File #: 2016-0123, **Version:** 3

A MOTION requesting that the executive develop and transmit a report that reviews the potential impacts of the upcoming auction of federally licensed broadcasting frequencies on King County taxpayers, residents and businesses.

WHEREAS, increasing demand for access to wireless connectivity poses a major challenge to ensure that America's wireless networks have the capacity to support the critical economic, public safety, health care and other activities that rely on them, and

WHEREAS, the radio spectrum is the range of frequencies used for wireless applications including broadcast television and radio, cell phones, satellite radio and television, wireless computer networks, Bluetooth, GPS and police dispatch, and

WHEREAS, in the United States, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration governs federal government users of the radio spectrum and the Federal Communications Commission ("the FCC") regulates all other users, and

WHEREAS, starting on March 29, 2016, the FCC will hold an auction, known as "the Incentive Auction," as a means of repurposing the radio spectrum by encouraging existing licensees to voluntarily relinquish spectrum usage rights in exchange for a share of the proceeds from an auction of new licenses to use the repurposed spectrum, and

WHEREAS, television stations operate under license from the federal government and are required to broadcast "in the public interest," and

WHEREAS, local television news serves the public interest by providing real time information in times of crisis, such as earthquake, wildfire, extreme weather and civil unrest, and

WHEREAS, concerns have been raised that purchasers appear to have acquired broadcast licenses following Congressional authorization of a spectrum auction to position themselves for windfall profits from the resale of broadcast licenses rather than from provision of public interest broadcasting, and

WHEREAS, concerns have been raised that the potential closure of hundreds of local television stations as a result of the Incentive Auction is not in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, the FCC should facilitate the reallocation of the television bandwidth to allow the more efficient use of a publicly owned resource, and

WHEREAS, reallocation of the broadcast spectrum should maintain benefits to taxpayers than to market speculators, and

WHEREAS, proceeds from the Incentive Auction should be reinvested in the public interest;

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

A. The executive shall develop and transmit to the council a report that reviews the potential impacts of the upcoming Incentive Auction on King County taxpayers, residents and businesses. At a minimum, the report shall include:

1. Analysis of the impact of the Incentive Auction on county residents, including the availability of public interest broadcasting;

2. Analysis by the office of emergency management of the disaster coordination-related risks and impacts of the potential loss of spectrum for local television;

3. Analysis of the fiscal impact of the Incentive Auction on county government and residents;

4. A potential strategy to ensure equitable distribution of benefits from the proceeds of the Incentive Auction; and

5. Recommended language for inclusion in the federal legislative agenda.

B. The executive shall transmit the report required in subsection A. of this motion by March 25, 2016, in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original

and provide an electronic copy to all

councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the policy staff director and the lead staff for the government

accountability and oversight committee, or its successor.