



Motion No. M2026-19

Master Research Agreement with the University of Washington Mobility Innovation Center

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:
Rider Experience and Operations Committee	05/07/2026	Recommend to Board
Board	05/28/2026	Final Action

Staff name:	Staff title:
Nadia Anderson	Chief Strategy Officer
Suzanne Schreck	Capital Innovation Senior Program Manager

Proposed action

Authorizes the chief executive officer to execute a Master Research Agreement with the University of Washington on behalf of its Mobility Innovation Center to perform research across a wide variety of areas and topics to support Sound Transit's planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

Key features summary

- This action would authorize a Master Research Agreement with the University of Washington (UW) Mobility Innovation Center (MIC) to address research needs across the agency and create a framework that Sound Transit can use to engage any department of UW to support research and innovation in areas of need, and establishes guidelines for intellectual property, licensing, and data security.
- Staff has engaged with UW on a variety of research projects over the past decade and has determined that UW has a depth of knowledge and expertise in a vast range of subject matter areas that support Sound Transit's work, and a single agreement will reduce staff time required to review and negotiate terms.
- Following execution of a Master Research Agreement with UW, the Parties will execute task orders consistent with the agreement. The Master Research Agreement has a 6-year term.
- Business units desiring to execute a task order under this Master Research Agreement will fund the task order out of their own budgets.
- The UW is scheduled to approve the execution of this agreement following Sound Transit's board decision.

Background

Sound Transit in general and the Innovation and Research program has entered into a wide range of one-off agreements with UW for various projects, including the below agreements for ORCA data analysis, research related to the planning and development of a Unified Control Center for operations, and research into vulnerable populations on Link, respectively. Staff has determined that the UW has a depth of knowledge and expertise across a vast range of subject matter areas that support Sound Transit's work, to a greater extent than could be efficiently procured through individual consultant contracts.

We are pursuing this master agreement, because our experience has been that negotiating individual agreements has proven to be time-consuming. In particular, negotiating specific data-sharing and intellectual property terms on a case-by-case basis has taken hours of staff time and added weeks and sometimes months to project schedules. It will benefit both Sound Transit and the UW to have one agreement that can be used to cover all of our needs.

Sound Transit Business Unit	Agreement Name	Agreement Purpose	Agreement Amount
Research and Innovation	On-Call Research and Development Support Agreement (GA 0012-24)	Research and Development of a Unified Control Center that supports expansion and collaboration between all Sound Transit modes	\$1,900,000
Research and Innovation	On-Call Research Support Agreement (GA 0124-20)	Research support on actional business intelligence from a variety of ORCA electronic fare collection	\$100,000
Service Delivery	Research and Development Support Agreement (GA 0115-24)	Conduct research study to understand drivers of disruptive passenger behaviors that impact service quality and ridership	\$4,500,000
Capital Delivery	SMART Rainer Valley Safe Project Agreement (GA 0081-24)	Implementation of safety solution leveraging intelligent sensor-based infrastructure, smart technology traffic signals, and V2X communication along the MLK corridor	\$133,000

Following execution of the Master Research Agreement, the Parties will execute task orders, the total value of which will not exceed the CEO's \$10,000,000 delegated signature authority.

The first project-based task orders we plan to perform under this agreement will focus on research into the impact of transit on low-income populations.

Fiscal information

Although there is no direct or immediate fiscal action associated with the proposed action, there may be fiscal impacts as research needs are identified by the agency. Those impacts will be addressed during future actions as they are presented.

The Master Research Agreement described in the proposed action will be assigned on a task order basis. Funding for the task orders will come from existing business unit budgets.

Disadvantaged and small business participation

Not applicable to this action.

Public involvement

Not applicable to this action.

Time constraints

A one-month delay will cause a significant impact to three different projects that are intending to use this agreement as soon as possible. Each of them is scheduled to begin in June, to coincide with the UW academic term. If staff are not able to begin the work then, it will not be able to start before September at the earliest, due to the UW schedule.

Environmental review – KH 4/20/26

Legal review – MT 5/6/26



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A motion of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority authorizing the chief executive officer to execute a Master Research Agreement with the University of Washington on behalf of its Mobility Innovation Center to perform research across a wide variety of areas and topics to support Sound Transit's planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

Background

This action would authorize a Master Research Agreement with the University of Washington (UW) Mobility Innovation Center (MIC) to address research needs across the agency and create a framework that Sound Transit can use to engage any department of UW to support research and innovation in areas of need, and establishes guidelines for intellectual property, licensing, and data security.

Staff has engaged with UW on a variety of research projects over the past decade and has determined that UW has a depth of knowledge and expertise in a vast range of subject matter areas that support Sound Transit's work, and a single agreement will reduce staff time required to review and negotiate terms.

Following execution of a Master Research Agreement with UW, the Parties will execute task orders consistent with the agreement. The Master Research Agreement has a 6-year term. Business units desiring to execute a task order under this Master Research Agreement will fund the task order out of their own budgets. The UW is scheduled to approve the execution of this agreement following Sound Transit's board decision.

Sound Transit in general and the Innovation and Research program has entered into a wide range of one-off agreements with UW for various projects, including the below agreements for ORCA data analysis, research related to the planning and development of a Unified Control Center for operations, and research into vulnerable populations on Link, respectively. Staff has determined that the UW has a depth of knowledge and expertise across a vast range of subject matter areas that support Sound Transit's work, to a greater extent than could be efficiently procured through individual consultant contracts.

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Task orders issued under the Master Research Agreement will be tracked and will be reported to the Rider Experience and Operations Committee on an annual basis.

Motion

It is hereby moved by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that the chief executive officer is authorized to execute a Master Research Agreement with the University of Washington on behalf of its Mobility Innovation Center to perform research across a wide variety of areas and topics to support Sound Transit's planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

APPROVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on May 28, 2026.

Dave Somers
Board Chair

Attest:

Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator