



# King County

1200 King County  
Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

## Meeting Agenda Regional Transit Committee

**Councilmembers:**

*Teresa Mosqueda, Chair  
Jorge Barón, Dave Upthegrove  
Alternate:*

**Sound Cities Association:**

*Joseph Cimaomo Jr., Vice Chair; Covington; Barbara de Michele, Issaquah;  
Susan Honda, Federal Way; Ryan McIrvine, Renton; Betsy Robertson, Shoreline;  
Katherine Ross, Snoqualmie, Toni Troutner, Kent; Janice Zahn, Bellevue  
Alternates: Neal Black, Kirkland; Paul Charbonneau, Newcastle;  
JC Harris, Des Moines; Karen Howe, Sammamish*

**City of Seattle:**

*Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka  
Alternate: Robert Kettle*

*Lead Staff: Mary Bourguignon (206-263-3296)  
Committee Clerk: Marka Steadman (206-477-0887)*

**3:00 PM**

**Wednesday, April 17, 2024**

**Hybrid Meeting**

**Hybrid Meetings:** Attend King County Council committee meetings in person in Council Chambers (Room 1001), 516 3rd Avenue in Seattle, or through remote access. Details on how to attend and/or provide comment remotely are listed below.

Pursuant to K.C.C. 1.24.035 A. and F., this meeting is also noticed as a meeting of the Metropolitan King County Council, whose agenda is limited to the committee business. In this meeting only the rules and procedures applicable to committees apply and not those applicable to full council meetings.

**HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT:** The Regional Transit Committee values community input and looks forward to hearing from you on agenda items.

	<p>Sign language and interpreter services can be arranged given sufficient notice (206-848-0355). TTY Number - TTY 711.</p> <p>Council Chambers is equipped with a hearing loop, which provides a wireless signal that is picked up by a hearing aid when it is set to 'T' (Telecoil) setting.</p>	
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There are three ways to provide public comment:

1. In person: You may attend the meeting and provide comment in the Council Chambers.
2. By email: You may comment in writing on current agenda items by submitting your email comments to [kcccomitt@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kcccomitt@kingcounty.gov). If your email is received by 1:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, your email comments will be distributed to the committee members and appropriate staff prior to the meeting.
3. Remote attendance at the meeting by phone or computer (see "Connecting to the Webinar" below).

You may provide oral comment on current agenda items during the meeting’s public comment period. You are not required to sign up in advance. Comments are limited to current agenda items.

You have the right to language access services at no cost to you. To request these services, please contact Language Access Coordinator, Tera Chea at 206-477-9259 or email [tera.chea2@kingcounty.gov](mailto:tera.chea2@kingcounty.gov) by 8:00 a.m. three business days prior to the meeting.

**CONNECTING TO THE WEBINAR:**

Webinar ID: 824 1078 7866

By computer using the Zoom application at <https://zoom.us/join> and the webinar ID above.

Via phone by calling 1-253-215-8782 and using the webinar ID above.



**HOW TO WATCH/LISTEN TO THE MEETING REMOTELY:** There are several ways to watch or listen in to the meeting:

- 1) Stream online via this link: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/kctv>, or input the link web address into your web browser.
- 2) Watch King County TV on Comcast Channel 22 and 322(HD) and Astound Broadband Channels 22 and 711(HD)
- 3) Listen to the meeting by telephone – See “Connecting to the Webinar” above.

To help us manage the meeting, if you do not wish to be called upon for public comment please use the Livestream or King County TV options listed above, if possible, to watch or listen to the meeting.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call

To show a PDF of the written materials for an agenda item, click on the agenda item below.

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3. **Approval of Minutes** p. 4

*March 20, 2024 meeting*

4. **Chair's Report**

5. **General Manager's Report**

6. **Public Comment**

**Briefing**

7. [Briefing No. 2024-B0050](#) p. 7

Transit Safety and Security (including Metro's SaFE Reform Initiative)

*DeAnna Martin, Chief of Staff, Metro Transit Department*

*Rebecca Frankhouser, Chief Safety Officer, Director Safety & Security Division, Metro Transit Department*

*Jeremy Une, Metro bus operator, Member, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 587.*

8. [Briefing No. 2024-B0051](#) p. 33

Metro's Vanpool, Metro Flex, and Community Van Programs



*Melisa Allan, Transportation Planner III, Metro Transit Department*

*Brian Henry, Transportation Planner IV, Metro Transit Department*

*Victoria Tobin, Rideshare Coordinator, Metro Transit Department*

**Other Business**

**Adjournment**

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## Meeting Minutes Regional Transit Committee

**Councilmembers:**

**Teresa Mosqueda, Chair**  
**Jorge Barón, Dave Upthegrove**  
**Alternate:**

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**Lead Staff: Mary Bourguignon (206-263-3296)**  
**Committee Clerk: Marka Steadman (206-477-0887)**

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3:00 PM

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Hybrid Meeting

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### DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**

*Chair Mosqueda called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.*

2. **Roll Call**

**Present:** 13 - Cimaomo Jr., de Michele, McIrvine, Troutner, Zahn, Honda, Mosqueda, Barón, Hollingsworth, Saka, Black, Charbonneau and Howe  
**Excused:** 3 - Ross, Upthegrove and Robertson

3. **Approval of Minutes**

*Vice Chair Cimaomo moved approval of the February 21, 2024, meeting minutes. There being no objections, the minutes were approved.*

4. **Chair's Report**

*This item was not addressed.*

**5. General Manager's Report**

*Michelle Allison, General Manager, Metro Transit, provided a brief introduction of herself and her background, followed by comments on Metro activities over the past month, celebration of transit appreciation week, current ridership recovery numbers, community engagement efforts, and answered questions from the members.*

**6. Public Comment**

*The following individual provided public comment:*

*Alex Tsimerman*

**Briefing****7. Briefing No. 2024-B0021**

Update on development of RapidRide Prioritization Plan

*Katie Chalmers, Transit Service Development Manager, Metro Transit Department; Erik Rundell, Transportation Planner, System Expansion and Integration, Metro Transit Department; and Corey Holder, Transportation Planner, System Expansion and Integration, Metro Transit Department; briefed the committee and answered questions from the members. Christina O'Claire, Director, Mobility Division, Metro Transit Department, answered questions from the members.*

**This matter was Presented**

**8. Briefing No. 2024-B0043**

Metro's approach to community engagement

*Maha Jahshan, Director of Partnerships & Engagement, Metro Transit Department; and Tristan Cook, Strategic Communications and Engagement, Metro Transit Department; briefed the committee and answered questions from the members.*

**This matter was Presented**

**Discussion and Possible Action****9. RTC Resolution No. RTC2024-01**

A RESOLUTION adopting the 2024 work plan for the King County regional transit committee.

*Mary Bourguignon, Council staff, commented on recent updates to the plan.*

*Due to the design of the legislative tracking software used to produce the proceedings, the vote on this item is misreported. The correct vote is:*

*Yes: 10 Barón, Cimaomo Jr., de Michele, Hollingsworth, Honda, McIrvin, Mosqueda, Saka, Troutner, Zahn, Black voting as alternate for Robertson, and Charbonneau voting as alternate for Ross.*

No: 0

Excused: 2 - Robertson, Ross and Upthegrove

**This matter was Passed**

**Yes:** 10 - Cimaomo Jr., de Michele, McIrvn, Troutner, Zahn, Honda, Mosqueda, Barón, Hollingsworth, Saka, Black and Charbonneau

**Excused:** 4 - Ross, Upthegrove, Robertson and Howe

**Other Business**

*There was no further business to come before the committee.*

**Adjournment**

*The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.*

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk's Signature



## King County

# Metropolitan King County Council Regional Transit Committee

### STAFF REPORT

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	7	<b>Name:</b>	Mary Bourguignon
<b>Proposed No.:</b>	2024-B0050	<b>Date:</b>	April 17, 2024

### SUBJECT

Today's briefing will provide an update on Metro's efforts to ensure safety and security for transit riders and employees, including an update on Metro's Safety, Security and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative. A Metro bus operator will share day-to-day experiences. Metro leadership will discuss safety and security policy and initiatives.

### SUMMARY

Metro operates a number of safety and security functions, including the Metro Transit Police (a division of the King County Sheriff's Office), transit security officers (contracted staff), and initiatives implemented as a result of Metro's SaFE Reform Initiative.

Updates on safety incidents on transit can be found at Metro's Strategic Plan dashboard.<sup>1</sup>

### BACKGROUND

**Metro safety, security, and fare enforcement functions.** The King County Metro Transit Department (Metro) is the largest provider of public transit in the Puget Sound region. Metro operates several safety and security functions:

- **Metro Transit Police (MTP)** is an 81-member division of the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO)<sup>2</sup> under contract to Metro<sup>3</sup> that enforces the Transit Code of Conduct.<sup>4</sup> MTP focuses its efforts on Metro services in Seattle, South King County, North King County, and parts of unincorporated King County.<sup>5</sup> It does not currently patrol the Water Taxi, Access, Metro Flex, or Seattle Streetcar.

<sup>1</sup> Metro Strategic Plan Dashboard ([link](#))

<sup>2</sup> Members of the MTP are commissioned police officers.

<sup>3</sup> Motion 11711 approved Transit Security Policies that included guidance on the staffing model for the Metro Transit Police.

<sup>4</sup> KCC 28.96

<sup>5</sup> Metro reports that MTP maintains a small presence in incorporated East King County area when extreme circumstances are present. When calls come into 911 to report a crime on transit property, local police departments often take the lead on responding as they are better positioned to be the first to arrive.

MTP staff patrol buses, routes, bus shelters, and park and ride lots, as well as Seattle's central business district; undertake and support criminal investigations; provide anti-terrorism services; coordinate with schools in response to issues with students using Metro; and manage community-based programs such as the Operator Assault Program and Sexual Misconduct Reduction Program.

During a briefing to the Council in October 2023,<sup>6</sup> MTP leadership noted that MTP was operating at 70% staffing levels and was using voluntary overtime and emphasis patrols to address ongoing staffing shortfalls.

- **Fare Enforcement** operates on bus routes on which passengers can pay before boarding.<sup>7</sup> Fare enforcement officers inspect each rider on a coach for proof of payment and issue warnings or violations for passengers who have not paid a fare. Fare enforcement is contracted out to a private company, Securitas, USA.

Metro's fare enforcement operations have been suspended since 2020. Instead, fare enforcement officers have been deployed to Metro's busiest routes to provide education and outreach to passengers, focusing on people in need.

