1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Proposed No. 2016-0005.2   **Sponsors** Dunn, Balducci, Dembowski and Kohl-Welles

1   AN ORDINANCE relating to public transportation;

2   adopting updates to the Strategic Plan for Public

3   Transportation 2011-2021 and the King County Metro

4   Service Guidelines; and repealing Ordinance 17143,

5   Section 3, Ordinance 17386, Section 1, Ordinance 17641,

6   Section 1, and Ordinance 17143, Section 4, as amended.

7   STATEMENT OF FACTS:

8   1. The King County council adopted the King County Metro Strategic

9   Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 ("strategic plan") and the King

10   County Metro Service Guidelines ("service guidelines") in July 2011.

11   2. The regional transit task force recommended that the strategic plan and

12   service guidelines focus on transparency and clarity, cost control,

13   productivity, social equity, geographic value and sustainable funding.

14   3. In 2010, the first-ever countywide King County Strategic Plan 2010-

15   2014 was adopted via Ordinance 16897, establishing prioritized goals,

16   objectives and strategies for the programs and services of King County

17   government. This countywide plan was also intended to provide a

18   framework for all agency-level strategic planning, including planning for

19   the transit division.

20   4. The strategic plan and service guidelines build on the King County

21   Strategic Plan 2010-2014 and the policy framework and recommendations

22   of the regional transit task force and are also guided by the challenges

23   King County Metro faces: population and economic growth, demographic

24   changes, funding, the environment, customer service and satisfaction,

25   access to transit, and an evolving transportation system.

26   5. The strategic plan and service guidelines are meant to be living

27   documents setting the policy for and guiding the implementation of the

28   Metro transit service network while responding to growth throughout the

29   county, while also incorporating regular review of policies by the regional

30   transit committee.

31   6. Ordinance 17143, Section 6, which adopted the strategic plan and

32   service guidelines, directed the executive to transmit to the council an

33   ordinance to update the strategic plan and service guidelines by April 30,

34   2012, 2013 and 2015, and as necessary thereafter for the purpose of

35   validating policy intent of the strategic plan.

36   7. Ordinance 18029, Section 1, changed the due date for the April 30,

37   2015 update to December 15, 2015, to allow for the formation of a

38   regional stakeholder task force called for in the 2015/2016 Biennial

39   Budget Ordinance, Ordinance 17941, Section113, Proviso P1 to provide

40   recommendations that influence the updates to the strategic plan and

41   service guidelines.

42   8. In February 2015, the council passed Motion 14304, adopting the work

43   plan for a regional stakeholder transit task force that convened from

44   March through October 2015. The task force made consensus

45   recommendations in October, 2015 after reviewing the following policy

46   areas identified in the charge:

47   a. How transit service performance is measured as specified in the

48   service guidelines to reflect the varied purposes of different types of

49   transit service;

50   b. Approaches to evaluating how the goal of geographic value is

51   included in the service guidelines, including minimum service standards;

52   c. Approaches to evaluating how the goal of social equity is included in

53   the service guidelines;

54   d. Financial policies for purchase of additional services within a

55   municipality or among multiple municipalities; and

56   e. Guidelines for alternative services implementation.

57   9. In addition to changes recommended by the regional stakeholder task

58   force, the legislation and updates to the strategic plan and service

59   guidelines include:

60   a. Changes necessary to account for separately adopted transit policy

61   documents including updating the strategic plan and service guidelines;

62   b. Any proposed changes to address unanticipated issues associated with

63   implementing the strategic plan and service guidelines, including the

64   factors that implement the concepts of productivity including land use,

65   social equity and geographic value;

66   c. Changes that may be necessary to achieve the five-year

67   implementation plan required in Ordinance 17143, Section 7;

68   d. Changes necessary to address the results of the collaborative process

69   required in Ordinance 17143, Section 8; and

70   e. Additional substantive changes proposed following regional transit

71   committee discussion.

