



King County



SOUND CITIES ASSOCIATION

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March 16, 2018

Regional Transportation System Initiative Elected Officials Meeting Summary

Thank you for participating in the Regional Transportation System Initiative (RTSI) meeting for elected officials held on February 2, 2018. Your participation in this discussion and ongoing partnership are critical as we work to address our shared regional transportation system.

At the meeting in February, we heard support for working to address our regional road network as an interconnected system. As the county and region have continued to grow, the demands on this regional system have grown beyond the ability of each agency to address alone. New demands from increased population and the growing prevalence of cut-through traffic on city streets (as motorists avoid congested freeways) are rapidly accelerating residents' demands for significant mobility improvements.

We look forward to continuing discussions between Sound Cities Association, King County, the City of Seattle, and our region's transportation agencies as we collaborate on opportunities to fund the needs of the regional system. Upcoming opportunities to collaborate include the update to the Long Range Transportation Plan (formerly Transportation 2040); looking for opportunities for joint projects – such as Intelligent Transportation System improvements - as grant opportunities arise; and continued dialogue to develop a regional strategy for informing members of the Legislature about the critical unfunded needs on local roads.

As we heard at the February RTSI convening, only 57% of the combined city and county need on the more than 1,400 miles of roadways that make up the RTSI network (as defined by the RTSI Technical Committee) is estimated to be met between now and 2040 by currently authorized revenue sources. All told, when reviewing the roadway needs identified in local comprehensive plans and available funding sources, our county and cities are facing an estimated funding gap of \$7-\$8 billion.

Finding a solution will not be easy and will require all of us working together. The needs of our road network will compete for resources needed to address other critical priorities in our region, and the tax system in Washington State leaves few options for equitably funding local services.

Attached to this letter, please find a summary of the February 2 RTSI meeting, including feedback received from our many partner jurisdictions. Thank you again for your commitment to working together to address our shared regional transportation challenges.

We look forward to partnering with you to better define and describe local transportation needs for our region.

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

David Baker
President, Sound Cities Association

Regional Transportation System Initiative

Elected Officials Committee Meeting #2 Summary – DRAFT

February 2, 2018, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Mercer Island Community and Event Center; 8236 SE 24th St, Mercer Island, WA

Introductions and Agenda Review

Bob Wheeler (facilitator – Triangle Associates) called the Regional Transportation System Initiative (RTSI) meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Mercer Island Mayor Debbie Bertlin thanked participants for coming. Then elected officials from King County and the City of Kenmore gave brief opening remarks.

- **King County’s opening remarks:** King County Executive Dow Constantine thanked participants for coming. At the June 2017 RTSI Elected Officials Committee meeting, the RTSI Technical Committee presented a network of regional roads critical to keeping communities connected. Since then, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and RTSI Technical Committee have worked hard to identify needs for the RTSI network. Each jurisdiction in King County manages its own discrete parts of the regional road network. As King County has grown, demands on the regional road network have grown too. Freight and people both need to move across political boundaries on the regional road network. However, increasing population growth, and federal regulations increasing requirements for bridges, are adding to our regional road network needs, and we have outdated tools to fund these needs. While some of the ideas heard here today will evolve over time, the long-term objective of RTSI is to find a sustainable solution to fund our system of interconnected arterials.
- **City of Kenmore’s opening remarks:** City of Kenmore Mayor David Baker shared that the number of jurisdictions at this meeting demonstrates how important the regional road network is to our region. Now it is up to elected leaders to decide how to use the Technical Committee’s information to find solutions in partnership with one another. We must also consider, as we move forward, the transportation needs of seniors. We all care about fixing the region’s traffic problems.

Presentation on RTSI Work

The facilitator presented on RTSI work to-date. The RTSI was jointly convened by the Sound Cities Association (SCA) and King County and focused on defining the regional transportation network and its unmet needs. Its purpose is to identify opportunities to collaborate on regional mobility issues and develop a proposal supported by cities and King County. RTSI is necessary for cities and King County to speak with a unified voice about needs for our regional transportation network. RTSI builds on past efforts including:

- 2015/16, King County Roads & Bridges Task Force;
- November 2016, “Issaquah Summit”;
- 2017 Sound Cities Association priority issue; and
- PSRC update of the regional Long-Range Transportation Plan.