- **Transit and Facility Security Operations** provides patrol and security at Metro's facilities and park-and-ride lots. Members of this team monitor security cameras and intrusion alarms at Metro facilities and enforce parking regulations and safety at park-and-ride lots. This function is contracted out to a private company, Securitas, USA.

The County's adopted 2023-2024 budget<sup>8</sup> provided funding for an additional 70 transit security officers, bringing the total to 140. Metro reports that these additional officers have been hired and are currently at work on buses and at Metro facilities carrying out safety and security functions.

**SaFE Reform Initiative.** As part of the 2021-2022 biennial budget, the Council included a proviso that recognized "the vital importance of reimagining and reforming safety and security functions" within Metro.<sup>9</sup> The implementation report<sup>10</sup> for this effort, which Metro named the Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative, described potential action steps, including:

- **Ongoing measurement and reporting.** The implementation report proposed that Metro expand measuring and reporting efforts, including investigating new safety and security measures, adding new measures to existing dashboards, and streamlining data reporting.

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<sup>6</sup> 2023-B0108

<sup>7</sup> Metro does not provide fare enforcement for Sound Transit, even for those services operated by Metro under contract to Sound Transit. For most Metro buses, passengers pay when boarding; however, some RapidRide and Downtown Seattle bus stops allow off-board ORCA readers allowing passengers to pay before boarding and then board the bus through any door.

<sup>8</sup> Ordinance 19546

<sup>9</sup> Ordinance 19120, Section 113, Proviso 5, as amended by Ordinance 19364, Section 86, Proviso P5

<sup>10</sup> Motion 16128



- **Oversight of transit safety and security.** The implementation report proposed using two existing advisory groups to provide ongoing oversight of transit safety and security: King County’s Public Safety Advisory Committee<sup>11</sup> and the Transit Advisory Commission.<sup>12</sup> The report also noted that the King County Office of Law Enforcement Oversight<sup>13</sup> had been providing independent oversight of the King County Sheriff’s Office.
- **Restructuring transit safety and security functions.** The implementation report identified concepts related to MTP, including possibilities for alternative enforcement, removing minor violations, providing automatic messaging regarding transit rules, and deploying community policing strategies. It also identified concepts related to other transit safety and security functions, including piloting support teams, stationing security officers at transit centers, and providing behavioral resources at transit centers.
- **Restructuring fare enforcement.** The implementation report identified concepts related to fare enforcement, including developing an alternative fare enforcement program, removing minor violations, clarifying standard operating procedures, and piloting a resource assistance program.
- **Increasing the use of non-police services.** The implementation report identified concepts to increase the use of non-police services, including increasing Metro’s role in regional social services, developing social services partnerships, and piloting support teams.

The SaFE implementation report noted that Metro’s priorities for the SaFE Reform Initiative include:

- Increasing presence in and around transit hubs
- Providing timely and appropriate response realized in a way that is genuinely equitable for all transit riders
- Prioritizing community voices
- Providing spaces for intentional partnerships that directly impact and improve transit
- Allowing community to take ownership of current and future safety-related Metro pilot programs to improve customer transit experience.<sup>14</sup>

**SaFE Reform Initiative implementation.** Over the last year, Metro has implemented several strategies that were identified in the SaFE Reform Initiative Implementation Report. These include:

- **Transit security officers.** As part of the 2023-2024 biennial budget, the Executive proposed and the Council approved funding to double the number of

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<sup>11</sup> Ordinance 19249 ([link](#)), as currently constituted, the PSAC expires upon confirmation of a new Sheriff.

<sup>12</sup> KCC 2.124.010 ([link](#))

<sup>13</sup> King County Charter §265 ([link](#))

<sup>14</sup> Proposed Motion 2024-0010, Attachment A, Page 8

transit security officers from 70 to 140.<sup>15</sup> Metro staff have stated that these additional transit security officers were in place by mid-2023.

- **Transit ambassadors.** Metro established a group of transit ambassadors, who are bus operators on light duty service, who are stationed through Seattle and South King County, as well as at special events, to provide information and assistance to transit riders. The group currently includes 12 ambassadors.
- **Behavioral health team.** Metro coordinated with King County's Department of Community & Human Services (DCHS) to establish a team of six behavioral health specialists, who are stationed at the Aurora Village and Burien transit centers. Since the team launched, Metro reports that team members had 4,5040 contacts with people in need of help, with 213 crisis response or de-escalation events.

Metro notes that during the near-term, its focus is to understand and bring together internal and external players responsible for maintenance, cleaning, outreach, and security at and around the transit stops/areas, as well as to fill in gaps and improve efficiency of coordination. Over the longer term, Metro plans to increase coordination with other areas in the region, create consistency across Metro on how to respond to various issues, and connect with human services providers.

Metro notes that a number of resources are available to its employees, including the Transit Control Center, whole employee care, building life safety, de-escalation training and operator safety partitions, the Pathways Program, pre-trip inspection technology, video management systems on coaches, and base security improvements.

Metro notes that a number of resources are available for riders, asking riders that, in the event of an incident, they should tell the driver, go to [www.kingcounty.gov/metro/ride](http://www.kingcounty.gov/metro/ride) or call 206-553-3000, or call/text 911 if there is an emergency.

During today's briefing, Metro staff will provide updated information about Metro's safety and security initiatives.

## **INVITED**

- DeAnna Martin, Chief of Staff, Metro Transit Department
- Rebecca Frankhouser, Chief Safety Officer, Metro Transit Department
- Jeremy Une, Metro bus operator, Member, Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 587

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Metro transit safety presentation

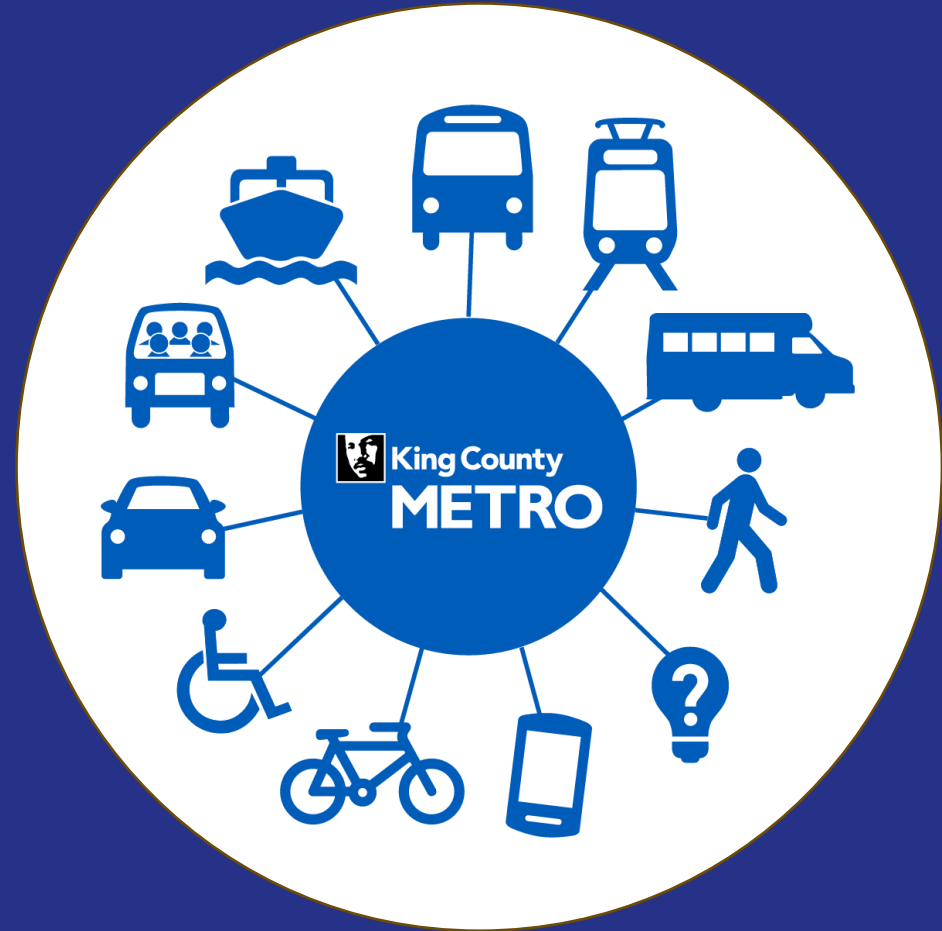
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<sup>15</sup> Ordinance 19546