72   10. In response to the regional transit task force recommendation to

73   consider alternative service products, the strategic plan for public

74   transportation establishes the goal of providing alternative services to

75   areas that are not well-served by fixed route service. The alternative transit

76   program was initiated through Ordinance 17143, Section 7, which directed

77   the establishment of a five-year implementation plan for alternatives to

78   traditional transit service delivery. Motion 13736 accepted the five-year

79   implementation plan and requested an annual report on alternative services

80   progress. Ordinance 17941, Section 113, as amended by Ordinance 18110,

81   Section 49, Proviso P8, established the 2015-2018 alternative services

82   demonstration program; and starting in 2014, the alternative services

83   annual report has been included in the annual service guidelines report

84   required by Ordinance 17143, Section 5, as amended by Ordinance 17597,

85   Section 1.

86   BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

87   SECTION 1. The King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation

88   2011-2021 is hereby updated as provided in Attachment A to this ordinance and the King

89   County Metro Service Guidelines are hereby updated as provided in Attachment B to this

90   ordinance.

91   SECTION 2. The following are each hereby repealed:

92   A. Ordinance 17143, Section 3;

93   B. Ordinance 17386, Section 1;

94   C. Ordinance 17641, Section 1; and

95   D. Ordinance 17143, Section 4, as amended.

96   SECTION 3. A. The regional transit committee intends to monitor progress in

97   the implementation of:

98   1. The 2015-2018 alternative services demonstration program established by

99   Ordinance 17941, Section 113, as amended by Ordinance 18110, Section 49, Proviso P8;

100   2. Strategic plan strategies 2.1.1, 2.1.4, 6.2.3 and 6.2.4; and

101   3. The Planning Alternative Services section of the service guidelines.

102   B. To allow the committee to more-effectively monitor progress in the

103   implementation of alternative services and to consider possible future amendments to the

104   strategic plan and service guidelines pertaining to prioritization criteria, performance

105   measures and other aspects of the program, the transit division shall present updates to

106   committee meetings at least quarterly and as requested by the chair and vice chair

107   through approval of committee agendas. Each update shall include but not be limited to a

108   discussion of the status of community engagement efforts, project implementation, and

109   selected performance indicators; in addition:

110   1. The third quarter 2016 update shall include a summary of the findings of the

111 alternative services demonstration program eighteen month report required by Ordinance

112 17941, Section 13, Proviso P5;

113   2. The fourth quarter 2016 update shall be integrated with the annual service

114 guidelines report chapter on alternative services and shall include a schedule and process

115 for evaluating the prioritization criteria included in the 2015 service guidelines update to

116 aid in prioritizing projects when the demand for alternative services exceeds the revenues

117 necessary to fund said services;

118   3. The 2017 quarterly updates shall include a discussion of the schedule and

119 process for evaluating the alternative services prioritization criteria to allow for regional

120 transit committee participation in the process; and

121   4. The fourth quarter 2017 update shall be integrated with the annual service

122   guidelines report chapter on alternative services and shall include recommended options

123   for prioritization criteria as directed by subsection B.

124

Ordinance 18301 was introduced on 1/19/2016 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 6/13/2016, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles and Ms. Balducci
No: 0
Excused: 1 - Mr. Gossett

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 16ᵀᴴ day of June , 2016.

Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: A. King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 2015 Update, Rev. April 27, 2016, B. King County Metro Service Guidelines 2015 Update, dated April 27, 2016

King County
METRO

We'll Get You There

King County Metro
**Strategic Plan
for Public
Transportation**
2011-2021

2015 UPDATE

■ LETTER FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Dear Friends,

Our strategic plan cover girl, Anaya, was only six when she appeared on the first edition of the plan in 2011. She has changed in the years since then, and so has Metro as we put the strategic plan and service guidelines to work.

Some highlights of what we've done:

- Enhanced safety—our number one goal—through more frequent bus operator safety training, a pedestrian awareness campaign, and stronger measures to protect our drivers.

- Launched the groundbreaking ORCA LIFT reduced fare program, making transit more affordable for people with low incomes.

- Supported our region's economy by getting more people to work as the job market rebounded. Metro delivered an all-time record of 121 million passenger trips in 2014.

- Brought new-generation hybrid buses and zero-emission electric trolleys into our fleet as we move toward our goal of an all-electric and hybrid fleet by 2018. We also completed a Sustainability Plan with goals for conserving energy and water, reducing climate pollution, managing waste, and growing transit ridership.

