



King County

1200 King County
Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Agenda Regional Transit Committee

Councilmembers:

Jorge L. Barón, Chair

De'Sean Quinn

Alternate:

Sound Cities Association:

Janice Zahn, Bellevue, Vice Chair; Barb de Michelle, Issaquah; Susan Honda, Federal Way;

Karen Howe, Sammamish; Ryan McIrvn, Renton; Katherine Ross, Snoqualmie;

Toni Troutner, Kent; Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., Covington

Alternates:

Neal Black, Kirkland; Paul Charbonneau, Newcastle;

JC Harris, Des Moines; Tarlochan Mann, Pacific

City of Seattle:

Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka

Alternate: Robert Kettle

Lead Staff: Mary Bourguignon (206-263-3296)

Committee Clerk: Blake Wells (206-263-1617)

3:00 PM

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

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. 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 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.

	<p>Sign language and interpreter services can be arranged given sufficient notice (206-848-0355). TTY Number - TTY 711. 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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3. **Approval of Minutes** p. 4

January 15, 2025 meeting minutes

4. **Chair's Report**

5. **Public Comment**

6. **General Manager's Report**

Discussion and Possible Action

7. [RTC Resolution No. RTC2025-01](#) p. 7

A RESOLUTION adopting the 2025 work plan for the King County regional transit committee.

Mary Bourguignon, Council staff

Briefings

8. [Briefing No. 2025-B0019](#) p. 13

Metro Research

Chris O'Claire, Mobility Division Director, Metro Transit Department

Anne Gienapp, Interim Research & Innovation Supervisor, Metro Transit Department

9. [Briefing No. 2025-B0040](#) p. 38



Metro Fare Inspection

Rebecca Frankhouser, Director of Safety and Security, Metro Transit Department

Renee Hosogi, SaFE Reform Initiative Program Lead, Metro Transit Department

Other Business

Adjournment

	<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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King County

1200 King County
Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Minutes Regional Transit Committee

Councilmembers:

Teresa Mosqueda, Chair

Jorge L. Barón

Alternate:

Sound Cities Association:

Janice Zahn, Bellevue, Vice Chair; Barb de Michelle, Issaquah;

Susan Honda, Federal Way;

Karen Howe, Sammamish; Ryan McIrvine, Renton; Katherine

Ross, Snoqualmie;

Toni Troutner, Kent; Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., Covington

Alternates:

Neal Black, Kirkland; Paul Charbonneau, Newcastle;

JC Harris, Des Moines; Tarlochan Mann, Pacific

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, January 15, 2025

Hybrid Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Mosqueda called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. The Chair thanked departing members for their service on the committee and welcomed new members. Current members made brief introductions.

2. **Roll Call**

Present: 12 - Cimaomo Jr., de Michele, McIrvine, Ross, Troutner, Zahn, Honda, Mosqueda, Barón, Howe, Black and Harris

Excused: 2 - Hollingsworth and Saka

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chair Cimaomo moved approval of the November 20, 2024, meeting minutes. There being no objections, the minutes were approved.

4. Chair's Report

Chair Mosqueda commented on the loss of Metro Driver Shawn Yim and provided an overview of the meeting topics.

5. Public Comment

Their were no individuals present to provide public comment.

6. General Manager's Report

Michelle Allison, General Manager, Metro Transit Department, commented on the loss of Transit driver Shawn Yim, safety priorities and actions, updates to the code of conduct, reintroduction of fare enforcement, funds received for the Rapid Ride I Line, recognition by The American Public Transportation Association for having the 2nd largest ridership increase across the country, ridership numbers, appreciation for the collaboration with the Amalgamated Transit Union and answered questions from the members.

Briefing

7. [Briefing No. 2025-B0001](#)

RTC Overview - Roles and Responsibilities of RTC - Selection of Vice Chair

Mary Bourguignon, Council staff, briefed the committee.

Councilmember Cimaomo moved the nomination of Councilmember Zahn as vice chair. The motion was adopted.

This matter was Presented

8. [Briefing No. 2025-B0002](#)

RTC Work Plan Discussion

Mary Bourguignon, Council staff, briefed the committee and answered questions from the members.

This matter was Presented

Other Business

There was no further business to come before the committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____

Clerk's Signature



King County

**Metropolitan King County Council
Regional Transit Committee**

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	7	Name:	Mary Bourguignon
Proposed No.:	RTC2025-01	Date:	March 19, 2025

SUBJECT

At today’s meeting, members of the Regional Transit Committee (RTC) will have the opportunity to discuss and potentially adopt and RTC work plan for 2025.

SUMMARY

The King County Charter directs that the RTC be primarily responsible for developing, recommending, and reviewing “countywide policies and plans” related to regional transit.¹ These include Metro’s three adopted policy documents: the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, King County Metro Service Guidelines, and Metro Connects long-range plan.²

The King County Council’s rule for regional committees³ calls for the Chair to consult with the Vice Chair “in developing a draft work program for consideration by the full committee.”

Resolution RTC2025-01 outlines a possible work plan for the RTC for 2025. Resolutions are non-binding, and internal to the RTC, meaning that they do not move on for consideration by the King County Council. If adopted, the Resolution would guide the committee’s work, though work plan items could be added or moved as needed as issues develop over the course of the year.

BACKGROUND

The Regional Transit Committee (RTC) is one of three committees formed in the 1990s when voters approved the merger of King County and the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle, which at the time provided transit and wastewater services. King County’s Charter⁴ directs that RTC be primarily responsible for developing, recommending, and reviewing transit-related countywide policies and plans for consideration by the King County Council.

¹ King County Charter Section 270.30

² Ordinance 19367

³ Rule 7 (K.C.C. 1.24.065)

⁴ King County Charter Section 270.30

The King County Council's rules state that:

The regional transit committee shall develop, review and recommend countywide policies and plans related to the transportation services formerly provided by the municipality of metropolitan Seattle. Plans and policies that must be assigned to the committee include, but are not limited to, the long-range transit system and capital improvement plans, service design, development and allocation policies, financial policies, fare policies, facility siting policy and major facilities siting process, and review and comment upon Regional Transit Authority plans.⁵

The Council's rules also state that the RTC Chair should consult with the Vice Chair in "developing a draft work program for consideration by the full committee."⁶

The remainder of this staff report provides a description of the major work items completed in 2023 and an initial outline of potential work program items for 2024 to inform the Chair and Vice Chair's consultation.

Review of Major Work Items in 2024: Implementation of Metro Transit Policies

In late 2021, the RTC and Council adopted updates⁷ to Metro's three adopted policy documents:

- **The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation** outlines Metro's goals, strategies, and performance measures.
- **The Service Guidelines** guide day-to-day delivery of transit service by helping Metro set targets for the level of transit service to be provided, evaluate performance, and add, reduce, or restructure service.
- **Metro Connects** is the adopted long-range plan, with a goal of increasing bus service hours from four million to seven million annual service hours between 2019 and 2050.

During 2024, the RTC focused on monitoring the implementation of the three policy documents, focusing in particular on the RapidRide Prioritization Plan.⁸

Work Plan Items for 2025

Resolution RTC2025-01 organizes potential work plan items for RTC during 2025 into several thematic areas:

⁵ Rule 7 (KCC 1.24.065.K.2)

⁶ Rule 7 (KCC 1.24.065.B.5.a(1))

⁷ Ordinance 19367

⁸ Motion 16659

- **ACTION** items are issues under RTC’s jurisdiction, for which some type of action is needed. These items include:
 - System Evaluation (due October 31 each year)⁹
 - Performance measures dashboard annual report (oral briefing only, due by November 30 each year)¹⁰
 - Briefing on transit safety and security (required by a Council budget proviso, briefing must be provided to RTC and/or Council by April 30, 2025)¹¹

- **CONTEXT** items would be informational briefings on general transit issues to provide RTC members with context to inform their actions. These items could include briefings on:
 - Metro’s research program
 - Fare inspection
 - ADA Transition Plan
 - Youth Transit
 - Metro Service Recovery Plan
 - FIFA World Cup Planning
 - RapidRide update (projects underway, reinvestments on existing lines)
 - The move to a zero-emission fleet
 - Community engagement and language equity
 - Metro Flex, Community Van, Vanpool services
 - ORCA use and distribution

Next Steps

If the RTC acts to adopt the work plan Resolution, it will be used as a guide for RTC meetings this year. As noted above, an RTC Resolution is a non-binding, internal document that can be adjusted as needed.