# Metro Safety

Regional Transit Committee

April 17, 2024



**Safe, clean, reliable**

# Overall Safety Trends

Trending CSRs Per Million Boardings

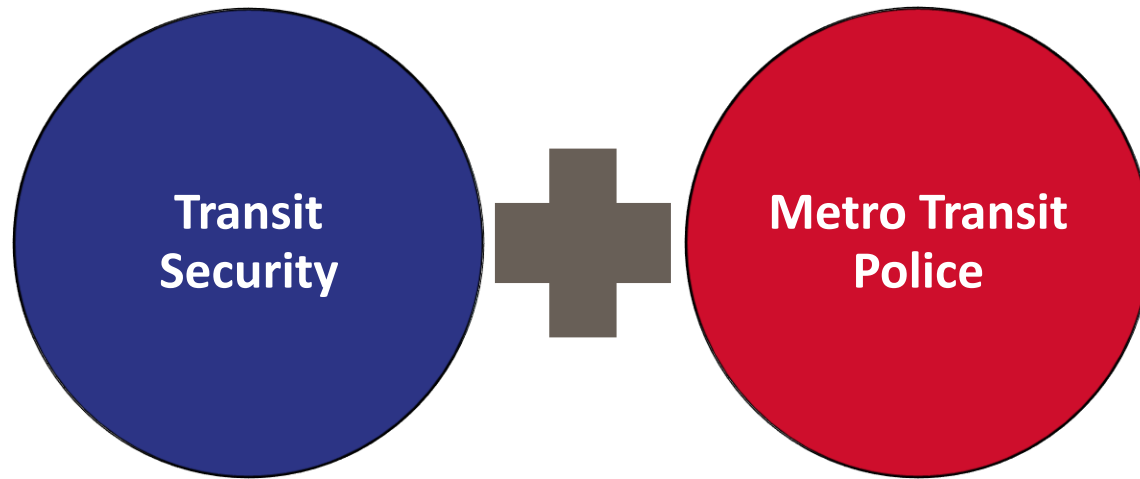


Coverage ● All Routes

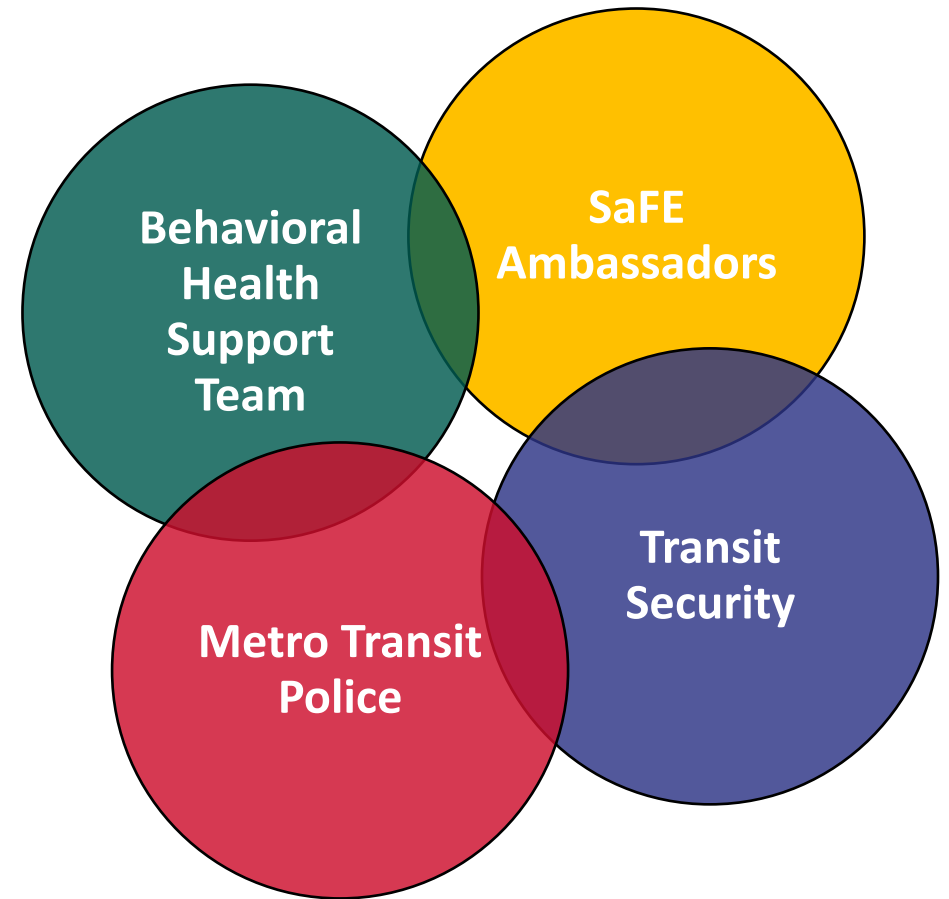


# Metro's safety model

# Public Safety Model



# Care and Presence Model



# Who works on safety at Metro?



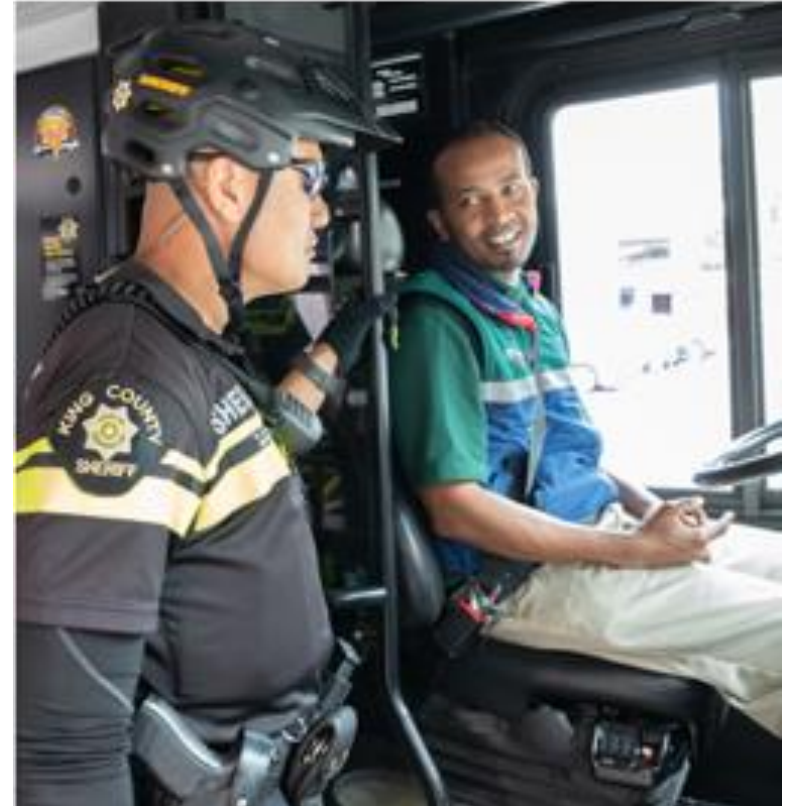
# Safety, Security and Quality Assurance (SSQA)

- Previously a section in Metro's General Manager's Office.
- Made a Metro division by King County Council in 2024.
- Oversees emergency management, industrial safety, operations safety, physical safety, quality assurance, and wellness.



# Metro Transit Police

- SSQA works with Metro Transit Police to ensure the safety and security of passengers and staff by patrolling, responding to emergencies, enforcing laws, and investigating criminal activities.
- Collaborative meetings and briefings with partner agencies including Sound Transit Police and the Seattle Police Department.



# Metro Transit Security Officers

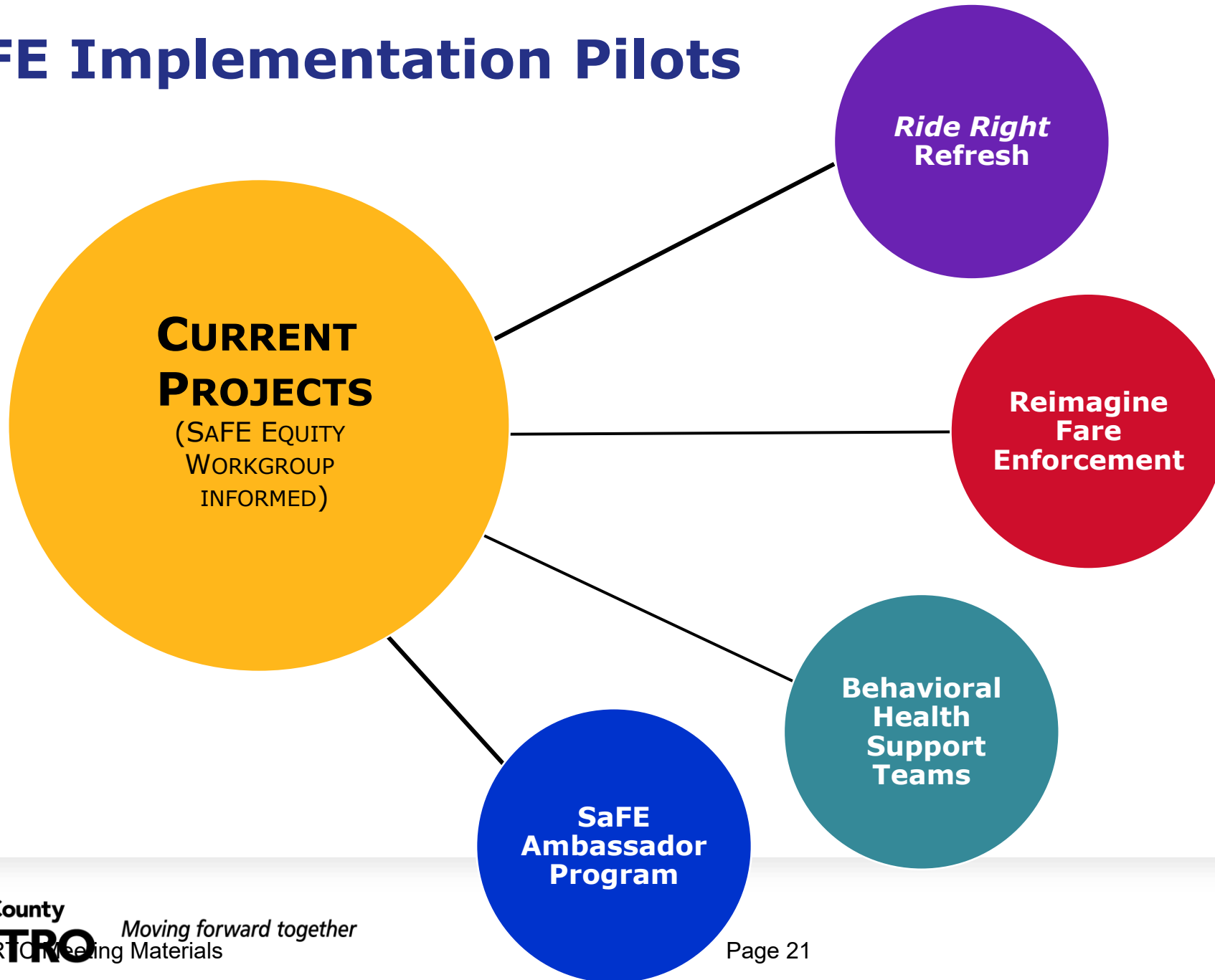
- SSQA oversees the Transit Security Officers (TSOs) that provide presence, deter incidents, monitor activities, address behavioral issues, and assist customers and operators with questions and life safety concerns.
- Pilot that began in March 2023.
- Coverage by approximately 140 TSO's includes:
  - 24/7 coverage at Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers
  - Final stops at end of bus routes
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave & Jackson Ave
  - Bus ridealongs
  - Monitoring cameras