RTSI is comprised of an Elected Officials Committee and Technical Committee. To-date, the Technical Committee developed, and Elected Officials accepted, the regional road network. Additionally, the Technical Committee has identified needs and cost estimates for the RTSI network, and learned about potential funding options for the network.

Presentation on RTSI Network Data

Ben Bakkenta (PSRC) presented RTSI network needs and costs estimates, the RTSI revenue gap, and potential revenue options. Needs estimates came from data supplied by all cities within King County,

including data collected from cities for the long-range Regional Transportation Plan as well as data PSRC collected from local comprehensive plans.

The RTSI network includes just under 1400 centerline miles of road, 86 percent of which are arterials that accommodate a significant amount of traffic in our region. The RTSI network consists of:

- Federally-designated principal and minor arterials;
- Designated T1 & T2 freight routes;
- Non-highway National Highway System segments;
- Roadways that include current or planned Frequent Transit Service by any transit agency (15 minute or better service for at least 12 hours per day);
- King County-designated principal and minor arterials;
- King County arterial and evacuation routes.

Only 57 percent of the combined city and county need for the RTSI network is estimated to be met by projected revenues from sources that are collected by current-laws. With a total RTSI network need of \$17 billion, this leaves approximately \$7-8 billion in unmet need not covered by current law revenues. Capacity costs account for \$8 billion of the estimated network need, while maintenance and preservation (M&P) costs account for \$9 billion of the need. Capacity projects are those identified on the Regional Capacity Project List, and projects identified in PSRC's Local Project's Database. M&P costs account for pavement, structures, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), stormwater, street lighting, non-motorized and other miscellaneous M&P categories.

There are several revenue options to consider for addressing the unmet RTSI network need base on what local jurisdictions employ around the world.

- Local option fuel tax
- Indexing the existing fuel tax to inflation
- Carbon tax on fuels, which would be an incremental fee on top of the gas tax
- Sales taxes on motor fuels
- Parking charges and taxes
- Vehicle license fees
- County Road Levy lift
- Transportation Impact Fees (TIFs)
- New revenue sources that would need further vetting, including
 - Street maintenance utility/transportation utility fee
 - Road usage charges which can replace the gas tax

Questions:

- Is the city-portion of estimated need based on entire city public works budgets or just what is needed to fund that city's portion of the RTSI network?
 - It is just what is needed to fund the RTSI network.
- What rationale was used for inclusion or exclusion of capacity elements in the need estimate?
 - Capacity projects include adding or removing vehicle lanes, changing the configuration or usage of vehicle lanes, other multimodal improvements that may affect vehicle usage or capacity such as Business Access Transit or High Occupancy Vehicle lanes. Capacity projects also include street realignment or relocation, continuous left turn lanes that extend between two principal arterials or state routes, and major ferry, Intelligent Transportation System, transit station, and separated bicycle-pedestrian projects.

- Is there an estimate of the RTSI network unmet need if we used Transportation Benefit Districts (TBDs) to full capacity?
 - PSRC found that TBDs are currently used by about one-third of jurisdictions. In the Regional Transportation Plan, PSRC assumed all jurisdictions would use their TBD authority, but even if all TBD authority was used, network funding would still be well short of the unfunded \$7.5 billion need.
- What is the total need if all four PSRC counties were included in the total?
 - The regional road network need for all PSRC counties combined is about \$40 billion.
- What is the relative order of magnitude of different revenue sources presented?
 - Revenue magnitude is difficult to estimate at the county level, but through the Transportation Futures Task Force, PSRC found every State transportation gas tax penny generated \$17 million for the Puget Sound Region.
- How is data counted from cities that span the King County borders with other counties?
 - RTSI needs estimates only counted roads and facilities inside the King County line.
- When looking at the revenue gap, were alternative funding sources considered? For example, Kent has a business and occupation (B&O) tax that is dedicated to residential streets.
 - Yes, PSRC accounted for alternative funding sources, such as general fund transfers and others.
- Does PSRC's needs data take into account annexations, such as White Center?
 - The needs estimate does not change depending on whether a road or facility lies in a city or unincorporated King County. The county/city designations matter more when considering the implementation of funding sources.
- Will background data for the needs estimates from PSRC be provided?
 - Some of this data is included on the RTSI website. Also, specific questions about data can be directed to Ben Bakkenta from PSRC: BBakkenta@psrc.org; 206-971-3286.
- Could the \$7-8 billion in unmet need be met if jurisdictions fully used their current taxing and fee authority?
 - Some of this need would be met, but not all.

