Comcast Cable Television Franchise

Governance & Utilities Committee

March 12, 2026

Legislation Schedule

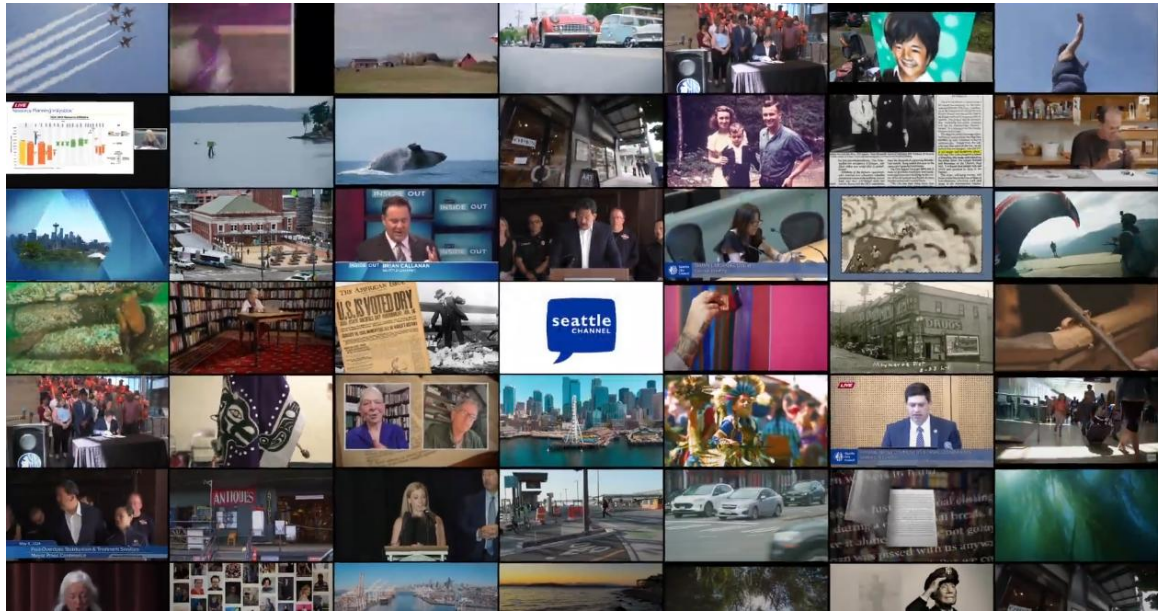
- February 12, 2026: Governance & Utilities Committee (informational briefing)
- **March 12, 2026: Governance & Utilities Committee (public hearing, briefing, discussion, and possible vote)**
- March 24, 2026: Full Council Vote
- March [Date]: Mayor signs legislation; CTO signs agreement

Purpose of Proposed Legislation

- Legislation amends the cable franchise agreement between the City of Seattle and Comcast to extend the franchise for 7 years, through January 20, 2033.
- As part of the City's negotiations with Comcast, Seattle IT conducted a community assessment and worked to retain or increase community benefits to the City and its residents.
- Raising Franchise Fee and PEG (Public, Education, and Government) Fee to help support programs funded by cable funds including Internet for All and Seattle Channel.

City and Community Priorities

- Maintain the benefits of the current franchise
- Address audit findings
- Continue support of Internet for All and Seattle Channel
- Maintain the Access for All program that provides free internet for non-profits
- Promote equity and affordability



Summary of Comparison to other Cities

- Most cities have a Franchise Fee rate of 5.0%, which is the maximum allowable rate under federal law. By moving to a Franchise Fee rate of 5.0%, Seattle is aligned with other cities.
- Seattle's previous PEG fee rate of 0.4% was lower than other cities in the comparison sample. By increasing the PEG fee rate, we are closer to the rates of other cities. The new rate of 0.6% is based on the Seattle Channel capital budget.
- Most comparison cities have complementary cable services. Tacoma stopped requiring Comcast to provide complementary cable service due to the FCC order allowing cable operators to consider the value of complementary cable service and other in-kind benefits as franchise fees subject to the 5.0% maximum.
- No other jurisdiction has a program similar to Seattle's Access for All program that provides free internet connections to non-profit organizations.
- Franchise terms of comparison cities range from 5 years to 15 years. 10 years is the most common.

	Seattle (current)	Seattle (new)	Tacoma	King County	Philadelphia	Portland	Denver	San Francisco
Franchise Fee Rate	4.4%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	3.0%	5.0%	5.0%
PEG Fee Rate	0.4%	0.6%	1.0%	$0.76 per customer per month	flat annual payment of $1.3 million	2.5%	$1.05 per customer per month	1.15%
# of PEG Channels in HD	4	4	2	2	5	8	2	0
# of total PEG Channels	8	7 (UW TV is no longer operational)	2	7	11	8	7	6
Complementary Cable to City Buildings and Schools	Included	Included	Not included	Included	Included	Included	Included	Not included
Access for All Program	Included	Included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Comcast Grants for Internet for All	$100,000 per year; expired in 2020	Not included in the franchise (Comcast's additional support of TMF is voluntary and separate from the franchise)	Not included	$300,000 one-time grant to PEG operators	One-time grant of $500,000	Not included	Not included	Not included
Franchise Term	10 years	Adds additional 7 years	10 years	10 years	15 years	10 years	5 years	10 years
Year Franchise Began	2016	Pending 2026	2023	2016	2015	2021	2023	2018

Questions