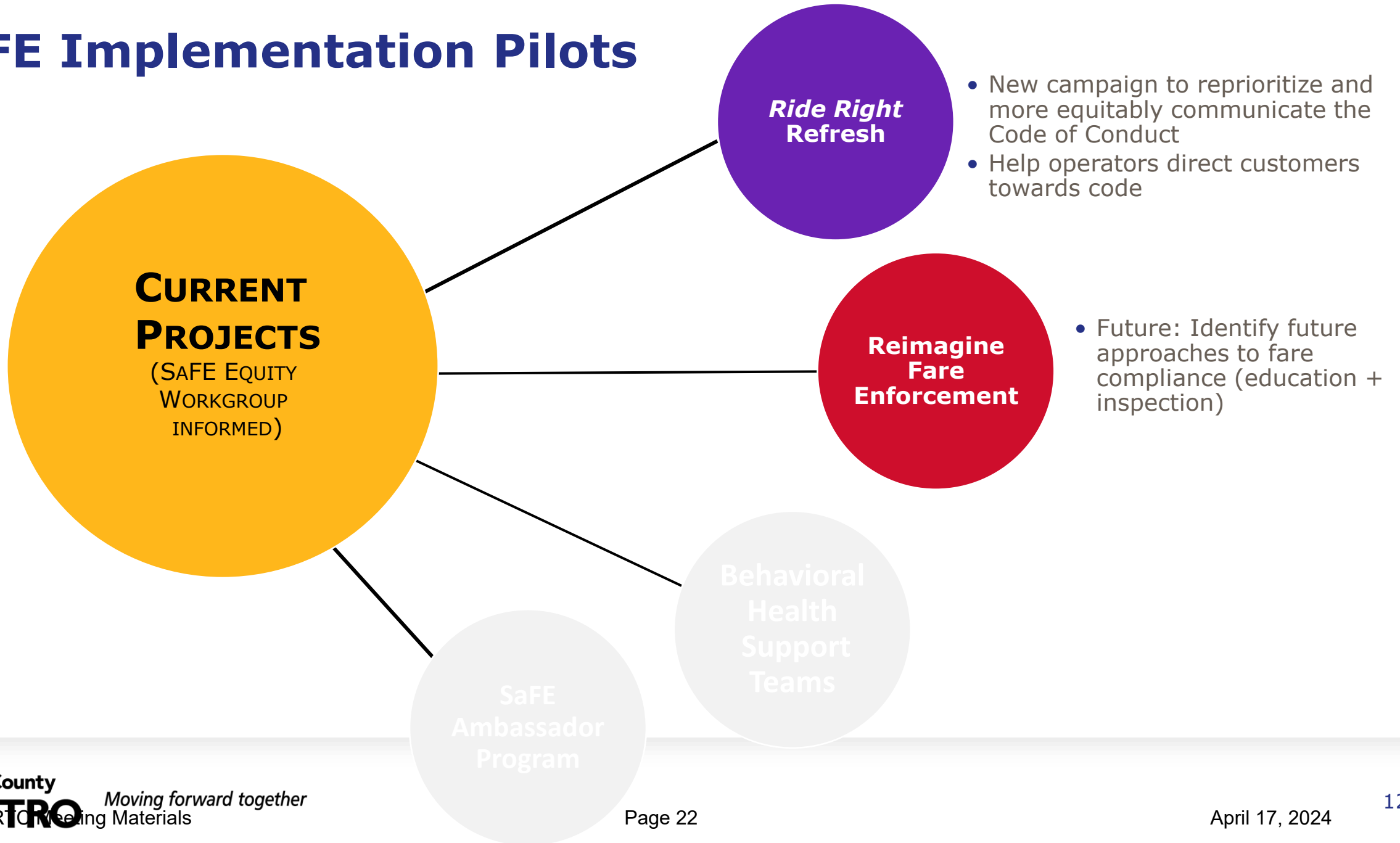
# Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform

*"Safe, accessible, and equitable transit that is co-created to support community well-being."*

# SaFE Implementation Pilots



# SaFE Implementation Pilots





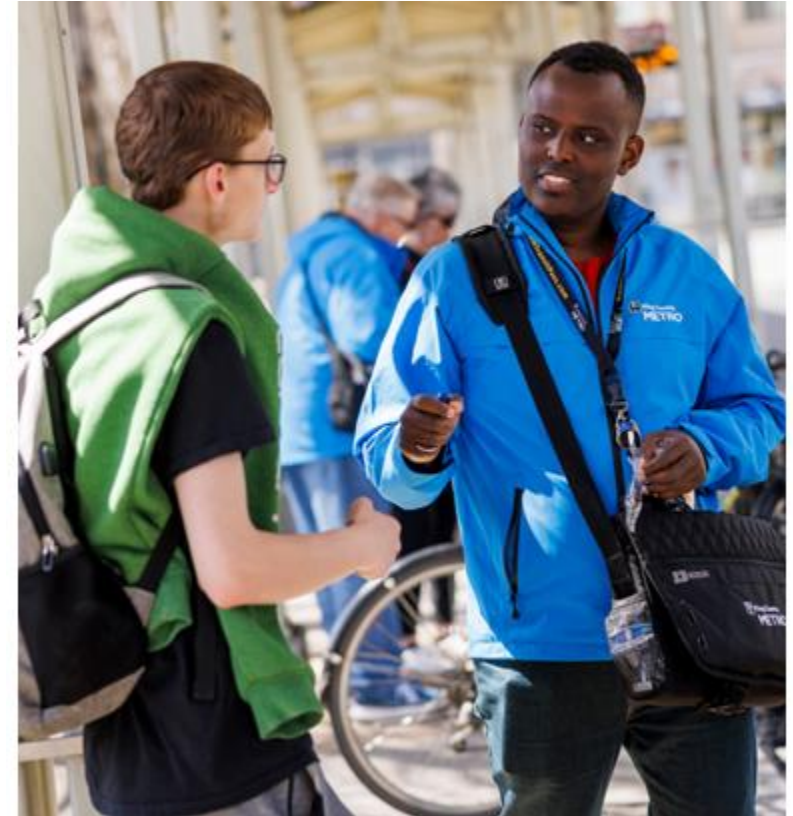
# Behavioral Health Support Pilot

- Provide basic needs for customers in crisis (cold weather supplies, food, hygiene items) and provide connection or referral to shelters/housing, medical care, and case management.
- 6 Behavioral Health Specialists offer assistance and resources on-site at Burien Transit Center.
- Partnership with King County Department of Community and Human Services.
- Since launch, the team has only requested police three times during its 4,504 total contacts and 213 crisis response/de-escalation events.



# SaFE Ambassadors Pilot

- Provide in-person customer service, interacting with both the public and bus operators, and report issues such as garbage, vandalism, or maintenance needs.
- 12 light-duty bus operators working as Ambassadors create a welcoming presence and offer a broad knowledge of the system.
- In-language assistance in over 140 languages.





# How is safety work coordinated across Metro teams, partner agencies, and jurisdictions?

# Safety Emphasis Coordination



Improving transit safety is a responsibility shared across Metro, King County, jurisdictions, partner agencies, and communities.

# Safety Emphasis Coordination

- **Near-term:**
  - Understand and bring together all the internal and external players responsible for maintenance, cleaning, outreach, and security at and around the transit stops/areas.
  - Fill in gaps and improve efficiency of coordination.
- **Longer-term:**
  - Increase coordination with other areas in our transit region.
  - Create consistency across Metro on how we respond to various issues.
  - Connect with human services providers.

# What resources are available to employees?

# Employee Resources

## Transit Control Center



Image courtesy of Seattle Transit Blog

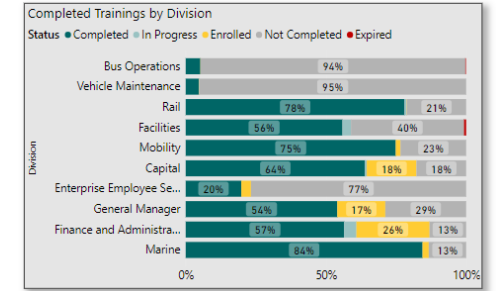
## Whole Employee Care



## Building Life Safety



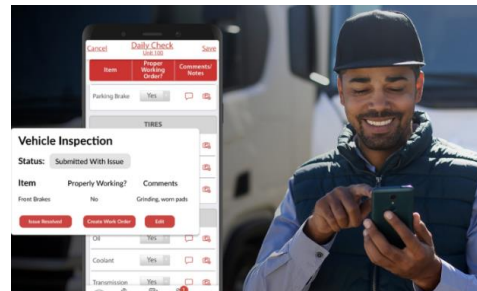
## De-escalation Training & Operator Safety Partitions



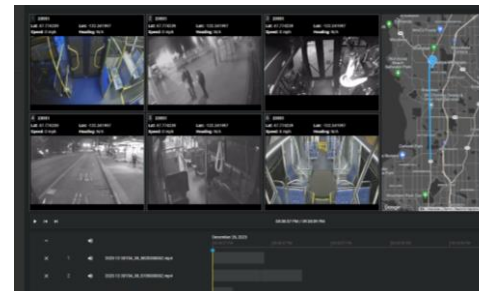
## Pathways Program



## Pre-Trip Inspection Technology



## Video Management System Technology (on coach)



## Base Security Improvements



# What resources are available to riders?

# Ride and Report

- **RIDE:** The more riders, the safer the experience.  
Plan your trip  
Prepare  
Be aware
- **REPORT:**  
Tell your driver  
Go to [kingcounty.gov/metro/ride](https://kingcounty.gov/metro/ride)  
or call 206-553-3000  
Call or text 911 if there is an emergency



# Closing and Questions





**King County**

**Metropolitan King County Council  
Regional Transit Committee**

**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	8	<b>Name:</b>	Mary Bourguignon
<b>Proposed No.:</b>	2024-B0051	<b>Date:</b>	April 17, 2024

**SUBJECT**

Today’s briefing will provide an update on several of Metro’s flexible mobility services, focusing on the Vanpool Program, Community Van, and Metro Flex.

**SUMMARY**

**Vanpool Program.** Metro operates a Vanpool Program as an alternative mobility service for individuals who don’t have convenient transit service between home and work. As of 2023, the Vanpool Program has 975 groups, with the goal of increasing to 1,200 by 2026.<sup>1</sup> Metro is in the process of implementing the County’s adopted goal<sup>2</sup> of transitioning to a 100% zero-emission fleet by 2030, with plans to procure 120 all-electric seven-passenger minivans in 2024.

**Community Van Program.** Metro’s Community Van Program<sup>3</sup> operates in Algona-Pacific, Bothell-Woodinville, Duvall-Carnation, Shoreline-Lake Forest Park, Kenmore-Kirkland, Redmond, Skyway, Sammamish, and Vashon. It offers a van for pre-scheduled trips as a driver or passenger. The cost to ride is the same as bus fare.<sup>4</sup>

**Metro Flex.** Metro Flex is an on-demand mobility service through which riders can request a ride using a phone app or through Metro’s call center or web site. The rider provides a start/end to their trip anywhere within the service area and receives a pick-up location and estimated arrival time. Metro Flex currently operates in the Juanita, Kent, Issaquah/Sammamish, Othello, Rainier Beach, Skyway, Renton Highlands, and Tukwila areas.<sup>5</sup> The cost to ride is the same as a bus fare.