- Earned high marks from customers—90 percent of riders surveyed in 2014 were very or somewhat satisfied with our service. Service improvements, such as the six RapidRide lines we completed between 2010 and 2014, and improved communication tools like our new TripPlanner mobile app, are factors.

- Continued to focus on containing costs. One way we're doing this is to involve employees in Lean and process improvement projects.

- Engaged tens of thousands of county residents in planning services as we started RapidRide lines, restructured bus networks to serve customers better and more efficiently, coordinated Metro's services with Sound Transit's Link light rail, and developed alternative services to meet local community needs.

- Enhanced programs to help employees move up in the organization and to develop the next generation of leaders. The Partnership to Achieve Comprehensive Equity, formed in 2013, continues working to build and sustain an inclusive, fair and equitable workplace.

- Used the service guidelines every year to evaluate our transit system and help us provide efficient, high-quality service that meets the county's most important public transportation needs.

- Produced annual reports showing our progress toward the strategic plan objectives using the metrics defined in the plan. The reports also compare Metro's performance with that of peer transit agencies. Our online Accountability Center makes it easy for the public to find performance reports as well as monthly and annual data.

The first edition of the strategic plan didn't sit on the shelf—we actively used it. The same will go for this updated version, and by incorporating recommendations from the Service Guidelines Task Force and Access to Transit Study, this 2015 plan improves the strategies and tools we're using to make real progress toward our vision.

Sincerely,

Kevin Desmond, General Manager
King County Metro Transit

18301

King County Metro Transit
Strategic Plan for Public Transportation
2011-2021

2015 UPDATE

April 27, 2016

King County METRO

We'll Get You There

Department of Transportation
Metro Transit Division
King Street Center, KSC-TR-0415
201 S. Jackson St
Seattle, WA 98104
206-553-3000   TTY Relay: 711
www.kingcounty.gov/metro

Alternative Formats Available

206-477-3832   TTY Relay: 711

15095-MTSP/comm

18301

18301

TABLE OF CONTENTS

■ METRO'S MISSION

Provide the best possible public transportation services and improve regional mobility and quality of life in King County.

■ METRO'S VISION

What we aspire to be.

Metro provides safe, efficient and reliable public transportation that people find easy to use. We offer a cost-effective mix of products and services, tailored to specific market needs and well-integrated with the services offered by other public transportation agencies.

Our fixed-route bus system meets the public transportation needs of most of our customers, particularly in areas of concentrated economic activity or urban development and along the corridors that link them. Metro's other public transportation options include paratransit service for people with disabilities who can't use the fixed-route system, alternative services designed for communities where regular bus service isn't the best fit, commuter vanpools, and ridesharing programs. No matter what community people live in or what needs they might have related to age, disability, income, or other circumstances, people can use public transportation throughout King County.

Expanded and improved products and services make public transportation attractive to a growing segment of the population, and public transportation **ridership increases** as a result. With more and more people switching from single-occupant cars to buses, carpools and other alternative transportation options, roadways are more efficient—carrying more people and goods and moving them faster. Less land is paved for parking, and the region can reduce its reliance on highway expansion.

Public transportation is **contributing to a better quality of life** in the Puget Sound region. The local economy is thriving because transit keeps the region moving. Public health is improving because people are walking, biking, and using transit more. Emissions from transportation have leveled off and are starting to decline, and Metro is using new technologies to reduce our energy consumption.

The public is engaged with Metro—informed about our plans and performance and a big part of the decision-making process. Customers find the public transportation experience to be positive at every stage, from trip planning to arrival at a destination. People understand how to use Metro's products and services, and are happy with the variety of transportation options available.

Metro has **quality employees who enjoy their jobs.** Their satisfaction shows in their good work ethic and responsiveness to customers.

Metro is **financially stable**—able to sustain transit products and services in both the short and long term by emphasizing productivity and efficiency and by controlling costs. Metro receives sufficient funding to fulfill the public's expectations for service and the region's vision for a robust public transportation system.

◼ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A plan for moving toward our vision

Public transportation is vitally important to the Puget Sound region, providing connections to jobs, schools, and other destinations; enabling people with limited mobility options to travel; enhancing regional economic vitality; providing an alternative to single-occupant driving on the most congested roadways; helping accommodate growth; and benefitting the environment.