Comments

- It seems archaic to be talking about gas taxes.
 - PSRC has heard substantial discussion about the long-term viability of the gas tax. By the mid-2020s Vehicle Mile Traveled (VMT) charges are expected to start replacing the gas tax.
- We should look at other sources of funding such as a King County or statewide impact fees. It is frustrating that we're looking at old funding sources. We should focus on impact fees for new development rather than taxing people who already live here.
 - Any King County or region-wide revenue options can be explored. Also, the impact fee concept is already factored into the Transportation Impact Fee revenue option presented by PSRC.
- It seems we should focus on the portion of the \$7-8 billion in unmet need that is not met by fully implementing the current taxing and fee authority jurisdictions already have. This would help determine what additional taxing and fee authority is needed.
- We should bring in large corporations, such as Amazon and Boeing, to these discussions. These corporations bring a lot of people to our region and they should be at the table.

Lightning Round with Ideas and Interests from Each Jurisdiction

Participants were led through a "lightning round" session where each city representative addressed the following questions:

- *Is the presented information a clear description of the regional road network transportation needs? Please explain your response.*

- *How do the presented regional road network transportation needs relate to priorities within your jurisdiction? Please explain your response.*

Responses below are listed in the order in which they were stated while going around the table.

- **City of Woodinville:** The presented road network description is good. We need to include areas outside of King County for this process to be effective since a lot of traffic in King County comes from areas of growth outside King County.
- **City of Tukwila:** Raising taxes is a concern. The priority should be on congestion and getting people to where they want to go.
- **City of Snoqualmie:** Costs are a concern. Asphalt costs have increased a lot in the last 20 years, and there are also increasing costs from environmental regulations.
- **City of Shoreline:** Shoreline's future will be led by transit with two light rail stations coming. Shoreline wants to focus less on building roads and more on facilitating transit and using current road space efficiently. Also, residents feel the effects of increased property taxes. Considering impacts of the McCleary Decision and increasing vehicle license fees, there are concerns about new legislation for more taxes.
- **City of SeaTac:** The presentation does not provide the information SeaTac needs. City and County projects appear lumped together and cities' share of the total need is unclear. Cities need to know why they should partner with the County on this issue. Also, with ST3 and other taxes going up, there may not be much public will for more taxes. SeaTac residents feel overtaxed.
- **City of Sammamish:** Local corporations, such as Costco and Microsoft, need to be brought into this regional effort to hear what corporations are seeing from employees and understand how they are impacting roads. Corporations are major players and should be at the table. Other priorities include environmental impacts on salmon and the intersections with transit and ST3. The City of Sammamish did not support ST3.
- **City of Renton:** Renton agrees with how the RTSI network is defined. Maintenance and preservation is the most important element to Renton. Arterials in Renton have issues with cut-through traffic from I-405, and whenever capacity is added it encourages more cut-through traffic. Also, some bridges are aging and need seismic upgrades.
- **City of North Bend:** In the presented information, city and county needs should be separated out. It is unclear if North Bend's needs are being addressed through RTSI.
- **City of Normandy Park:** Information is well presented and informative. Normandy Park is a bedroom community without much access to mass transit, so it is concerned about taxing road use to pay for transit that its residents cannot use. It also has an aging population. Normandy Park is not just interested in improving roads but about transportation more broadly.
- **City of Newcastle:** Presented information is clear. Newcastle is a small city dependent on transit provided from outside its city limits. It also deals with a lot of cut-through traffic. It would like to see better public transportation solutions to mitigate traffic.
- **City of Mercer Island:** Presented information is clear, however more clarity is needed on the numbers behind what was presented.
- **City of Medina:** The presentation is clear and they will look for more data on the RTSI website. Medina deals with cut-through traffic as well as noise from the floating bridge. It would like to track traffic to ensure plans are in place to address real life traffic patterns.
- **City of Redmond:** The presentation is clear, though more details behind the funding options are needed. Redmond has four light rail stations on the way. Also, as Microsoft's headquarters, people from many other communities commute to Redmond. There are many impacts on Redmond's roads and a lot of maintenance needs.