Today’s briefing will provide more information on each of these services.

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<sup>1</sup> Motion 16550

<sup>2</sup> KCC 18.22.010.A.3

<sup>3</sup> Community Van Program ([link](#))

<sup>4</sup> Current Metro bus fares: free for youth, \$2.75 for adults, \$1.00 for ORCA LIFT (low-income), and \$1.00 for seniors or people with disabilities who have a Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP) ORCA.

<sup>5</sup> In Fall 2024, Metro Flex will begin service in the Kenmore/Bothell/Lake Forest Park area.

## **BACKGROUND**

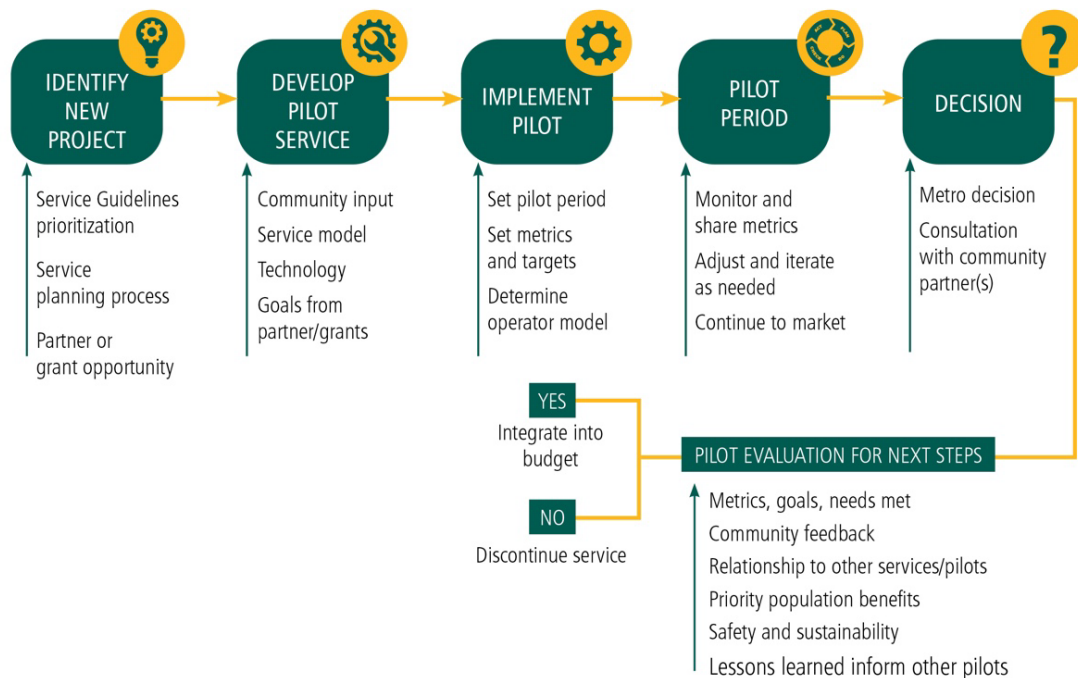
**Flexible services.** Metro’s flexible services are defined<sup>6</sup> in its adopted policy documents as transportation services tailored to meet specific community needs that operate without a fixed route. Flexible services may or may not serve designated stops or hubs, depending on service design. They are typically deployed in communities that lack the infrastructure, density, or land use to support fixed-route bus service.

Flexible services are identified in Metro’s adopted policy documents<sup>7</sup> as one of the categories of service Metro offers. These “service types,” which are defined based on the level of service a route provides, are Very frequent/RapidRide, Peak Frequent, Local, Hourly, Peak-only, and Flexible services.

Flexible services are planned and implemented by Metro following criteria outlined in the adopted Service Guidelines.<sup>8</sup> Specifically, the Service Guidelines provide guidance on planning flexible services, adding flexible services, evaluating flexible services, and reducing flexible services.

Figure 1, below, which is from the adopted Service Guidelines, outlines the process through which a flexible service is identified, developed, piloted, and evaluated.

**Figure 1.  
Life Cycle of a Pilot Project<sup>9</sup>**



<sup>6</sup> King County Metro Policy Updates, Technical Report A, July 2021 (transmitted as ancillary material to the policy documents adopted through Ordinance 19367) ([link](#))

<sup>7</sup> Ordinance 19367

<sup>8</sup> Ordinance 19367, Attachment B

<sup>9</sup> Ordinance 19367, Attachment B, p. 30

Metro notes that flexible services are prioritized based on:

- **Equity**, to serve those who need access the most
- **Partnership**, in response to opportunities to leverage resources
- **Access**, to reach jobs and community assets
- **Density**, to serve areas with adequate ridership and without high quality fixed-route service

After the pilot process for a flexible service shown in Figure 1, above, Metro conducts an evaluation, which measures:

- Equity, productivity, efficiency
- Community feedback
- Alignment with Metro's priorities, goals, and plans
- Other mobility solutions in the area
- Available resources, including staff capacity

**Vanpool Program.** Metro operates a commuter Vanpool Program as an alternative mobility service for individuals who don't have convenient transit service between home and work. Vanpools range in size, with five or more members required to start a Vanpool group.<sup>10</sup> Each group has a volunteer driver plus a bookkeeper to track mileage, ridership, and fares. Fares are based on mileage, number of riders, and size of van.<sup>11</sup> Vans are kept at the driver's house and riders usually meet at a Park & Ride lot, with each group determining their own route, parking, and operating rules.

Metro sets fares for the program (which are often subsidized by employers) to recover 100% of direct costs and at least 25% of indirect and administrative costs, as is required by the King County Code.<sup>12</sup> Fares are based on the number of commuting days, trip mileage, vehicle size, and the number of people in the Vanpool.

The Vanpool Program had 1,649 Vanpool groups operating in 2019 prior to the pandemic. Membership fell to 395 groups in 2021, then grew to 600 groups operating in 2022. In 2022, Metro reported<sup>13</sup> that commuter van fare revenue was \$5.7 million, up 40% from 2021, but continuing to fall short of the minimum needed (\$8.3 million) to cover program costs as required in the Code.<sup>14</sup> As of the end of 2023 the Vanpool Program had 5,451 participants in 975 active Vanpool groups.

As of the end of 2023, the Vanpool Program had a fleet of 1,347 vehicles that included 1,223 active and 124 retired vehicles. Metro retires Vanpool vehicles at their end of their life cycle. Lower-mileage retired Vanpool vehicles are repurposed for other rideshare

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<sup>10</sup> In response to the pandemic, Metro has temporarily reduced the minimum vanpool group size from five to three.

<sup>11</sup> Overview of Metro Vanpool Program ([link](#))

<sup>12</sup> KCC 4A.700.130

<sup>13</sup> 2023 Rate of Fare Report (2023-RPT0101)

<sup>14</sup> KCC 4A.700.130

uses, including Vanshare,<sup>15</sup> Job Access Reverse Commute,<sup>16</sup> Community Van,<sup>17</sup> and the Council's van grant program.<sup>18</sup> Higher-mileage retired Vanpool vehicles are sold,<sup>19</sup> with proceeds used to support the Vanpool Program's cost recovery requirements.<sup>20</sup>

Metro is implementing the County's adopted goal<sup>21</sup> of a 100% zero-emission rideshare fleet by 2030. Beginning in 2024, Metro will purchase only zero-emission vehicles to replace retired Vanpool vehicles and to expand the fleet.

A Vanshare provides first/last mile connections for commuters who share a van to link to public transportation (such as a train, bus, ferry, or longer-distance Vanpool). Each Vanshare must have five or more riders and a daily commute of 20 miles or less. Vanshare costs a flat \$200/month, which is split by the group or covered by an employer.

**Community Van.** Metro's Community Van Program<sup>22</sup> operates in Algona-Pacific, Bothell-Woodinville, Duvall-Carnation, Shoreline-Lake Forest Park, Kenmore-Kirkland, Redmond, Skyway, Sammamish, Snoqualmie Valley, and Vashon (with service in Tukwila coming soon). It offers a van for pre-scheduled trips as a driver or passenger. The cost to ride is the same as bus fare.<sup>23</sup>

Each Community Van program has a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) who recruits volunteer drivers, manages trips and vehicles, and promotes and maintains an info hub about the van. Metro provides vehicles, fuel, maintenance, insurance, staff funding, and monitoring. Community Vans are available 24/7, with flexibility to meet community needs.

All trips are driven by volunteer drivers and are dependent on volunteer availability. Passengers wishing to request a ride are asked to contact the coordinator for Community Van in their service area, with Metro requesting two business days' advance notice. Metro notes that Community Van programs provide a way to organize local group trips to events and activities, and also support medical appointments, food bank trips, meal deliveries, and youth trips.

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<sup>15</sup> Vanshares are available for commuters who need to share the ride to or from another public transit mode such as a park-and-ride, train station or transit hub. Given the two services are substantially the same as it relates to the context of this report, the report states that it refers to them collectively as 'vanpool,' unless otherwise noted.

<sup>16</sup> The Job Access Reverse Commute Program partners with social service organizations, local jurisdictions, and employers to assist with transportation for low-income people, specifically for job training and placement programs.

<sup>17</sup> The Community Van Program ([link](#)) is being piloted in several communities. It offers a van for pre-scheduled trips as a driver or passenger.

<sup>18</sup> Each year, the Council grants retired vanpool vans to non-profit organizations and local governments to meet the mobility needs of seniors, youth, low-income people, and people with disabilities (KCC 4.56.100.E). The program has granted more than 775 retired vans since it began in the 1990s.

<sup>19</sup> KCC 4.56.195

<sup>20</sup> KCC 4A.700.130 requires that the vanpool program must cover 100% of direct costs and 25% of indirect costs.

<sup>21</sup> KCC 18.22.010.A.3 sets the goal that the rideshare fleet will be 100% zero-emission by 2030.

<sup>22</sup> Community Van Program ([link](#))

<sup>23</sup> Current Metro bus fares: free for youth, \$2.75 for adults, \$1.00 for ORCA LIFT (low-income), and \$1.00 for seniors or people with disabilities who have a Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP) ORCA.

**Metro Flex.** On March 6, 2023, Metro’s Community Ride, Ride Pingo to Transit, and Via to Transit services were consolidated into **Metro Flex**.<sup>24</sup> Metro Flex services operate in the Juanita, Kent, Othello, Rainier Beach, Renton Highlands, Sammamish, Skyway, and Tukwila areas. Service times for Metro Flex are shown in Table 1, below.