King County Metro Transit, King County's public transportation provider, is committed to serving the public with the highest quality products and services possible as we work toward our vision of a sustainable public transportation system that helps our region thrive.

The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation outlines key opportunities and challenges Metro faces:

Population and economic growth: To accommodate 28 percent more people and 40 percent more jobs, Metro's annual service is expected to grow by 2.3 million annual service hours (roughly 60 percent) by 2040.

Demographic changes: The percentage of residents in King County over age 65 is increasing, younger people are increasingly choosing transit, the number of people with low incomes is growing, and our population is becoming more diverse—with associated disparities in education, employment, and income. Metro will continue to provide mobility for people who, for these and other reasons, have limited transportation options or are increasingly choosing transit.

Customer service and satisfaction: An ongoing aspiration is to make every customer's public transportation experience positive at every stage of a trip. Among the drivers of customer satisfaction are the frequency of service, personal safety on buses and at stops, comfort and cleanliness on buses and at stops, customer information, bus drivers' performance and the number of transfers.

The environment: Metro has a major role to play in helping King County meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets: reduce countywide sources of greenhouse emissions by 25 percent by 2020, 50 percent by 2030, and 80 percent by 2050; and reduce emissions from County operations by at least 15 percent by 2015, 25 percent by 2020, and 50 percent by 2030. (Targets are compared to a 2007 baseline.)

Funding: Metro's heavy reliance on sales tax makes it challenging to provide sustainable bus service, because revenue from this source is likely to decline in an economic downturn. While Metro's finances are on relatively stable footing as of late 2015, all of the region's transit agencies need additional long-term, sustainable funding to deliver the services our region expects. Metro's annual service guidelines analysis consistently finds that the transit system needs substantially higher investments in service than Metro can make with available resources. The 2015 analysis found a need of more than 470,000 annual service hours, equivalent to a 13 percent expansion of our system.

Access to transit: People's access to transit depends on factors such as their proximity to bus stops, the quality of walking and biking pathways, the availability of parking spaces at park-and-rides, and the type and amount of transit service provided at the access point. Working in partnership with other transit agencies and local jurisdictions, Metro can help improve access across King County.

Evolving transportation system: Continued and increased collaboration with other agencies will be necessary to deliver efficient, well-integrated services as the region's public transportation system evolves.

Pathway to the future

This is a plan for addressing these challenges and opportunities and moving toward our vision for public transportation. A companion long-term plan, slated for adoption in 2016, will contain more detail about Metro's future public transportation network.

Our plan builds on the foundation of King County's mission, vision, guiding principles, and goals, which were adopted in 2010 and updated in 2015. The revised County goals highlight the importance of transportation by adding a new goal: Deliver a seamless, reliable network of transportation options to get people where they need to go, when they need to get there.

Metro's plan and attached service guidelines also reflect the recommendations of two public advisory groups:

- **The Regional Transit Task Force,** which in 2010 proposed a groundbreaking new policy framework and service guidelines for transit in King County.

- **The Service Guidelines Task Force,** which in 2015 reviewed Metro's experience using the service guidelines and recommended a number of revisions.

The plan establishes goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving our vision, as well as performance measures to track progress. These are summarized in the table that follows.

TABLE 1: **Summary table of Metro strategic plan elements**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	MEASURES
Goal 1: Safety. Support safe communities.		
Keep people safe and secure. Outcome: Metro's services and facilities are safe and secure.	Promote safety and security in public transportation operations and facilities. Plan for and execute regional emergency-response and homeland security efforts.	• Preventable accidents per million miles • Operator and passenger incidents and assaults • Customer satisfaction regarding safety and security • Effectiveness of emergency responses
Goal 2: Human Potential. Provide equitable opportunities for people from all areas of King County to access the public transportation system.		
Provide public transportation products and services that add value throughout King County and that facilitate access to jobs, education and other destinations. Outcome: More people throughout King County have access to public transportation products and services.	Design and offer a variety of public transportation products and services appropriate to different markets and mobility needs. Provide travel opportunities and supporting amenities for historically disadvantaged populations, such as low-income people, students, youth, seniors, people of color, people with disabilities, and others with limited transportation options. Provide products and services that are designed to provide geographic value in all parts of King County. In areas that are not well-served by fixed-route service, seek to complement or "right-size" transportation service by working with partners to develop an extensive range of alternative services to serve the general public.	• Population within a ¼-mile walk delete to a transit stop • Number of jobs within a ¼-mile walk to a transit stop • Number of students at universities and community colleges that are within a ¼-mile walk to a transit stop • Percentage of households in low-income census tracts within a ¼-mile walk to a transit stop • Percentage of households in minority census tracts within a ¼-mile walk to a transit stop • Population within ½ mile of stops with frequent service • Number of jobs within ½ mile of stops with frequent service • Households within specific ranges of distance from frequent service • Average number of jobs and households accessible within 30 minutes countywide (total population, low-income population, minority population)*

