project schedule, we need to close on the Property by mid-November. Even a few weeks of delay could significantly impact the project schedule and budget. For this reason, the District respectfully urges expedient action on this ordinance so that the parties may execute the purchase agreement and move toward closing.

We appreciate the opportunity to work together with King County and the City of Maple Valley to find a school site that is best located for our students and the community. Without the creative thinking and cooperative planning of all three parties, this school would not be a reality.

Again, thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Morrow".

Rob Morrow
Superintendent