**Table 1. Metro Flex Service Times**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Weekdays</b>	<b>Saturdays</b>	<b>Sundays</b>
Juanita	7am-7pm	--	--
Kent	5am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm
Issaquah/Sammamish	7am-6pm	9am-6pm	--
SE Seattle, Renton, Tukwila	5am-1am	5am-1am	6am-12am

Metro Flex is open to the general public. Riders can request a ride on-demand using a phone app or through Metro’s call center or web site. The rider provides a start/end to their trip anywhere within the service area and receives a pick-up location and estimated arrival time. The rider then walks to the pick-up location and joins a shared ride with a 15-minute estimated time of arrival for the ride on average. Metro Flex services have the same fare as a Metro bus and provide for free transfers to fixed-route buses, Link light rail, or Sounder commuter rail using an ORCA card.

Metro states that Metro Flex, as currently configured:

- Provides operational efficiencies
- Builds on innovations from previous services, while preserving the innovations achieved by previous services
- Streamlines branding and reduces customer confusion
- Reduces staff demands
- Achieves cost savings

During today’s briefing, Metro staff will provide updated information about Metro’s existing flexible services, as well as how flexible services are planned, piloted, marketed, and evaluated.

**INVITED**

- Melisa Allan, Transportation Planner III, Metro Transit Department
- Brian Henry, Transportation Planner IV, Metro Transit Department
- Victoria Tobin, Rideshare Coordinator, Metro Transit Department

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Metro flexible services presentation

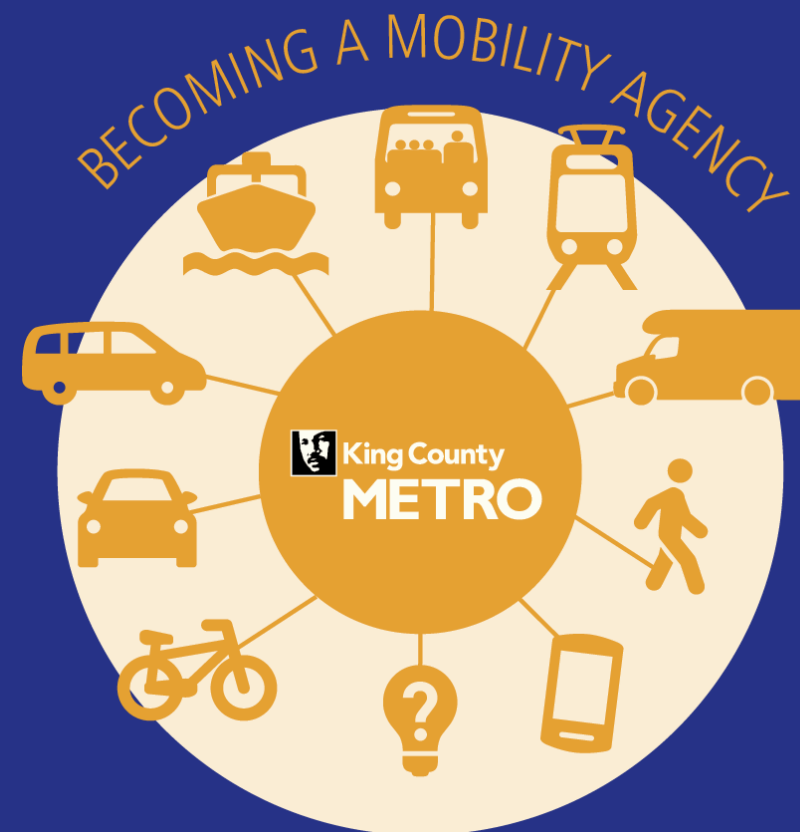
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<sup>24</sup> Metro Flex web site ([link](#))

# Community Van, Metro Flex, Vanpool and Vanshare

Regional Transit Committee

April 17, 2024





# Metro Policies

- **Strategic Plan for Public Transportation**
  - Adopt innovative services and products
- **Metro Connects**
  - Pilot new innovative flexible service models
  - Design, implement, evaluate new services
- **Service Guidelines**
  - Priority – equity, access, density
  - Evaluation – equity, productivity, efficiency, mobility options




# Community Van







# What is Community Van?

 Reservation-based rideshare service for groups of 2-11.


 Volunteer driven.


 No restrictions or qualifications to ride.

 Community Transportation Coordinators help with trip planning and scheduling.

 Metro provides vans, fuel, and insurance.

 Accessible vans available.

 Discover passes included with vans and bike racks available with some vans.

 Same cost as a one-way bus fare.

# Who can drive Community Van?

- Anyone 21+ with valid Washington state driver's license may apply as a driver.
- Volunteers are vetted and monitored by King County Metro.



- Volunteers must complete training before driving.

- Drive neighbors or donate time to the community or an organization to help someone in need.
- Drive family, friends, teams, troops or organization outings.

# Connections in the Community

## Community Transportation Coordinator Role:

- Outreach and Community events
- Form Community Partnerships
- Metro Ambassadors
- Volunteer Training
- Trip planning
- Vehicle Upkeep
- Metro Reporting



# Community Van Partnerships

**Transit to Nature** is a partnership with King County Parks and Community Van.

- ❖ Reduce barriers for access to parks, outdoors and other experiences.
- ❖ Build community centered partnerships with organizations who serve BIPOC, and other racially and economically diverse residents of King County.



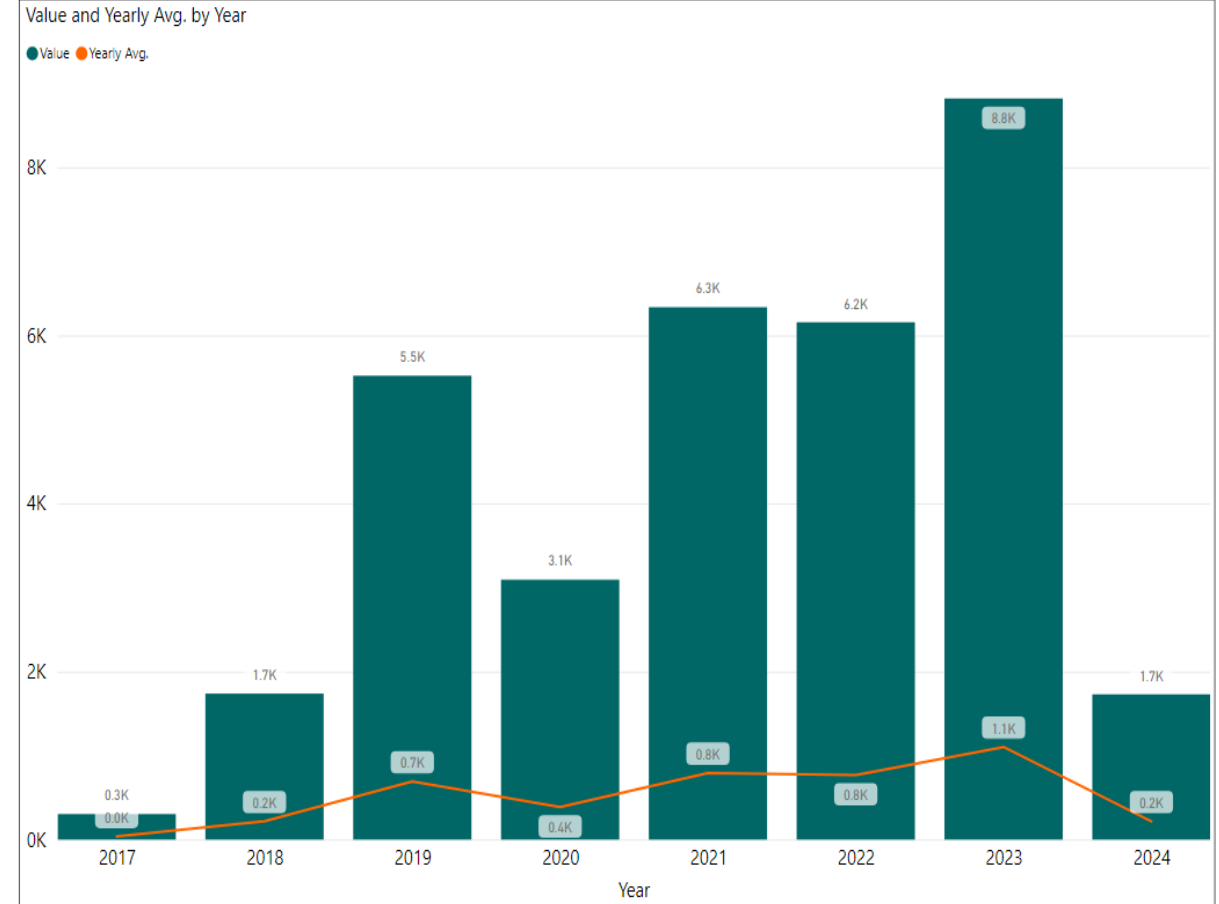
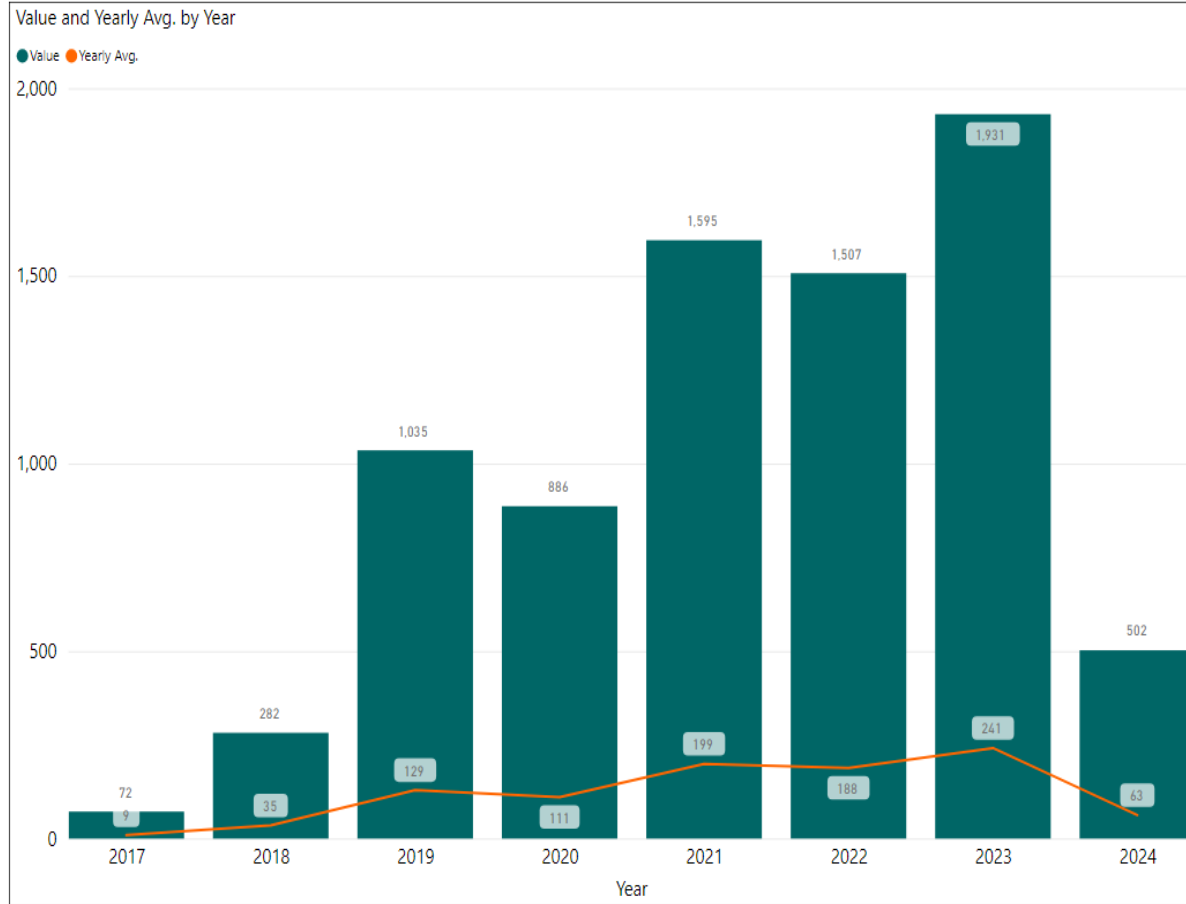