The work plan Resolution lists items for the February meeting, which was not held. These items have been moved to March. The committee could choose to amend the work plan Resolution or could adopt it as originally drafted, understanding that the items from the February agenda were moved to March.

ATTACHMENTS

1. RTC2025-01 and its attachment

⁹ Required by Ordinance 19367

¹⁰ Required by Ordinance 19367

¹¹ Required by Ordinance 19861, Section 115, Proviso P6

Date Created:	February 5, 2025
Drafted by:	mbourguignon
Sponsors:	Barón
Attachments:	A. King County Regional Transit Committee 2025 Work Plan

1 ..Title

2 A RESOLUTION adopting the 2025 work plan for the
3 King County regional transit committee.

4 ..Body

5 WHEREAS, the King County regional transit committee is charged with
6 developing, proposing, reviewing, and recommending action on ordinances and motions
7 adopting, repealing, or amending transit-related countywide policies and plans, as
8 determined by the committee's annual work program, and

9 WHEREAS, King County regional transit committee has developed and
10 implemented annual work programs each year to carry out its responsibilities, and

11 WHEREAS, the priorities for the King County regional transit committee in 2025
12 include reviewing reports on transit performance and service required by the King
13 County Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, the King County Metro Service
14 Guidelines, and the Metro Connects long-range transit plan;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the King County regional transit
16 committee:

17 The King County regional transit committee 2025 work plan, Attachment A to
18 this resolution, is hereby adopted.

RTC Work Plan for 2025

February 5, 2025

JANUARY 15, 2025

- RTC overview: committee roles and responsibilities
- Vice Chair selection
- 2025 Work Plan (discussion)

FEBRUARY 19, 2025

- ACTION: 2025 Work Plan (approve)
- CONTEXT: Metro research briefing

MARCH 19, 2025

- CONTEXT: Fare inspection briefing

APRIL 16, 2025

- ACTION: Briefing on transit safety and security (briefing of RTC or TrEE required by Proviso P6 in 2025 budget ordinance, due date is April 30, 2025)
- CONTEXT: ADA Transition Plan briefing

MAY 21, 2025

- CONTEXT: Youth transit briefing
- CONTEXT: Update on Metro Service Recovery Plan (will include update on ridership recovery, service throughout county, and past and planned restructures, including East Link, Lynnwood Link, and upcoming Seattle/Vashon service recovery project)

JUNE 18, 2025

- CONTEXT: Briefing on FIFA World Cup planning (panel discussion)

JULY 16, 2025

- CONTEXT: RapidRide update on the expansion projects underway (J, I, R, and K Lines), and reinvestment studies (A, F, and E Line)

AUGUST 20, 2025 <<MEETING MAY BE CANCELLED DUE TO AUGUST RECESS>>

RTC Work Plan for 2025 (Continued)
February 5, 2025

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

- CONTEXT: Transition to zero-emission fleet (briefing)
- CONTEXT: Community engagement and language equity

OCTOBER 15, 2025

- ACTION: Performance measures dashboard annual report (briefing, RTC does not need to vote, but the briefing is required by Ordinance 19367)
- CONTEXT: Metro Flex, Community Van, Vanpool briefing

NOVEMBER 19, 2025

- ACTION: 2025 System Evaluation Report (discussion/possible action, required by Ordinance 19367)
- CONTEXT: Budget remarks (to be provided as part of General Manager's report)
- CONTEXT: ORCA use and distribution (tech update, briefing on different types of ORCA cards, how many in use, how distributed in community, including new free Youth ORCA cards)

DECEMBER 17, 2025 <<NO MEETING DUE TO DECEMBER RECESS>>

General Manager reports at each meeting will provide ongoing updates on Metro's service planning and recovery; operations; financial condition; federal, state, and county budgets; and federal and state funding opportunities.



King County

**Metropolitan King County Council
Regional Transit Committee**

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	8	Name:	Mary Bourguignon
Proposed No.:	2025-B0019	Date:	March 19, 2025

SUBJECT

Today’s briefing will provide an overview of Metro’s research program.

BACKGROUND

Metro seeks to measure its progress toward achieving the vision of its long-range plan, Metro Connects.¹ Metro does this through the Strategic Plan dashboard,² which is a required part of the adopted Strategic Plan,³ as well as efforts to strengthen Metro’s learning and impact.

Metro bases its efforts on the 2018 federal “Evidence Act (also known as the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018),”⁴ which requires federal agencies to strengthen the culture and infrastructure for research, evaluation, and continuous learning and improvement. At King County, there is an emphasis on evidence to inform programs, policies, and investments. Metro is working to expand evidence and its use via internal efforts and productive research partnerships. At Metro, research is used to:

- Help meet the goal to be responsible stewards of financial resources and invest in line with values and goals
- Strengthen Metro’s impact
- Inform required performance measure dashboards

Metro’s vision for its research program is that:

- Metro has sufficient data and research to confidently assess program and policy outcomes, understand impacts for people and places, and make improvements that help advance Metro’s goals
- Data and research guide plans and decisions
- Metro teams have access to tools and resources to pursue high-quality research, evaluation, and learning

¹ Ordinance 19367

² Strategic Plan dashboard ([link](#))

³ Ordinance 19367

⁴ Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 ([link](#))

Research is one part of how Metro collects information about its programs. Other information-gathering tools include business intelligence, community engagement and partnerships, and program-based analysis. The research program helps Metro:

- Develop outcome data, customer-focused data, data to guide solution design and improvement
- Develop data products and tools to answer teams' and leaders' key questions
- Build capacity to gather and use data

Metro gathers customer data using six tools:

- 1. Rider/non-rider survey.** The rider/non-rider survey helps Metro understand travel behaviors, transit use, attitudes, and experiences with transit across King County. It is a random sample of King County addresses that oversamples Census block groups with higher concentrations of priority populations and oversamples multi-family dwellings.

The survey is implemented twice a year, with approximately 2,000 responses each time. Regular topics include:

- a. Travel behaviors: modes, commute behaviors, youth transit use in household
- b. Transit use: transit services used, frequency of use, trip purpose, barriers to transit use
- c. Transit experiences: satisfaction with elements of service
- d. Transit attitudes: perceptions of friends' and family transit use, what people hear in the news, interest in riding more
- e. Supplemental topics can include fares, trip planning, transfers, incentives for future transit use, transportation security

- 2. Onboard survey.** The onboard survey is designed to develop a clearer understanding of current ridership, transit perceptions and experiences, and boarding behavior through additional data from bus riders. It also reduces barriers to survey participation by meeting people where they are.

Metro uses onboard surveys to sample 27 Metro routes, including:

- a. 15 highest ridership routes (60% of fixed-route ridership)
- b. All RapidRide routes
- c. Routes that serve schools
- d. Routes that have high ridership relative to ORCA use
- e. Routes that represent all regions of King County

For the most recent onboard survey, 7,010 boardings were tallied, 2,384 surveys were started, and 1,693 were completed (electronic and paper). Most surveys were completed online and in English, but there was significant participation via print/paper (14.2%) and in-language (7.2%)

3. **Panel research.** Panel research is conducted to obtain timely input from specific residents and transit customers and to enrich evidence for planning and decision-making. Methods include interviews, focus groups, focused surveys, travel diaries, and user testing.

Panel research during 2023 and 2024 included approximately 200 people each year, representing multiple identities and experiences, providing opportunities to hear specific perspectives for topics of interest. The surveys offer quarterly honoraria and per-study compensation.