- **City of Kent:** The presented information is helpful. A lot of truck traffic in the region goes to Kent and it struggles to preserve its regional roads. It is hard to ask Kent residents to solve a traffic problem they are not causing.
- **City of Kenmore:** There are transportation issues in each community. Many communities incorporated King County roads, and it is a concern that many of those roads do not have sidewalks.
- **King County:** King County will continue to focus on the criteria and rationale for inclusion or exclusion of capacity projects. Added capacity has to be maintained. About 13 percent of the RTSI network is King County roads. RTSI deals with high volume city and county arterials but not the broader issue of the many miles of County roads.
- **City of Federal Way:** Capacity needs are understated since state highway traffic diverts to local roads. Federal Way is ahead of the game on pavement maintenance, but it would like to see capacity, safety and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) addressed.
- **City of Duvall:** Overall the presented information is clear, but the next phase should focus on cross-county border traffic and the issues underlying problems with the regional road network. Also, like Federal Way, Duvall deals with traffic diverted from state highways onto local roads.
- **City of Maple Valley:** Capacity is Maple Valley's priority. State Routes 169 and 516 are its links to the rest of the region. Both are used at or above capacity and this will only get worse. Maple Valley is also focused on economic development.
- **Lake Forest Park:** Lake Forest Park is a smaller city but in a key location. Two major state highways intersect in Lake Forest Park, and it is in the midst of a major study to understand how those highways can be improved. The City would like to implement ideas from this study in the near future. The City is also concerned about cut-through traffic.
- **City of Kirkland:** The information presented is a good prelude to scoping the problem and illustrates the need for new funding methods. The need may be underestimated. Kirkland is not just focused on roads and vehicles, but on moving people. It is interested in multimodal transportation including bikes, pedestrians and other modes. It sees Metro Connects as important as well.
- **City of Issaquah:** It is not clear if the presented information is enough. The Issaquah-Hobart Road is a priority for Issaquah. Also, Issaquah's Front Street does not have capacity to be a major corridor. Issaquah would like a build-out of adjacent major corridors including Highway 18 and Maple Valley Highway.
- **City of Enumclaw:** Enumclaw would like more information before determining if the presented information is useful. Enumclaw has taken care of its own roads with a Transportation Benefit District. Enumclaw deals with tourism traffic to Mt. Rainier as well as logging trucks. It also has a high percentage of senior citizens.
- **City of Des Moines.** Though the presented information is clear, it could be clearer. Des Moines has been using what authority it has to fund its roads and it is not sure about voter appetite for more taxes.
- **City of Covington:** The presentation is a good overall description, but the City would like to see how surrounding counties and corridors connected to I-5 affect the network. Funding should be allocated to widening highways.
- **City of Carnation:** State highways, and cut-through traffic from state highways, are huge issues to Carnation. Tolt Hill Road Bridge is currently closed to busses and trucks, and that is having impacts.
- **City of Burien:** This information is a lot to take in. Burien would like to see facilitated transit. It would also like to see how traffic time impacts people directly in their day-to-day lives. Highway 509 in Burien is seeing more freight traffic. Burien is also seeing more cut-through traffic from people going to Normandy Park or Seattle.
- **City of Bothell:** Residents have extreme tax fatigue. Bothell agrees with the City of Renton about maintenance and preservation as a priority issue. Discussions about increasing capacity should focus on

capacity for transit. Bothell does not have transit lanes and would need to expand roads to accommodate transit. It would also like to see state routes and cross-county border traffic addressed.

- **City of Bellevue:** Bellevue would like to see a more specific description of projects on the RTSI network since all cities have different needs. Maintenance and preservation is easier for Bellevue, but recognizes that not all cities are in the same situation. Capacity is more challenging for Bellevue.
- **City of Auburn:** The presentation is clear. City and county needs should not be separated out and we should not try to pit cities and the county against one another. Note there is a local match required for state projects. We must be mindful of how we will come up with funding for different road projects. Auburn appreciates mentions of cut-through traffic and the focus on more maintenance and preservation.
- **City of Algona:** They are a very small city. As regional roads are maintained, growth will continue. We need a living RTSI map.