* See note on next page.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	MEASURES
		• Average number of jobs and households accessible within 30 minutes from regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, and transit activity centers*
		• Vanpool boardings
		• Transit mode share by market
		• Student, reduced fare (youth, seniors, people with disabilities) and low-income fare permits and usage.
		• Accessible bus stops
		• Access registrants
		• Access boardings/number of trips provided by the Community Access Transportation (CAT) program
		• Requested Access trips compared to those provided
		• Access applicants who undertake fixed-route travel training

* These two metrics measure the accessibility of the county using the transit system, or what can be accessed via transit within a given time from a given location. Because buses run on schedules, trip times can vary greatly depending on the exact time the trip begins. For this reason, we compute the number of jobs and households that a person can reach from particular locations at multiple different times, averaged throughout the day. For the countywide measures, we conduct the same computations, but we choose multiple starting locations throughout the county. These results provide a picture of how many jobs the average King County resident can access via transit within 30 minutes.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	MEASURES
Goal 3: Economic Growth and Built Environment. Encourage vibrant, economically thriving and sustainable communities.		
Support a strong, diverse, sustainable economy. Outcome: Public transportation products and services are available throughout King County and are well-utilized in centers and areas of concentrated economic activity.	Encourage land uses, policies, and development that lead to communities that have good access to transit and that transit can serve efficiently and effectively. Partner with employers to make public transportation products and services more affordable and convenient for employees.	• All public transportation ridership in King County (rail, bus, Paratransit, Rideshare) • Transit rides per capita • Ridership in population/ business centers • Employees at CTR sites sharing non-drive-alone transportation modes during peak commute hours • Employer-sponsored passes and usage • Park-and-ride capacity and utilization (individually and systemwide); capacity and utilization of park-and-ride lots with frequent service • HOV lane passenger miles • Bike locker capacity and utilization (including number of locations with bike lockers)
Address the growing need for transportation services and facilities throughout the county. Outcome: More people have access to and regularly use public transportation products and services in King County.	Expand services to accommodate the region's growing population and serve new transit markets. Coordinate and develop services and facilities with other providers, local jurisdictions and the private sector to create an integrated and efficient regional transportation system that takes innovative approaches to improving mobility. Facilitate convenient and safe access to transit by all modes. Work in collaboration with transit partners, WSDOT, and other public and private partners to address transit parking capacity demand through a range of approaches that use resources efficiently and enable more people to access transit.	
Support compact, healthy communities. Outcome: More people regularly use public transportation products and services along corridors with compact development.	Encourage land uses, policies, and practices that promote transit-oriented development and lead to communities that have good access to transit and that transit can serve efficiently and effectively. Support bicycle and pedestrian access to jobs, services, and the transit system.	
Support economic development by using existing transportation infrastructure efficiently and effectively. Outcome: Regional investments in major highway capacity projects and parking requirements are complemented by high transit service levels in congested corridors and centers.	Serve centers and other areas of concentrated activity, consistent with Transportation 2040.	