# Performance

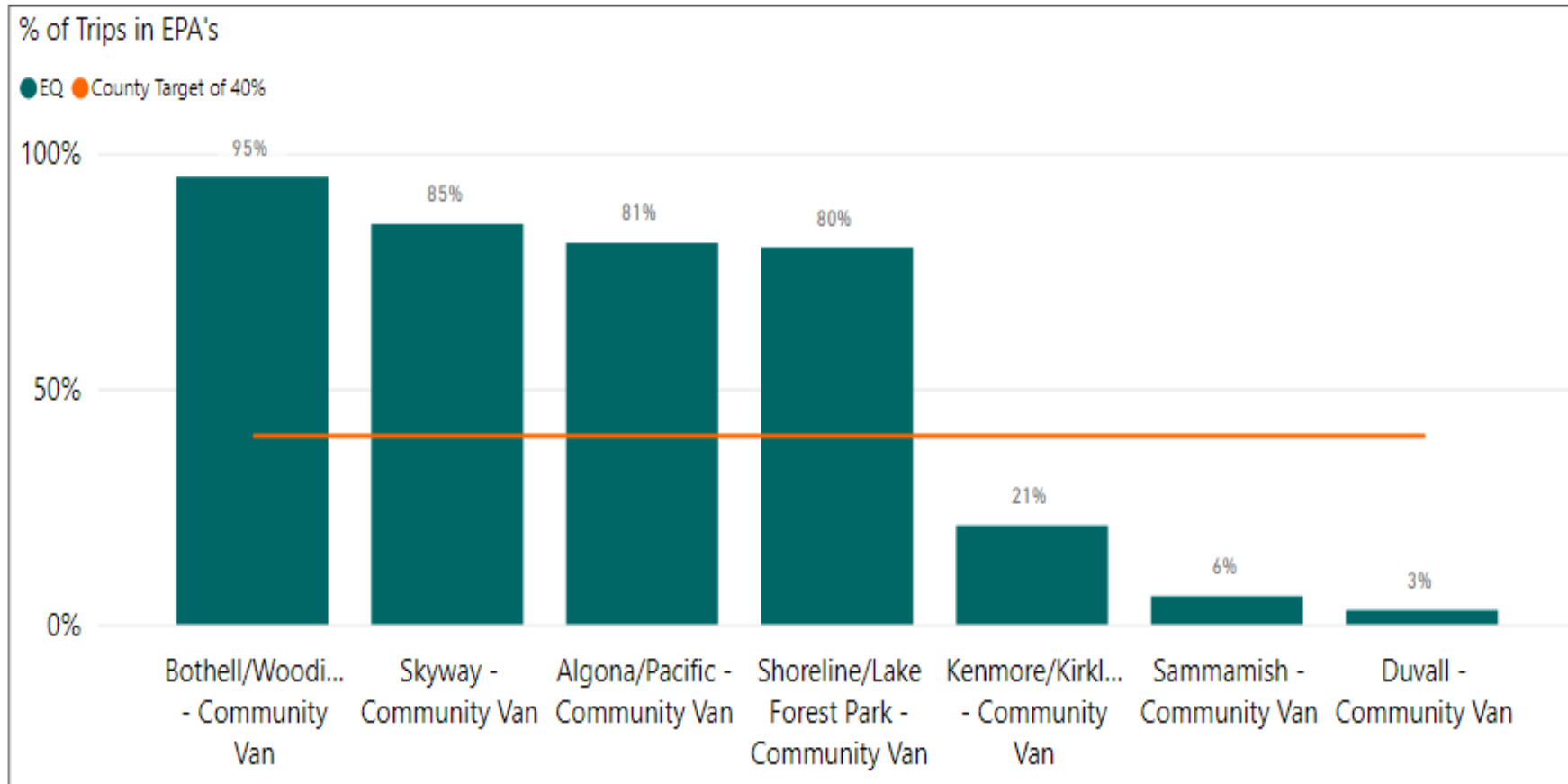
Boardings  
**33,731**

Trips  
**7,811**

Boardings/Trips  
**4.3**



# Equity through Service



# Community Van Locations and What is Next...



- Algona-Pacific
- Bothell-Woodinville
- Kenmore-Kirkland
- Redmond
- Sammamish
- Shoreline-Lake Forest Park
- Skyway
- Snoqualmie Valley *\*New locations!*
- Vashon Island
- Tukwila coming soon!