Nine studies were completed during that timeframe, including on:

- a. Transit attitudes and behaviors among South and East King County residents
- b. Non-cost barriers to transit for low-income customers
- c. Perceptions of RapidRide design features, onboard and offboard
- d. Experiences leaving comments via the King County Metro web site
- e. Testing messages that respond to known customer safety concerns

4. **Regional travel trends (LOCUS).** The LOCUS tool is used to understand regional and sub-regional travel trends, mode splits, market share, and transit's competitiveness. The tool relies on integrated geo-location, ORCA, and automated passenger count (APC) data.

5. **Program evaluations.** Program evaluations and impact studies give Metro the opportunity to partner with external researchers to design and implement rigorous evaluations, including of the Mentors Moving Metro program, mobility supports for residents living in permanent supportive housing, Access on Demand, and Community Transportation Navigators.

6. **Data summaries and products.** Metro relies on several different data summaries:

- a. State of the Customer dashboard presents performance and customer data for core service elements and helps promote clarity about how Metro is doing and surface learning opportunities.
- b. The REAL Hub is a comprehensive portal that provides numerous resources and data links for Metro and King County employees
- c. Research and learning profiles summarize key findings, methods, and insights from research and data collections efforts, and include 35+ profiles to help inform decisions and actions.

As it develops these tools and uses data more intensively, Metro aims to meet several goals:

- Develop rigorous, relevant data and evidence so that Metro staff and leaders can make confident, informed decisions to advance agency goals and priorities.
- Partner and share data where possible.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Metro presentation

INVITED

- Brian Mannion, Mobility Division Deputy Director, Metro Transit Department
- Anne Gienapp, Interim Research & Innovation Supervisor, Metro Transit Department

King County Metro Research Program

Regional Transit Committee
March 19, 2025



Why does Metro do research?

How Research Fits Into Metro's Guiding Policies



- Helps meet the goal to be responsible stewards of financial resources and invest in line with values and goals



- Calls for strengthening of Metro's learning and impact
- Research informs required dashboards

Mobility Framework

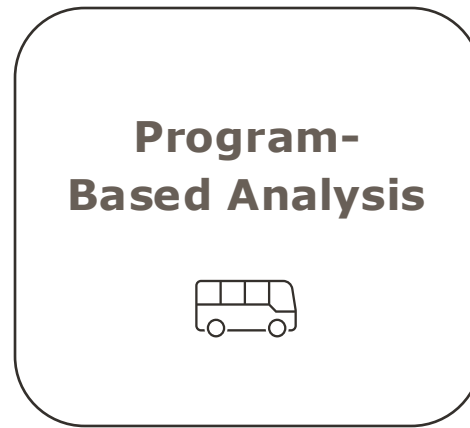


Research Program Vision

1. Metro has sufficient data and research to:
 - Confidently assess program and policy outcomes
 - Understand impacts for people and places
 - Make improvements that help advance the Long Game
2. Data and research guide plans and decisions
3. Metro teams have access to tools and resources to pursue high-quality research, evaluation, and learning



Research enriches Metro's data & evidence landscape

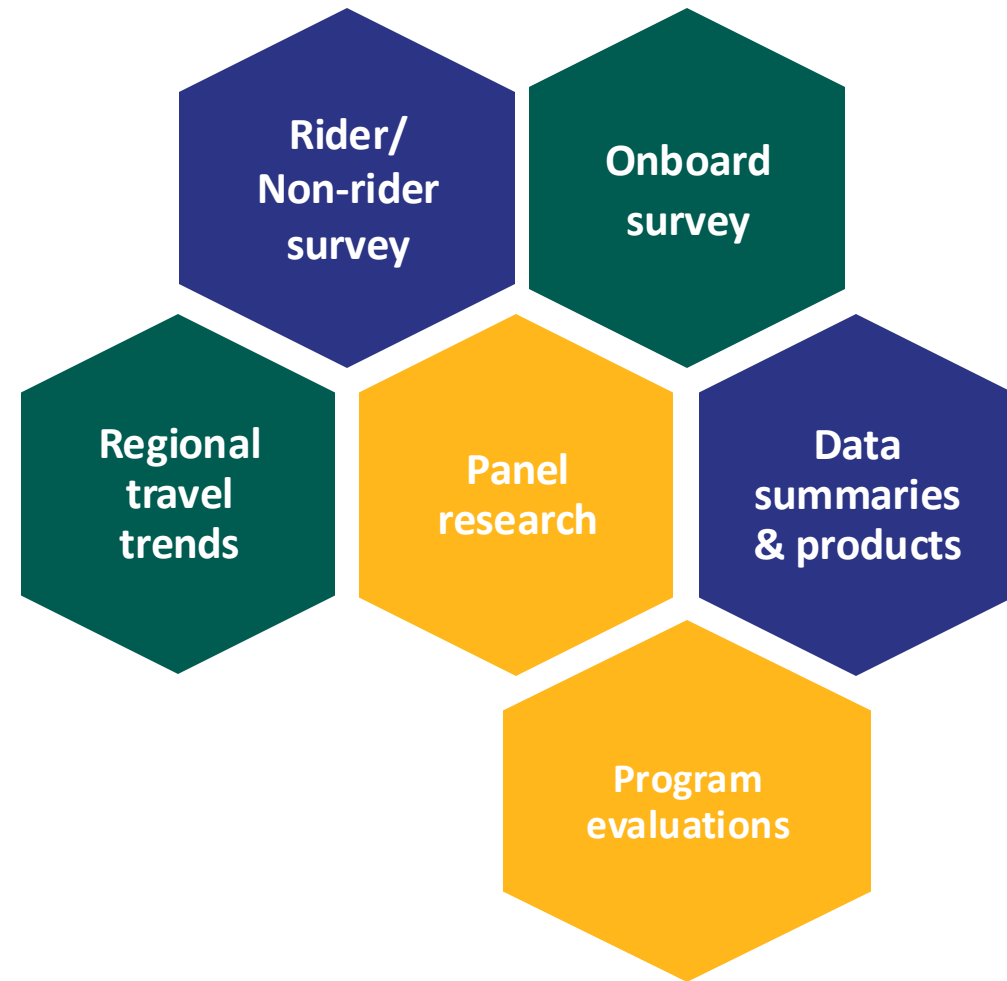


- Develop outcome data, customer-focused data, data to guide solution design & improvement
- Develop data products and tools to answer teams' and leaders' key questions
- Build capacity to gather and use data

How does Metro gather data?

Six Ways Metro's Research Team Delivers Customer Data

1. Rider/non-rider survey
2. Onboard survey
3. Panel research
4. Regional travel trends
5. Program evaluations
6. Data summaries and products



Rider/Non-rider Survey

- **Purpose:** Understand travel behaviors, transit use, attitudes and experiences with transit across King County
- **Methods:**
 - Random sample of King County addresses
 - Oversampling of Census Block Groups with higher concentration of priority populations
 - Oversampling of multi-family dwellings
 - Survey implemented twice per year; ~2000 responses per wave



Regular and Supplemental Topics

Regular topics

- **Travel behaviors**—modes, commute behaviors, youth transit use in household
- **Transit use**—transit services used, frequency of use, trip purpose, barriers to transit use
- **Transit experiences**—satisfaction with elements of service
- **Transit attitudes**—perceptions of friends' and family transit use, what people hear in the news, interest in riding more