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	MEASURES
Goal 4: Environmental Sustainability. Safeguard and enhance King County's natural resources and environment.		
Help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region. Outcome: People drive single-occupant vehicles less.	Increase the proportion of travel in King County that is provided by public transportation products and services.	• Average miles per gallon of the Metro bus fleet • Vehicle energy use (diesel, gasoline, kWh) normalized by miles • Vehicle fuel use (diesel, gasoline, kWh) normalized by boardings • Total facility energy use • Energy use at Metro facilities: kWh and natural gas used in facilities, normalized by area and temperature • Per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) • Transit mode share
Minimize Metro's environmental footprint. Outcome: Metro's environmental footprint is reduced (normalized against service growth).	Operate vehicles and adopt technology that has the least impact on the environment and maximizes long-term sustainability. Incorporate sustainable design, construction, operating and maintenance practices.	
Goal 5: Service Excellence. Establish a culture of customer service and deliver services that are responsive to community needs.		
Improve satisfaction with Metro's products and services and the way they are delivered. Outcome: People are more satisfied with Metro's products and services.	Provide service that is easy to understand and use. Emphasize customer service in transit operations and workforce training. Improve transit speed and reliability.	• Customer satisfaction • Customer complaints per boarding • On-time performance by time of day • Crowding • Use of Metro web tools and alerts
Improve public awareness of Metro products and services. Outcome: People understand how to use Metro's products and services and use them more often.	Use available tools, new technologies, and new methods to improve communication with customers. Promote Metro's products and services to existing and potential customers.	

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	MEASURES
Goal 6: Financial Stewardship. Exercise sound financial management and build Metro's long-term sustainability.		
Emphasize planning and delivery of productive service. Outcome: Service productivity improves.	Manage the transit system through service guidelines and performance measures.	• Service hours operated • Service hours and service hour change per route • Boardings per vehicle hour • Boardings per revenue hour
Control costs. Outcome: Metro's costs grow at or below the rate of inflation.	Continually explore and implement cost efficiencies including operational and administrative efficiencies. Provide and maintain capital assets to support efficient and effective service delivery. Develop and implement alternative public transportation services and delivery strategies. Provide alternative or "right-sized" services in the context of overall system financial health and the need to reduce, maintain or expand the system.	• Ridership and ridership change per route • Passenger miles per vehicle mile • Passenger miles per revenue mile • Cost per hour • Cost per vehicle mile • Cost per boarding • Cost per passenger mile • Cost per vanpool boarding • Cost per Access boarding • Fare revenues • Farebox recovery • ORCA use • Asset condition assessment
Seek to establish a sustainable funding structure to support short- and long-term public transportation needs. Outcome: Adequate funding to support King County's short- and long-term public transportation needs.	Secure long-term stable funding. Establish fare structures and fare levels that are simple to understand, aligned with other service providers, and meet revenue targets established by Metro's fund management policies. Establish fund management policies that ensure stability through a variety of economic conditions.	• For new or nontraditional alternative services, cost per boarding, ride, or user, as appropriate (Note: Different performance measures may be used to evaluate different types of services.)

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	MEASURES
Goal 7: Public Engagement and Transparency. Promote robust public engagement that informs, involves, and empowers people and communities.		
Empower people to play an active role in shaping Metro's products and services. Outcome: The public plays a role and is engaged in the development of public transportation.	Engage the public in the planning process and improve customer outreach.	• Public participation rates • Customer satisfaction regarding Metro's communications and reporting • Social media indicators • Conformance with King County policy on communications accessibility and translation to other languages
Increase customer and public access to understandable, accurate and transparent information. Outcome: Metro provides information that people use to access and comment on the planning process and reports.	Communicate service change concepts, the decision-making process, and public transportation information in language that is accessible and easy to understand. Explore innovative ways to report to and inform the public.	
Goal 8: Quality Workforce. Develop and empower Metro's most valuable asset, its employees.		
Attract and recruit quality employees. Outcome: Metro is satisfied with the quality of its workforce.	Market Metro as an employer of choice and cultivate a diverse and highly skilled applicant pool. Promote equity, social justice and transparency in hiring and recruiting activities.	• Demographics of Metro employees • Employee job satisfaction • Promotion rate • Probationary pass rate
Empower and retain efficient, effective, and productive employees. Outcome: Metro employees are satisfied with their jobs and feel their work contributes to an improved quality of life in King County.	Build leadership and promote professional skills. Recognize employees for outstanding performance, excellent customer service, innovation and strategic thinking. Provide training opportunities that enable employees to reach their full potential.	