Group Discussion on Potential Next Steps

Participants were asked to weigh in on how to move forward in this regional effort. The ideas listed below were based on the following prompts:

How can information presented today be used?

- Inform legislators and others not in the meeting room today.
- Steer funding toward regional needs.

What process next steps do you want to consider or propose?

Partnership Ideas

- Continue discussions with SCA leadership and develop a strategy for informing regional leaders to address funding challenges.
- Bring Pierce County and Snohomish County to the table.
- Bring major employers and corporations to the table (*four people mentioned this around the table*)
- Have jurisdictions work together on joint projects.
- Determine how we can get the State to step up beyond what it has already done.
- Partner with Ports and have more partnerships in general.

Funding/Revenue Ideas

- Take advantage of the local option fuel tax.
- Explore Vehicle Miles Traveled (CMT) technologies as well as funding sources and means testing for this option. This is a hot topic in the insurance industry right now. A lot of vehicles have computers so the technology exists for this funding source.
- Consider how to index VMT charges based on income level.
- Determine voter appetite to support each funding alternative.
- Determine which funding alternatives are for cities or the county, and resulting funds from each revenue option.
- Look more thoroughly into funding tools.
- Address revenue options to fund M&P, since we are not using all available revenue options.
- Consider the pros and cons of different revenue types.
- Identify the type of revenue each option brings and the pros and cons of each.

Project and Prioritization Ideas

- Make transit the most important issue.

- Go back to residents and business owners with information on how to fund a few regional priorities.
- Implement new projects to address capacity.
- Get past the inventory phase and identify a few regional corridors.
- Prioritize projects and identify where specific cities are on the project's list.
- Find agreement on a funding source, but then ensure most of that money goes to projects in cities and that it is not funneled through King County.
- Identify priorities before making investments.
- Address deferred maintenance. The state has provided tools to address this, but not enough.
- Address crumbling rural road infrastructure as this affects schools and evacuation routes. Some evacuation routes are gravel and have potholes.
- Choose priority projects.
- Identify what factors to take into account and how to weight each factor.
- Identify each jurisdiction's priorities for transportation infrastructure.
- Look into the transportation infrastructure rankings of other local jurisdictions.

Other Next Step Ideas

- Focus on total mobility and optimize the infrastructure and services we have.
- Consider how we will use our dollars to address capacity needs.
- Do not just focus on replacing roads but on how to fund them.
- Focus on the greater impacts of how we plan roads and address underlying issues.
- Determine how to maintain what we have with the revenue sources we have.
- Determine how to invest in our infrastructure efficiently.
- Determine how to add capacity without necessarily adding lanes.
- Consider how to get the State to play a part in this effort and invest in the regional transportation system.
- Use a mechanism to address how cities impact each other's traffic.
- Consider mobility for freight versus mobility for people. Mobility is about moving people, not just cars.
- Spend in the most effective way for the regional transportation system to work.

Closing Comments and Next Steps

The City of Kenmore and King County provided closing comments.

- **City of Kenmore closing comments:** We will look for opportunities to work through PSRC to address regional road network needs. There are many opportunities to work together.
- **King County closing comments:** This has been a robust discussion. It is fair to say there is not a consensus in the room about solutions, but we're hearing that people want to work together. An important point was raised about the extent to which growth should pay for growth. Also, a question was brought up about how utilization of the system should be tied to funding the system. There was also discussion about old fashion versus new funding methods. There must be a long-term discussion about the accuracy and appropriateness of VMT funding mechanisms and we should also consider a means test for VMT funding. Additionally, a lot of traffic comes from other counties so this should be addressed. King County looks forward to working with Kenmore, Kirkland, Seattle, other cities, and SCA. We will continue this conversation.

Additionally, four public comments, from two individuals, were provided at the meeting. Public comments addressed the following topics:

- Capacity projects
- Decision-making by jurisdictions

- Regional impact fees
- Issaquah-Hobart Road
- Working with other counties
- Continuing RTSI work through a small group of elected officials

As a next step, a meeting summary, and any public comments received, would be circulated to the RTSI Technical and Elected Official Committees within a few weeks of this meeting. Also, while additional RTSI data will be provided on the RTSI website (www.regionaltransportationsystem.org), some of the specific data requests at this meeting should be directed to Ben Bakkenta from PSRC: BBakkenta@psrc.org; 206-971-3286.