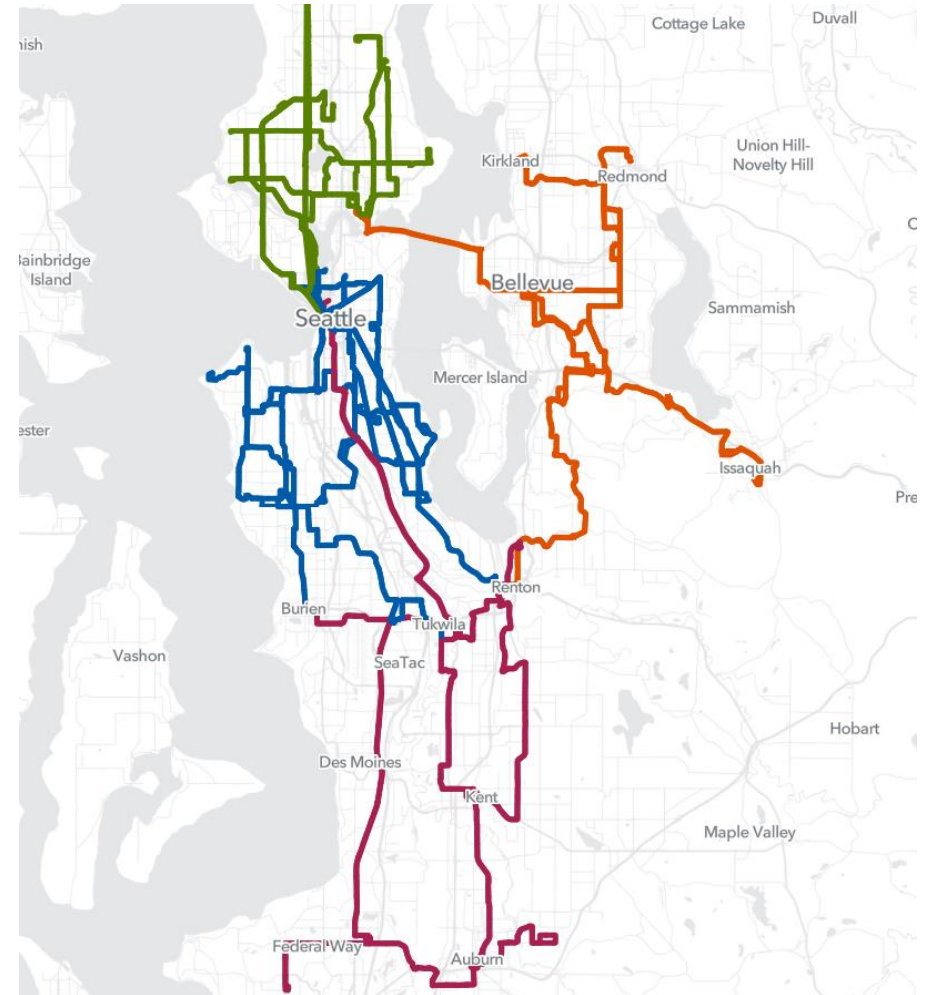
Supplemental topics (examples)

- Fares, trip planning, transfers, incentives for future transit use, transportation security



Onboard Survey

- **Purpose:**
 - Develop clearer understanding of current ridership, transit perceptions and experiences, and boarding behavior via additional data from bus riders
 - Reduce barriers to survey participation by meeting people where they are
- **Methods:** Sample of 27 Metro routes:
 - 15 highest ridership routes (60% of fixed route ridership)
 - All RapidRide routes
 - Routes that serve schools
 - Routes that have high ridership relative to ORCA use
 - Routes that represent all regions of King County



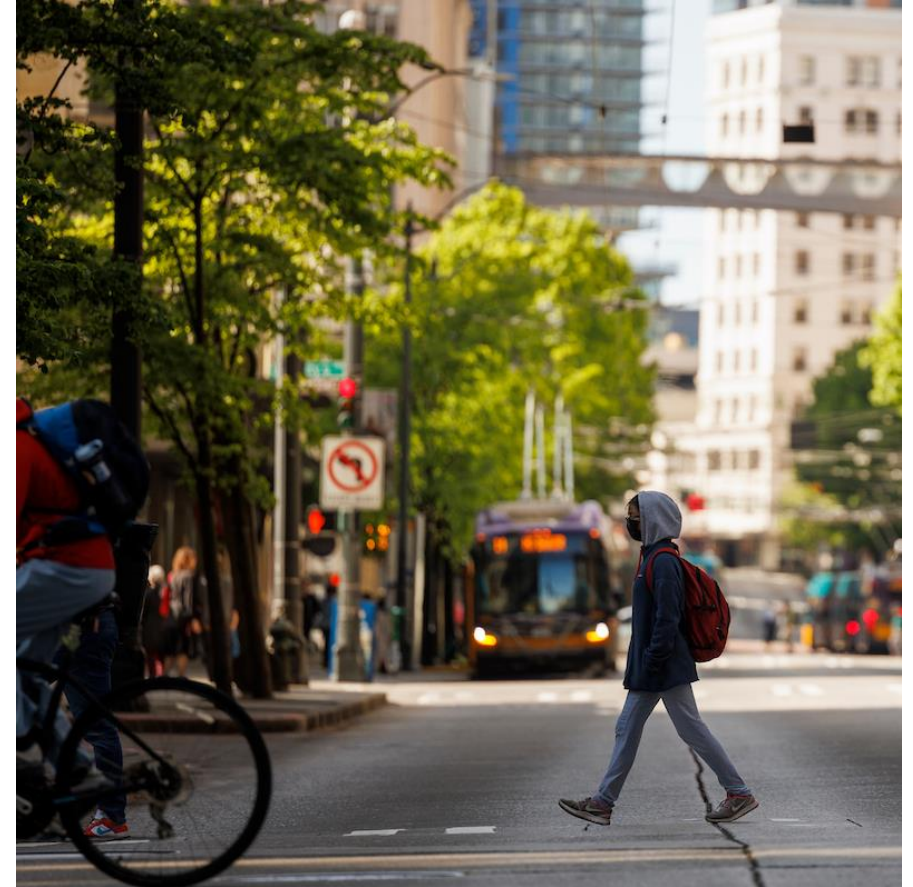
Onboard Survey Implementation

- 7,010 boardings tallied
 - 2,384 surveys started, 1,693 completed (electronic + paper)
 - Most surveys completed online and in English, but significant participation via pen/paper and in-language
 - 14.4% of surveys completed on paper
 - 7.2% of surveys completed in languages other than English
- 109 surveys completed in Spanish



Panel Research

- **Purpose:**
 - Obtain timely input from specific residents and transit customers
 - Enrich evidence for planning and decision-making
- **Methods:**
 - Interviews
 - Focus groups
 - Focused surveys
 - Travel diaries
 - User testing



Panel Research in 2023-2024

Participants

- ~200 people per year, representing multiple identities and experiences; opportunities to hear specific perspectives for topics of interest
- Quarterly honoraria, per-study compensation

Nine studies completed—some examples:

