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For Immediate Release

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FAA To Delay Airport Tower Closures until June 15 Renton Air Traffic Tower Among Those Slated for Closure

RENTON: The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced today that it will delay the closures of all 149 federal contract air traffic control towers until June 15. The tower at Renton Municipal Airport is one of the air traffic control towers that had been scheduled for closure April 21. Last month, the FAA announced it would eliminate funding for these towers as part of the agency's required \$637 million budget cuts under sequestration.

"We're pleased to hear that the FAA has delayed the closure of our tower," said Renton Mayor Denis Law. "Our number one priority is public safety, and we hope that the FAA will reconsider this closure and resolve their budget issues in a way that doesn't close the tower and potentially put the public at risk."

The City of Renton filed a petition for review in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals Wednesday, April 3, challenging the closure of the Renton tower. The city filed the petition challenging the process by which the FAA decided to close the towers. Many other airports across the country have filed similar challenges.

According to the FAA this additional time will allow the agency to attempt to resolve multiple legal challenges to the closure decisions. Extending the transition deadline will give the FAA and airports more time to execute the changes to the National Airspace System.

On March 22, the FAA announced that it would stop federal funding for 149 contract towers across the country. A phased, four-week closure process was scheduled to begin Sunday, April 7. That phased closure process will no longer occur. Instead, the FAA has announced it will stop funding all 149 towers on June 15 and will close the facilities unless the airports decide to continue operations as nonfederal contract towers.

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