City Participants, King County Elected Officials, and General Public

Name	Position	Affiliation
Cynthia Adkins	Mayor	City of Medina
Genesee Adkins	Chief of Staff, Department of Transportation	City of Seattle
Will Appleton	Public Works Director	City of SeaTac
Jay Arnold	Deputy Mayor	City of Kirkland
Dave Asher	Councilmember	City of Kirkland
David Baker	Mayor	City of Kenmore
Nancy Backus	Mayor	City of Auburn
Claudia Balducci	Councilmember	King County
Boyd Benson	City Engineer/Public Works Director	City of Duvall
Debbie Bertlin	Mayor	City of Mercer Island
Angela Bierney	Councilmember	City of Redmond
Regan Bolli	City Manager	City of Covington
Jeff Brauns	Public Works Director	City of Newcastle
Tom Carpenter	Resident	Resident
Brandon Carver	Public Works Director	City of Des Moines
Jonathan Chicquette	Mayor	City of Normandy Park
Dow Constantine	Executive	King County
Randy Corman	Councilmember	City of Renton
Allen Dauterman	Councilmember	City of Newcastle
April Delchamps	Senior Transportation Planner	City of Kent
Davina Duerr	Deputy Mayor	City of Bothell
Allan Ekberg	Mayor	City of Tukwila
Jim Ferrell	Mayor	City of Federal Way
Cyntha Foley	Policy Analyst	Sound Cities Association
Ingrid Gaub	Assistant Public Works Director and City Engineer	City of Auburn
Ken Hearing	Mayor	City of North Bend
Dave Hill	Mayor	City of Algona
Fran Hollums	Councilmember	City of Covington
Dave Kaplan	Councilmember	City of Des Moines
Conrad Lee	Councilmember	City of Bellevue
Steve Leniszewski	Public Works Director	City of Sammamish

Name	Position	Affiliation
Erin Leonhart	Interim Deputy City Manager	City of Bothell
Robert Lindskov	City Engineer	City of Covington
Kim Lisk	Mayor	City of Carnation
Matt Mahoney	Councilmember	City of Des Moines
Dan Marcinko	Parks and Public Works Director	City of Snoqualmie
Hank Margeson	Councilmember	City of Redmond
Krystal Marx	Councilmember	City of Burien
James Mayhew	Councilmember	City of Snoqualmie
Heather Munden		City of Snoqualmie
Amy Ockerlander	Mayor	City of Duvall
Linda Olson	Councilmember	City of Maple Valley
Mary Lou Pauly	Mayor	City of Issaquah
Rick Perez	City Traffic Engineer	City of Federal Way
Joel Pfundt	Transportation Engineering Manager	City of Kirkland
Mark Phillips	Councilmember	City of Lake Forest Park
Dana Ralph	Mayor	City of Kent
Brian Roberts	Assistant Public Works Director	City of Burien
Patty Rubstello	Assistant Secretary	Washington State Department of Transportation
Jesse Salomon	Deputy Mayor	City of Shoreline
Chris Searcy	City Administrator	City of Enumclaw
Jim Seitz	Transportation Director	City of Renton
Michael Siefkes	Mayor	City of SeaTac
Nytasha Sowers	Transportation Services Manager	City of Shoreline
Jessica Steed		City of Algona
Bernie Talmas	Mayor	City of Woodinville
Scott Tkach	Public Works Director	City of Maple Valley
Anthony Wright	Councilmember	City of Enumclaw

King County, Sound Cities Association, PSRC, and Consultant Staff

Name	Position	Affiliation
Chris Arkills	Government Relations Officer	King County Executive Office
Ben Bakkenta	Program Manager	Puget Sound Regional Council
Brenda Bauer	Director	King County Road Services Division
Rick Brater	County Road Engineer	King County Road Services Division
Dylan Brown	District 3 Legislative Aide	King County Council
Brent Champaco	Public Information Officer	King County Department of Transportation
Ed Conyers	Engineering Services Section Manager	King County Road Services Division
Lise Kaye	King County Council	Analyst
Evan Lewis	Associate	Triangle Associates, Inc.
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