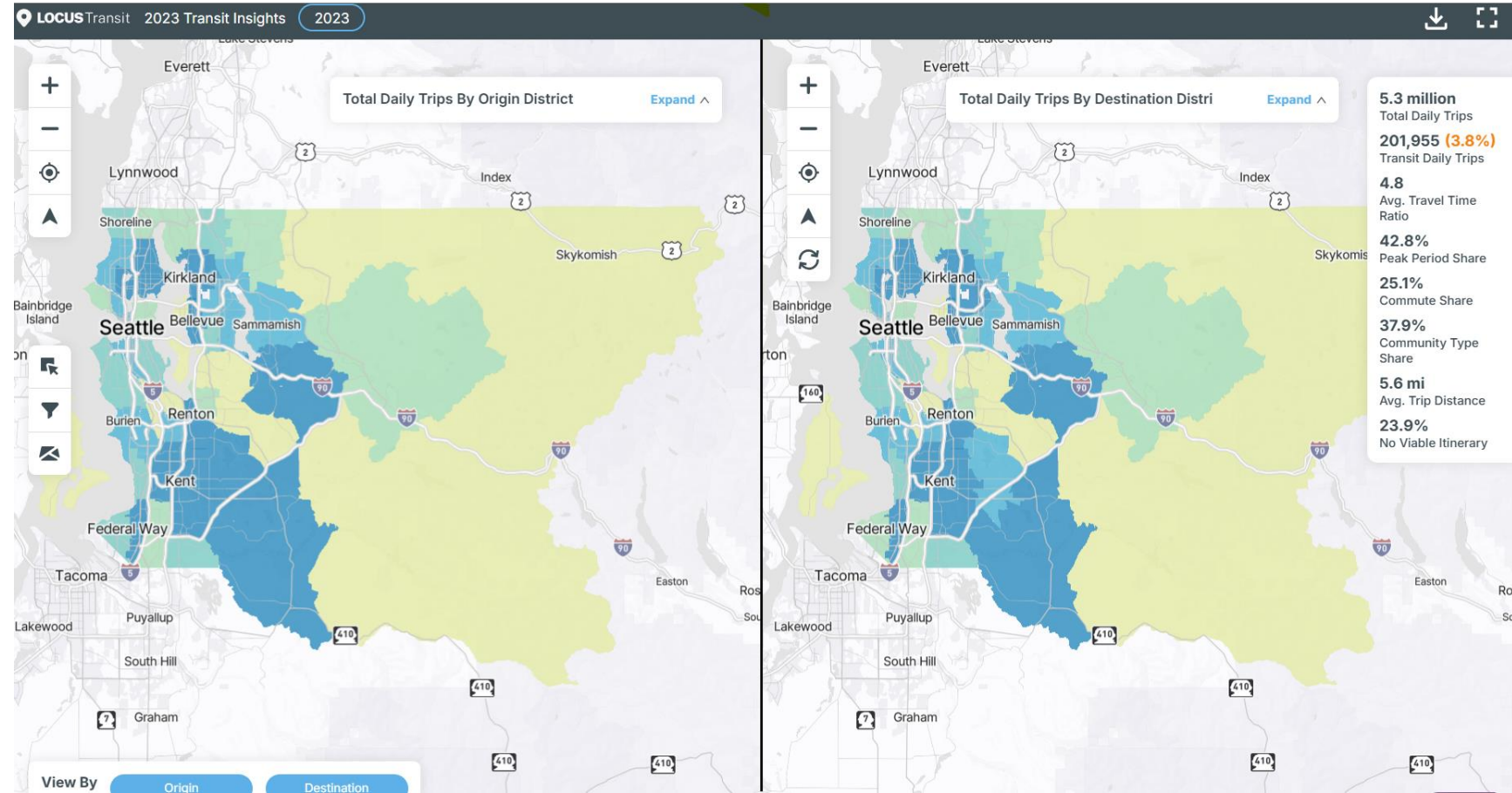
- Transit attitudes and behaviors among South and East King County residents
- Non-cost barriers to transit for low-income customers
- Perceptions of RapidRide design features, onboard and offboard
- Experiences leaving comments via the King County Metro website
- Testing messages that respond to known customer safety concerns

2024*	Number of panelists
Below 200% FPL	94
Identifies as Black, indigenous, or person of color	73
Lives with a disability	69
Identifies as LGBTQ+	14
Student	24
Rides transit	152
Speaks a language other than English	12

**Panelists may identify with multiple groups*

LOCUS tool

- **Purpose:** Understand regional and sub-regional travel trends, mode splits, market share, and transit's competitiveness
- **Methods:** Integrated geo-location, ORCA, and APC data



Program evaluations and impact studies

- Partner with external researchers to design and implement rigorous evaluations:
 - Mentors Moving Metro program
 - Mobility supports for residents living in permanent supportive housing
 - Access on Demand
 - Community Transportation Navigators



Data products: State of the Customer dashboard

- Presents performance and customer data for core service elements together—helps promote clarity about how we are doing and surfaces learning opportunities

File Share Comment Subscribe to dashboard

Some of the dashboard tiles didn't load. Show details

Welcome to the State of the Customer Dashboard + Learning Agenda!

Metro's goals and priorities encompass a commitment to ensuring **customers experience mobility as a human right** and **have positive experiences** when using our system so that they want to use transit more for more trips. To advance these goals, Metro teams and leaders have to be clear about what is true for customers and how our investments are contributing to customer experiences and outcomes.

To support Metro's work, the Research team has developed a *State of the Customer* product (SOTC) which provides:

- **A comprehensive picture of customer experience and what is changing.** SOTC draws on multiple data sources—performance data, Rider/Non-rider Survey, panel studies, LOCUS, C3, and others—to describe customers' experience in/around transit.
- **Opportunities to improve transit experiences.** Questions that emerge from the data and that can drive insights and decisions related to the continuous improvement of solutions, strategies, and investments: *What can or should Metro do to create the conditions for customers to experience excellence when they use transit?*

Initial focus: Service Excellence

Service Excellence expresses our General Manager's priority of creating conditions that result in consistently safe, clean, and reliable transit for Metro customers. MBRs and existing dashboards track a variety of measures related to safety, cleanliness, and reliability—such as the number of safety and security incidents across the system and on time performance. Those measures are important...AND, whether we are actually delivering safe, clean, and reliable transit is ALSO determined by what people *perceive*. Since customer experiences may not always match up neatly with performance metrics, advancing Service Excellence means uncovering and sitting with tensions around that and a commitment to improve.

Further, if Metro is to leverage positive perceptions that encourage transit use and mitigate negative perceptions that may dissuade people from using transit or degrade the experiences of those who depend on transit, we must pay attention to customer experiences alongside traditional performance measures.

Currently, SOTC covers **safety** and **reliability**—two key components of **Service Excellence**. The Research team will continue to build out SOTC, focusing on customers' experiences as well as customer outcomes related to ridership growth and mobility.

Interactive design

SOTC is designed to be interactive: clickable graphs and figures will take you to the relevant source data or report. We hope this makes it easy to investigate and examine data and evidence in targeted, thorough way!

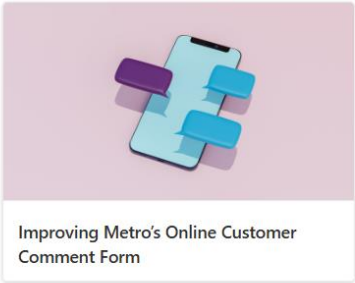
RELIABILITY **BARRIERS** **SAFETY** **OFF-BOARD EXPERIENCE**

Data products: Research & learning profiles on key topics

- **The REAL Hub**—comprehensive portal provides numerous resources and data links for Metro/King County employees
- **Research and learning profiles** summarize key findings, methods, and insights from research and data collection efforts
 - 35+ profiles help inform Metro’s decisions and actions



Research & Learning Profiles



Improving Metro's Online Customer Comment Form



Transfers



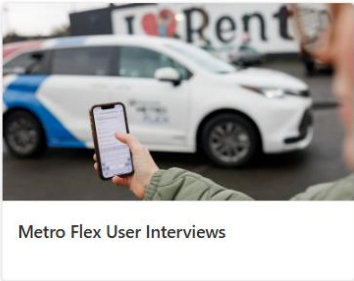
Onboard Rider Survey



Safety Messaging



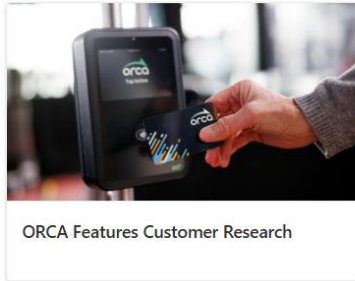
Travel Behaviors & Transit Experiences: East King County



Metro Flex User Interviews



RapidRide Kit of Parts Study



ORCA Features Customer Research

How does Metro data & research fit with a regional picture?

Aims of the Research Program

- Develop rigorous, relevant data and evidence so that Metro staff and leaders can make confident, informed decisions to advance agency goals and priorities
- Partner and share data where possible

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Questions?



King County

**Metropolitan King County Council
Regional Transit Committee**

STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:	9	Name:	Mary Bourguignon
Proposed No.:	2025-B0040	Date:	March 19, 2025

SUBJECT

Today’s briefing will provide an update on Metro’s plans to resume fare inspection during 2025.