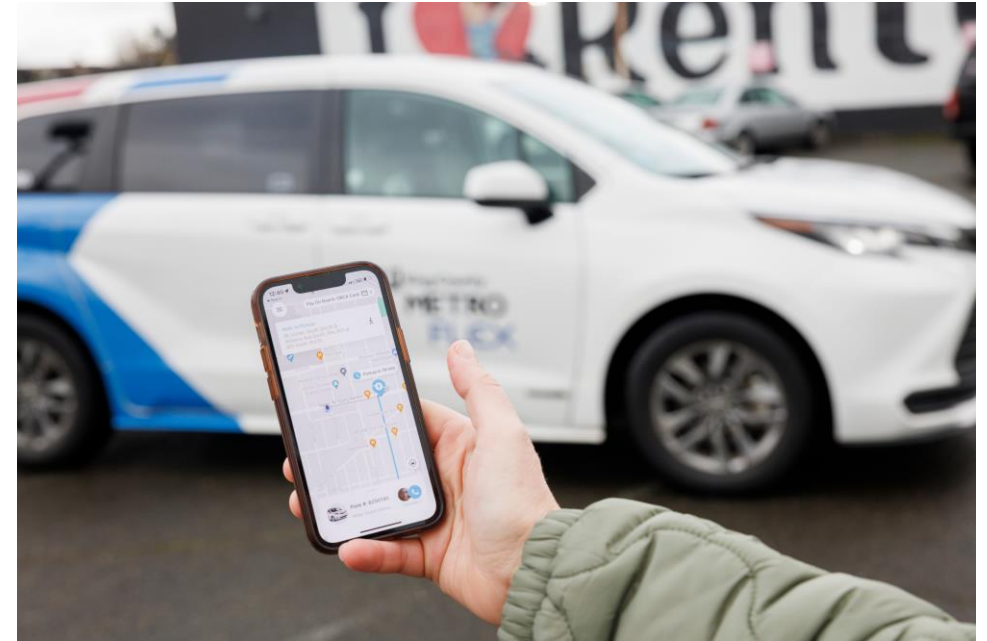
# Metro Flex – On-Demand, Microtransit





# Metro Flex Basics

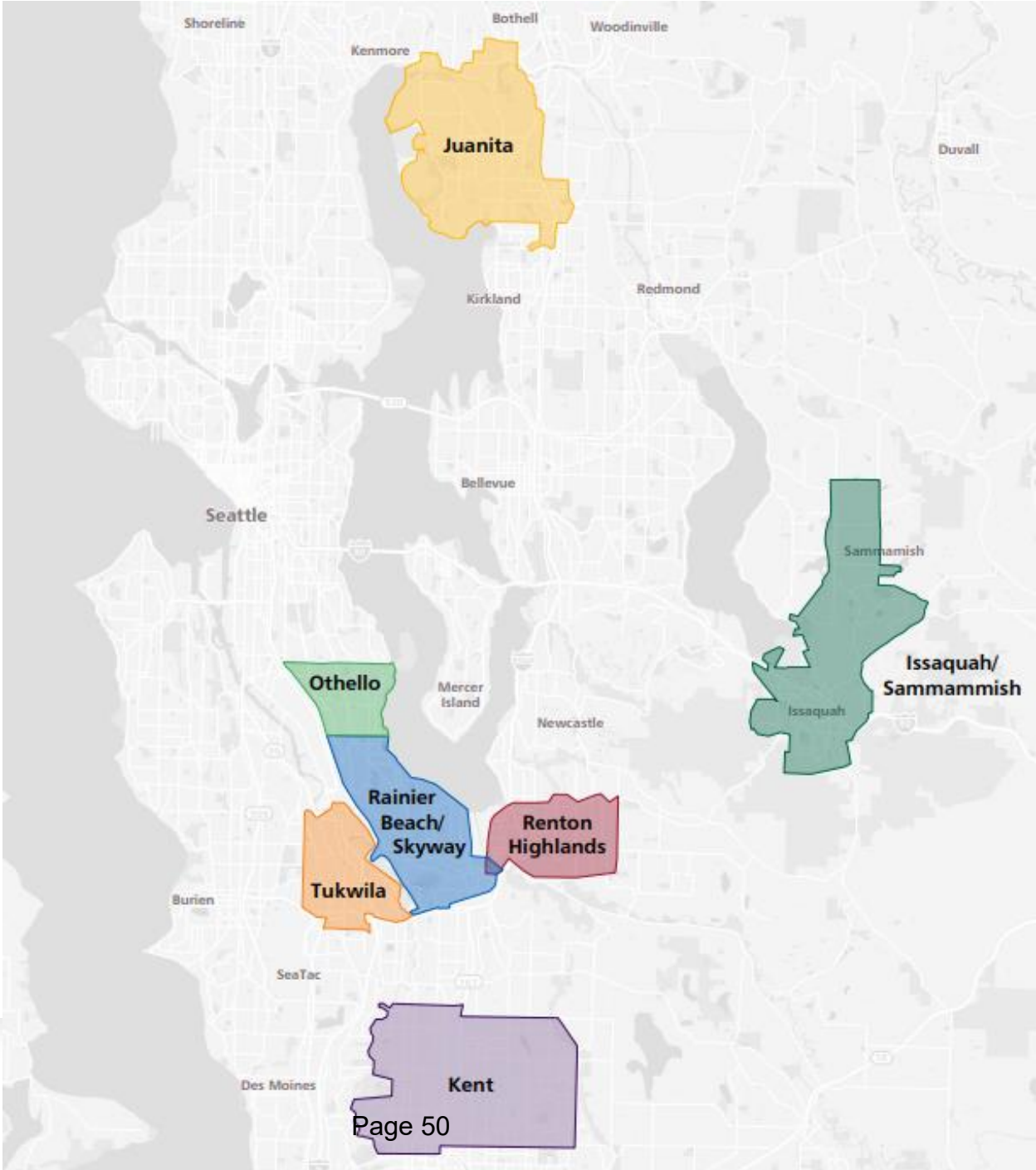
- Open to general public
- Request ride on-demand using app, call center, or web booking
- Provide start/end anywhere within service area, get ETA
- Walk to nearby pick-up location
- Join a shared ride with 15-minute ETA on average
- Same fare as bus, free transfers with ORCA



# Service Areas

**Service Areas**

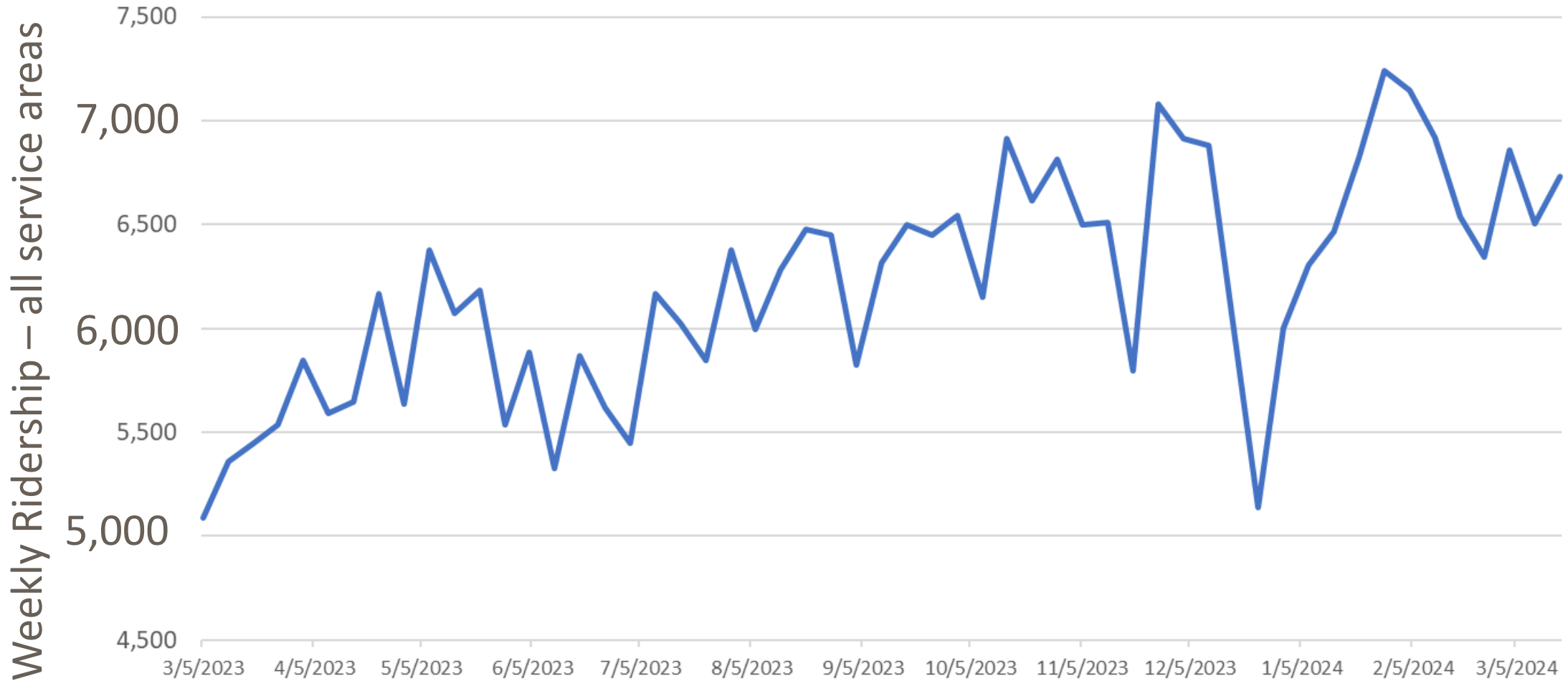
- Juanita
- Issaquah / Sammamish
- Othello
- Rainier Beach / Skyway
- Renton Highlands
- Tukwila
- Kent



# Service Area Hours

Service areas	Weekdays	Weekend
Juanita	7am to 7pm	Sat/Sun - No service
Issaquah/Sammamish	7am to 6pm	Saturday - 9am to 6pm Sunday - No service
Kent	5am to 7pm	Sat/Sun - 7am to 7pm
Othello Rainier Beach Skyway Renton Highlands Tukwila	5am to 1am	Saturday - 5am to 1am Sunday - 6am to 12am

# Recent Metro Flex Ridership Trend



# On-Demand Pilot Evaluation

## Equity

- Riders picked up or dropped off in a high score EPA
- Compared to total % households in high score EPA (within zone, countywide)

## Productivity & Efficiency

- Rides per vehicle hour
- Cost per ride

## Strength of fixed-route

- Households outside ¼ mile of a bus stop, ½ mile of a rail stop
- Community assets outside ¼ mile of a bus stop, ½ mile of a rail stop



# What's Next

- Pilot period evaluations
- Integrations with paratransit
- Electrification
- Integration w/trip planners
- Non-dedicated service providers for high demand times/overflow
- Supporting families w/children
- Regional coordination
- Planned expansion (2024-2026):  
Northshore, West Seattle/Delridge,  
Overlake, Auburn, Federal Way





# Vanpool & Vanshare Program





# What is a Vanpool?

## 5+ Commuters:

A group of commuters who share a similar home origin, work destination and schedule.



## Volunteer Roles:

At least two drivers and a bookkeeper.

## Group Operations:

Members decide on route, meeting locations, schedule and other logistics.

## Monthly Fare Covers:

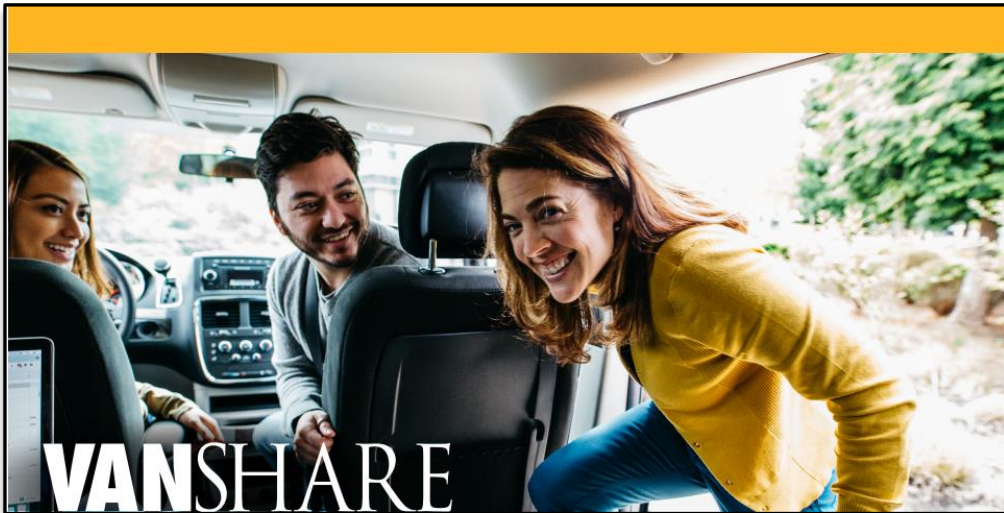
The van, fuel, tolls, insurance, maintenance, roadside assistance and emergency ride home. Employer may cover fare.



# What is a Vanshare?

## First/Last Mile Connection:

Commuters share a van to link to public transportation such as a train, bus, ferry or longer-distance vanpool.



## 5+ Riders:

Commuters with key volunteer roles.

## Mileage:

20-mile daily roundtrip commute.

## Cost:

Flat \$200/month split by group or covered by employer.

## Example:

Train commuters arrive at Tukwila station and use Vanshare to connect last few miles to Renton worksite.

# Vanpool vs Vanshare?

	Vanpool	Vanshare
Rider needs	People who want a <b>direct route</b> between their home and work or school destination.	People who use transit- such as the train, ferry or bus – but need a <b>final connection</b> to work, school, or home.
Ride type	<b>Anywhere in King County</b> – All participants must live or work in King County	<b>Shorter distances</b> – 20 daily miles or less in King County to connect to transit modes.
Fare	<b>Depends on</b> number of commuting days, trip mileage, vehicle size and the number of people in your Vanpool.	<b>\$200/month</b> , split among 5 or more participants.

Fares cover 100% capital and operating costs, and 25% of administrative costs by King County code.





# What's Next

- Increase van ridership to fill empty seats.
- Expand Vanpool Reduced Fare pilot.
- Diversify customer base.
- Electrify vanpool fleet 100% by 2030.



# Closing and Questions