SUMMARY

The King County Metro Transit Department (Metro) is the largest provider of public transit in the Puget Sound region. Metro uses a “care and presence” public safety model that includes traditional public safety functions, as well as behavioral health support and community engagement, including:

- **Metro Transit Police (MTP).** MTP is a division of the King County Sheriff’s Office (KCSO) contracted to Metro. MTP deputies patrol Metro services and undertake and support criminal investigations related to transit.
- **Transit security officers.** Metro contracts with a private provider for 160 transit security officers (TSOs), whose role is to deter incidents, monitor activities, address behavioral issues, and assist Metro’s passengers and employees with questions and safety concerns.
- **Fare inspection.** Metro had previously conducted fare inspection and enforcement on bus routes, such as RapidRide, that offer off-board payment. Fare inspection was suspended during the pandemic, but is planned to resume beginning March 31, 2025, with full fare inspection beginning May 31, 2025.
- **SaFE Reform Initiative.** Over the last several years, Metro has implemented a Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative to provide support for people in need on buses and at transit centers and to coordinate with community members on transit security.

Today’s briefing will focus on Metro’s plans to restart fare inspection during 2025. Note that, although Metro operates Sound Transit express bus and Link light rail services under contract, Sound Transit is responsible for providing its own security and fare inspection on its services.

BACKGROUND

Prior to the pandemic, Metro conducted fare inspection and enforcement on bus routes¹ on which passengers can pay before boarding (such as RapidRide routes or some routes through downtown that offer off-board ORCA readers). Fare enforcement officers would inspect each rider on a coach for proof of payment and issue warnings or violations for passengers who had not paid a fare. Fare enforcement was contracted out to a private company.

Metro suspended fare enforcement operations at the onset of the pandemic, with transit security officers who had formerly provided fare inspection and enforcement services deployed to Metro's busiest routes to provide education and outreach to passengers about masking and social distancing and to share information about social services with passengers in need.

Pre-pandemic changes to fare enforcement functions. During the years prior to the pandemic, Metro changed its fare enforcement practices in response to concerns raised by community members, the King County Auditor, and Council.

To address concerns about youth accused of fare violations, the Council worked with Metro to change the Transit Code of Conduct to make non-payment of fare by an individual 17 years of age or less a civil infraction and to make trespass on transit property a misdemeanor. This effort also led to improved geographic access to court for those cited with civil infractions for fare non-payment; and mitigated rider suspensions to limit impacts on riders' ability to get to work, school, or other necessary destinations.²

To address concerns about impacts to riders suspended from using Metro services, the Council worked with Metro to amend the Transit Code of Conduct to allow the Hearing Examiner to hear appeals of transit rider suspensions and to set timelines for reviewing appeals of transit rider suspensions.³

To address concerns about fare enforcement practices that had been raised by transit riders, stakeholders, and the King County Auditor,⁴ the Council worked with Metro to amend the Transit Code of Conduct to restructure the fare enforcement process by developing an internal process as an alternative to citing individuals with a civil infraction or a misdemeanor for non-payment of fare. This internal process included warnings and notices prior to a violation; provided options to resolve a violation by paying a fee, adding value to an ORCA card, or performing community service; provided an opportunity to appeal a violation; and limited rider suspensions.⁵

¹ Metro does not provide fare inspection for Sound Transit, even for those services operated by Metro under contract to Sound Transit.

² Motions 14441 and 14675, Ordinance 18332

³ Ordinance 18709

⁴ King County Auditor's Office, RapidRide Fare Enforcement: Efforts Needed to Ensure Efficiency and Address Equity Issues, April 4, 2018 ([link](#))

⁵ Ordinance 18789

Following the fare enforcement restructure in early 2019, the Council asked Metro to prepare an annual report on the program. Metro's 2021 annual report⁶ stated that from January 2019, when the new fare enforcement program was implemented, through March 15, 2020, when fare enforcement was suspended due to the pandemic, there were 11,760 warnings and 4,491 violations issued, with 442 (10%) of the violations resolved.

Fare inspection has remained suspended since March 2020.

Restart of fare inspection. In January, Metro announced⁷ that it is planning a phased approach to returning to fare inspection during 2025.

- Starting March 31, 2025, Metro fare inspectors will ask riders for proof of fare payment. Verbal reminders will be given to riders who did not pay.
- Starting May 31, 2025, fare inspection will fully resume. In place of verbal reminders, riders who do not pay will receive a written warning. Riders can receive two written warnings without consequence. However, third and subsequent violations may result in a fine or an alternative resolution, which could include:
 - Pay a fine of \$20 within 30 days, or \$40 within 90 days
 - Load \$20 onto an ORCA card or, if eligible, \$10 onto a reduced fare program card⁸
 - Enroll in a reduced fare program⁹ if eligible
 - Perform two hours of community service
 - Appeal to the Fare Adjudication Program Manager or request a customized resolution

Youth who do not have proof of payment will not face a fine or alternative resolution but will instead receive information on how to enroll in the Free Youth Transit Pass.¹⁰

Metro's approach to transit security. Fare inspection is being restarted as part of Metro's overarching approach to transit security, which includes:

- **Metro Transit Police (MTP).** MTP is a division of the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO)¹¹ under contract to Metro¹² that enforces the Transit Code of

⁶ 2021-RPT0040, King County Metro, Annual Report on King County Metro Fare Enforcement & Fare Violation Programs, April 2021

⁷ Metro Matters, King County Metro to resume fare inspection in March 2025, January 6, 2025 ([link](#))

⁸ Metro offers a number of reduced fare cards and provides an online tool that riders can use to determine if they are eligible for a reduced fare ([link](#)).

⁹ ORCA LIFT ([link](#)) offers a \$1 fare for transit riders with household income at or below 200% of federal poverty level. The Regional Reduced Fare Permit, or RRFP ([link](#)) offers a \$1 fare for riders age 65+, riders with disabilities, and Medicare card holders. Very-low-income transit riders who are enrolled in one of six State benefit programs can receive a subsidized annual pass ([link](#)) to ride transit for free.

¹⁰ Youth 18 and younger ride transit for free, but are encouraged to obtain a free youth transit pass ([link](#)).

¹¹ Members of the MTP are commissioned police officers.

¹² Motion 11711 approved Transit Security Policies that included guidance on the staffing model for the Metro Transit Police. The MTP contract is funded by Metro's budget, not by the General Fund.

Conduct.¹³ MTP focuses its efforts on Metro services in Seattle, South King County, North King County, and parts of unincorporated King County.¹⁴ It does not currently patrol the Water Taxi, Access, Metro Flex, or Seattle Streetcar.

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.

As of January 2025, Metro indicated that 65 of 79 budgeted MTP positions were filled. Open patrol shifts were being backfilled with available staff on overtime.

- **Transit security officers.** Metro contracts with a private provider for contracted transit security officers (TSOs), who work to deter incidents, monitor activities, address behavioral issues, and assist customers and operators with questions and safety concerns. TSOs provide on-coach security on routes and in areas with the highest reported security incidents, as well as terminal (last stop) security at locations of concern. They also provide outreach support to individuals within a three-block radius of the terminal.

As part of the 2023-2024 biennial budget, the Executive proposed and the Council approved funding to double the number of contracted TSOs from 70 to 140.¹⁵ Metro then used salary savings to increase the number to approximately 160. The adopted 2025 budget includes appropriation authority to maintain this level of additional TSOs, as well as to provide for additional bus and bus stop cleaning and to expand behavioral health support at Metro transit centers.¹⁶

As of Fall 2024, Metro indicated that these TSOs will continue to ride bus routes with the highest rates of security incidents (currently Routes 7, 36, A, C, D, E, F, and H). In addition, TSOs will continue to be stationed at the Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers and will continue to provide support at overnight bus terminals.

- **Fare inspection and enforcement.** As discussed above, Metro had previously conducted fare inspections on bus routes, such as RapidRide, that offer off-board payment, but suspended fare enforcement during the pandemic. Metro plans to resume fare inspections beginning March 31, 2025, with full fare inspections beginning May 31, 2025.¹⁷

¹³ KCC 28.96

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Ordinance 19546

¹⁶ The 2025 budget (Ordinance 19861) includes \$4.7M for additional bus stop and bus cleaning; \$11.8M to sustain extra 100 transit security officers from 2023-2024; and \$4.7M to expand behavioral health and Metro Ambassadors programs to provide support and assistance.

¹⁷ King County Metro, Metro Matters, King County Metro to resume fare inspection in March 2025, January 6, 2025 ([link](#))

- **SaFE Reform Initiative.** Metro’s Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative, which was launched in 2021, has worked with Metro employees, community members, jurisdictional and agency partners, and transit riders to develop additional approaches to transit security focused around increasing presence in and around transit hubs and providing support to people in need. The SaFE Reform Initiative has led to several new programs, including:
 - **Transit Ambassadors.** Metro established a group of transit Ambassadors, who are bus operators on light duty service, who are stationed throughout Seattle and South King County, as well as at special events, to provide information and assistance to transit riders, including in-language assistance in more than 140 languages.¹⁸

As of Fall 2024, Metro reported that it had 10 Ambassadors working with the program and anticipated that the number of light duty bus operators working as Ambassadors would remain steady during 2025, at between 12 and 15. The 2025 adopted budget¹⁹ includes funding for 14 short-term temporary Ambassadors and two Lead Ambassadors. As proposed, the Ambassadors would continue to focus on Jackson/23rd, Lower Queen Anne/Belltown, Mt. Baker/Columbia City, and Skyway/Renton. In addition, in partnership with the City of Seattle, Ambassadors may expand to other locations, such as the University District and UW Husky Stadium, Second Avenue, Rainier Beach, and the Seattle Waterfront.

- **Behavioral health team.** Metro coordinated with King County’s Department of Community & Human Services (DCHS) to establish a team of behavioral health specialists, who are stationed at Burien Transit Center. As of Spring 2024, Metro reported that team members had made 4,504 contacts with people in need of help and made 213 referrals for housing assistance.²⁰

The 2025 budget includes funding to expand the program, with the proposal that the four current employees of the program will work in teams at the Burien Transit Center (Mondays to Fridays, 9:00 am-3:00 pm; Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 5:00-11:00 pm) and will also ride the RapidRide C, D, and E Lines with TSOs (Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, from 5:00-11:00 pm).

- **Community outreach effort.** Metro engaged with community members and local businesses in affected areas, focusing on the Aurora Village and Burien transit centers, Chinatown/International District and Little Saigon, Third Avenue in Downtown Seattle, 23rd Avenue South & South Jackson Street, and Skyway-West Hill. Metro reported on this outreach effort in 2024,²¹ providing information on system-wide and area-specific security incidents over the last several years and outlining planned safety and cleanliness interventions for each of the geographic areas involved.

¹⁸ 2024-B0050

¹⁹ Ordinance 19861

²⁰ 2024-B0050

²¹ Motion 16647

- **Safety Emphasis Coordination Team.** During 2024, Metro launched a Safety Emphasis Coordination Team to provide cross-divisional coordination and to collaborate with local jurisdictions and other organizations to more efficiently deploy resources to improve transit safety across the region.

Metro's restart of fare inspection will be implemented as part of its overall approach to transit safety and security. Metro staff will brief the committee today on its plans.

INVITED

- Rebecca Frankhouser, Director of Safety and Security, Metro Transit Department
- Renee Hosogi, SaFE Reform Initiative Program Lead, Metro Transit Department

ATTACHMENTS

1. Metro fare inspection presentation

Fare Inspection

Regional Transit Committee

March 19, 2025



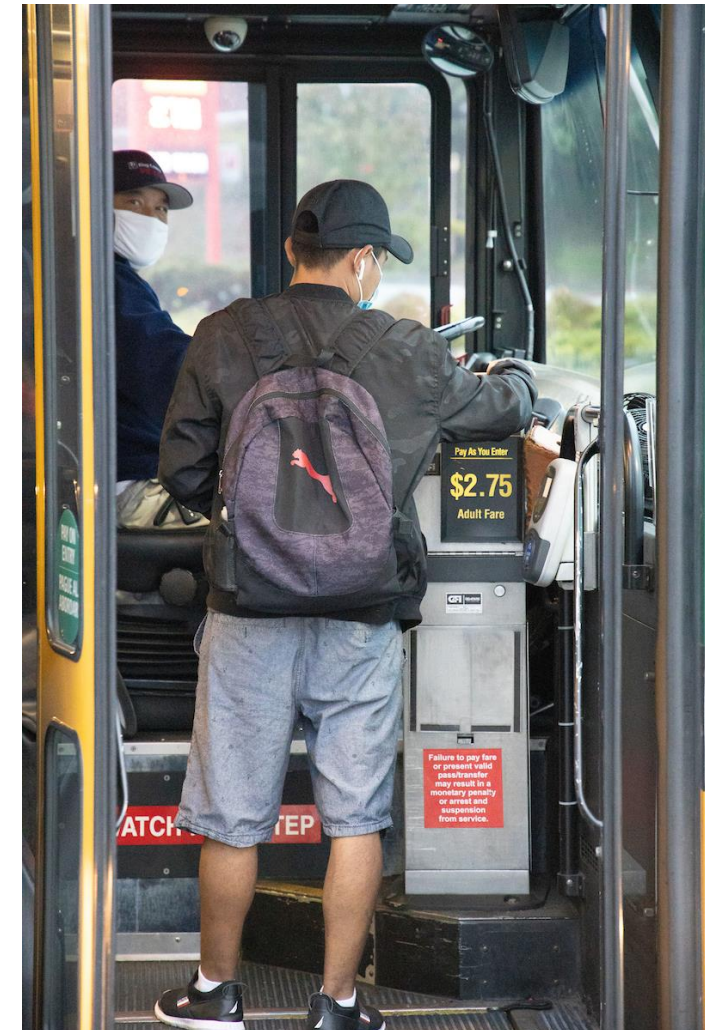
Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform

The Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative aims to accomplish the shared vision statement—developed through the engagement process with community—to reimagine and reform safety and security functions at Metro.

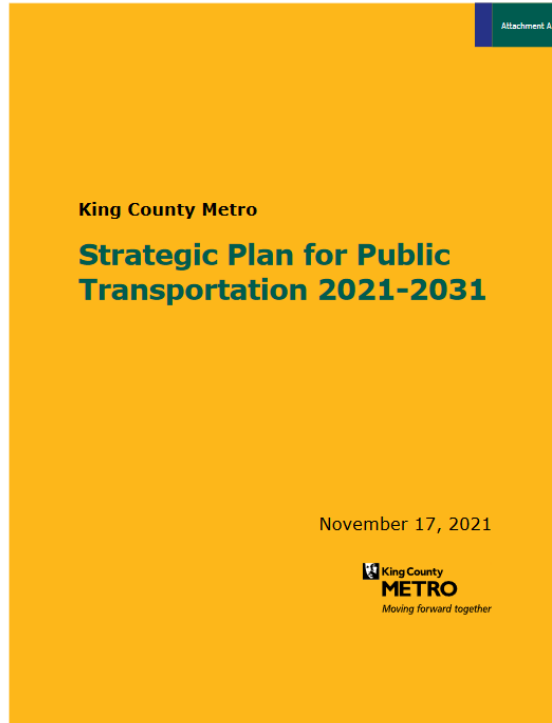
"Safe, accessible, and equitable transit that is co-created to support community well-being."

Fare Basics

- As recipients of FTA funding, Metro is obligated to recover a certain percentage of farebox revenue.
- Metro relies on fares to fund existing service and support future growth.
- Current fares are \$2.75 and will increase to \$3 on September 1, 2025.
- In 2024, Metro saw an average of 45% of riders using ORCA cards and tapping.



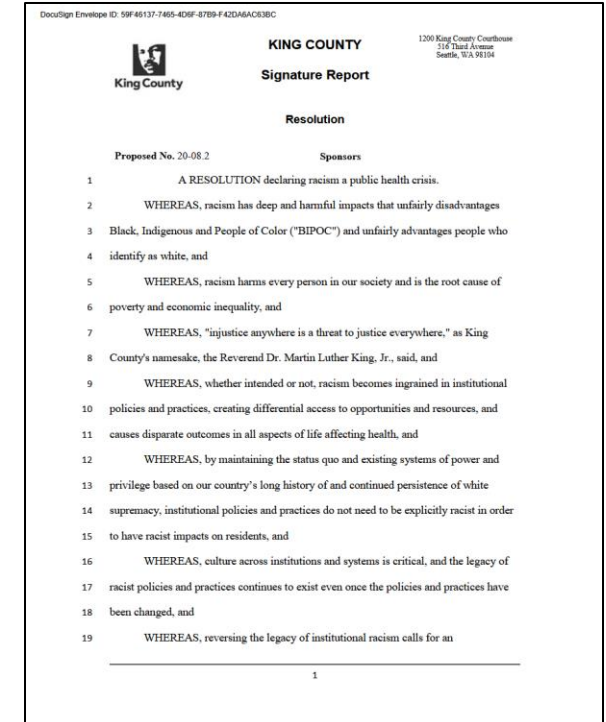
How Fare Inspection Fits Into Metro's Guiding Policies



- Stewardship goal: Align fares with other service providers, meet revenue targets, and advance equity through Metro's income-based approach to fares.

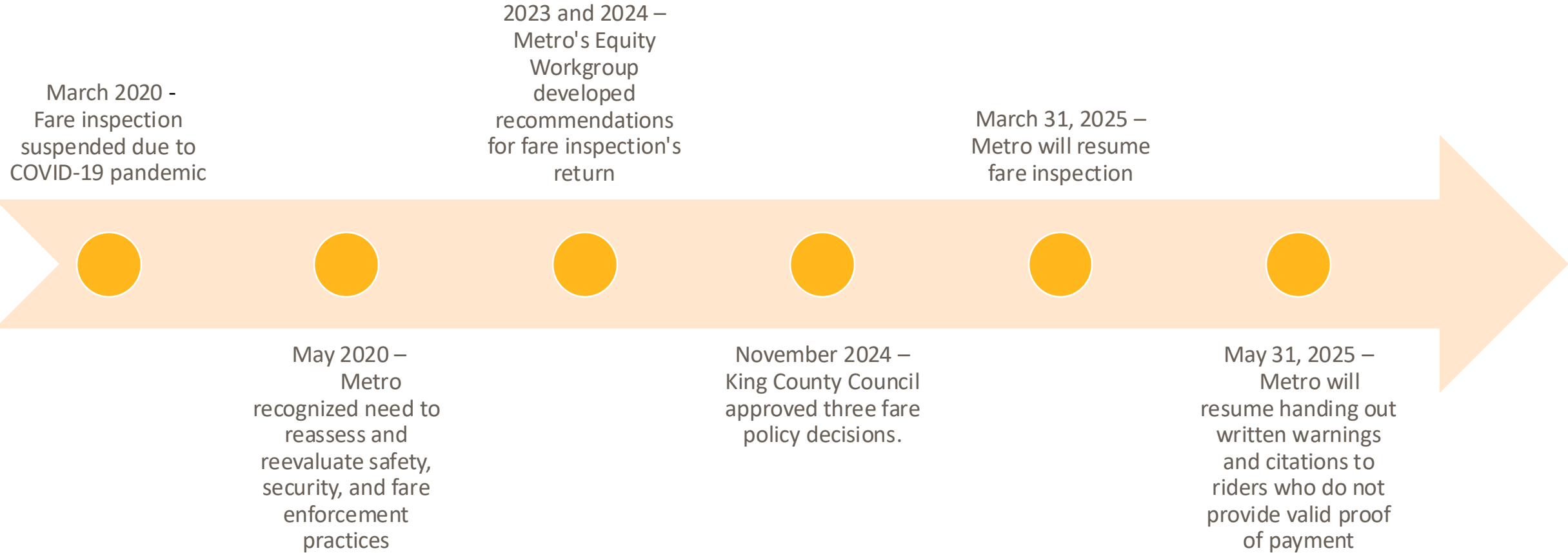


- Make it fast and easy to ride.
- Make transit affordable to all with income-based approach and employer benefits.
- Investments will be made in effective, community-based messaging.



- King County's declaration of racism as a public health crisis

Background



How did Metro develop this new approach to fare inspection?

Initial Direction to Center Community Voices

- Metro's Equity Workgroup gave recommendations around policy and procedure, as well as design and communication
- Equity Workgroup consists of nine community members, two operators, and one former fare enforcement officer supervisor
- Fare Inspection recommendations asked that Metro:
 - Center community benefits of paying fares and involve community members
 - Lead with fare education
 - Update the alternative resolutions for citations

Strategy to Reach Multiple Audiences

Community Outreach

- Community recommendations (June 2024)
- Taskforce guidance (October 2024-Present)
- Community Based Organizations (December 2024-Present)

Operator Outreach

- Announcement in Bases (December 2024)
- Tabling and Campaigning (Present)

Public Campaign

- Fare Education materials
 - Buses
 - Bus shelters and stops
 - Transit Centers
 - Pass Sales Office
- Code of Conduct Refresh
 - Buses
- Traditional media
- Social media

What will fare inspection look like?

Centering Community Voices in Fare Education

- As part of the larger fare education campaign on buses, bus shelters and stops, and transit centers, Equity Workgroup members gave quotes to show how fares benefit everyone.
- These can be seen on the backs of seats, along with several other marketing materials reminding riders to pay their fares.

“Paying the fare **improves safety and supports new features** to make riding smoother and easier.”

—Sarey, Safety and Fare Enforcement workgroup member



Leading with Fare Education

- Reduced Fares products
 - Reduced Regional Fare Permit (RRFP)
 - Senior Cards
 - ORCA Lift
 - Subsidized Annual Pass
- Free Youth Transit Pass

King County Metro will ask you for proof of fare payment starting **March 31, 2025**



Fares help pay for transit

Every time you remember to pay, you improve Metro service for everyone!

Visit kingcounty.gov/metro/FareEducation



Find the fare that's right for you

You may qualify for a reduced fare based on ability, age or income.

Visit ReducedFare.kingcounty.gov



Don't have proof of payment?



First and second times:
Warning



Subsequent times:
Fines or alternative resolutions



Updating the Code of Conduct

Please follow Metro's Code of Conduct



Pay the right fare.



Be respectful.



Wear headphones.



Do not harass the driver or riders.




Do not smoke, vape, use drugs, eat, or drink alcohol.




Do not lie down.



Thank you for riding and reporting:

 TELL your driver

 GO TO kingcounty.gov/metro/ride or call 206-553-3000

 CALL or TEXT 911 if there is an emergency

Fare Enforcement Officers

- Fare enforcement is not the responsibility of operators. However, operators may remind riders to pay fare if they feel safe doing so.
- 30 Fare Enforcement Officers operating in teams of two on buses and the streetcar.
- Trained in AED, CPR, and First Aid.



Phased Approach

March 31

- Metro fare inspectors will start to ask riders for proof of fare payment.
- Friendly, verbal reminders will be given to riders who did not pay.

May 31

- Metro fare inspectors will continue to ask riders for proof of payment.
- In place of verbal reminders, riders who do not pay will receive a written warning.
- Riders can receive two of these written warnings without consequence.
- However, third and subsequent violations may result in a fine or an alternative resolution.

Alternative Resolutions

After two written warnings, the rider may choose from the following:

- Pay a fine within 30 days, or an increased fine within 90 days.
- Load funds onto an ORCA card or—if eligible—funds onto a reduced fare program card.
- Enroll in a reduced fare program if eligible.
- Perform two hours of community service.
- Appeal to the Fare Adjudication Program Manager or request a customized resolution.

How can jurisdictions get involved?

Share the News

- Share upcoming changes with your constituents on your social media, newsletters, and communications channels
- Share with your councils and staff
- Reach out with questions:
 - King County Council:
stephanie.pure@kingcounty.gov
 - Jurisdictions:
apleasant-brown@kingcounty.gov



Metro plans a "phased-in" approach to resuming fare enforcement. Here's when it starts, and what the consequences may be for nonpayment.



KING5.COM

Fare inspection to return aboard King County Metro buses this March

Metro plans a "phased-in" approach to resuming fare enforcement. Here's when it starts, and wh...

Closing and Questions