■ CHAPTER 1: **INTRODUCTION**

King County Metro Transit's strategic plan is divided into three chapters: **Introduction,** which provides background and context, summarizes the challenges facing Metro, and describes the strategic planning process; **Pathway to the Future,** which presents Metro's goals, objectives and strategies; and **Plan Performance Monitoring,** which describes how Metro will track progress.

■ SECTION 1.1

Background and context

The importance of public transportation in the Puget Sound region

Public transportation is vitally important to the Puget Sound region. In 2014, people in the region took about 172 million trips on the fixed-route transit services offered by King County Metro, Community Transit, Pierce Transit, and Sound Transit.

Metro carried 70 percent of these trips, with 121 million boardings in 2014, or about 400,000 passenger trips every weekday. Metro also provides an array of other products and services to meet a range of public transportation needs (see sidebar).

These services improve the quality of life in our region by providing mobility to those who need or choose to use them. Public transportation connects commuters to jobs. In 2014, 45 percent of work trips to downtown Seattle were made on transit. Students take the bus to schools and universities. People also use public transportation to reach shopping, services, and recreation. Transit offers travel options to those who cannot drive, and provides assurance to drivers that other mobility options exist should they need them.

Transit enhances the region's economic vitality not only by getting people to their jobs but also by freeing up roadway capacity, improving the movement of people and goods. Metro's service keeps more than 175,000 vehicles off our roads every weekday. Public transportation is an integral part of the regional growth strategy in the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 and Transportation 2040 action plans. These plans rely on the expansion of public transportation to support growth by meeting the travel needs of a larger share of the region's projected population.

Public transportation also improves the region's air quality by reducing the number of miles people drive. Energy-efficient transit vehicles contribute to the decrease in transportation emissions. Metro service displaces approximately 600,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e) each year.

Metro is committed to working closely with other transit providers to continually enhance our region's public transportation system and attract a growing number of riders.

Metro's mandate

The King County Department of Transportation's Metro Transit Division performs the "metropolitan public transportation function" authorized in the Revised Code of Washington 35.58. Metro is required to plan and operate transit services consistent with county, regional, state and federal policies. As a County agency, Metro complies

Metro products and services

Metro provides a wide range of services: about 190 bus routes including six RapidRide lines, Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART), and operation of the City of Seattle's streetcar system. These fixed-route services delivered 121 million passenger trips in 2014. Metro also operates Sound Transit's Link light rail and most ST Express buses in King County under contract.

For people with disabilities who cannot use Metro's regular buses, Metro offers Access service and supports the Community Access Transportation program.

Metro's commuter vanpool program had 1,450 vehicles in operation in 2014.

Metro also offers a growing suite of alternative services, such as ride-sharing programs and community vans, tailored to local needs.

In this plan, the terms "public transportation" or "Metro's products and services" encompass all of Metro's offerings.

with County law and procedures; the Metropolitan King County Council approves Metro's fund management policies and Metro's biennial budget.

Countywide planning and policies: King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) are established by King County and its cities and jurisdictions. These policies are consistent with state law, state agency guidance, decisions of the Growth Management Policy Council and the regional growth strategy outlined in Vision 2040. The CPPs provide a countywide vision and serve as a framework for each jurisdiction to develop its own comprehensive plan, which must be consistent with the overall vision for the future of King County. Metro's Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 is consistent with King County's Countywide Planning Policies, Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Climate Action Plan, Comprehensive Financial Management Policies, and adopted mission, vision, guiding principles and goals.

Regional planning and policies: State law (RCW 47.80.020) designates the four-county Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for federal planning purposes. As the region's MPO, PSRC develops a regional plan and strategies to guide decisions about regional growth management and environmental, economic and transportation issues. As the region's RTPO, PSRC develops long-range transportation and development plans across multiple jurisdictions and allocates federal transportation funds for the region. Metro participates in the PSRC planning process and strives to meet the goals of the regional plans, Vision 2040 and Transportation 2040.

Washington state planning and policies: The 1990 Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the state's largest and fastest-growing counties to conduct comprehensive land-use and transportation planning, to concentrate new growth in compact "urban growth areas," and to protect natural resources and environmentally critical areas. King County's urban growth area is shown in Figure 1. The GMA requires King County to consider population and employment growth targets and land uses when determining the future demand for travel and whether such demand can be met by existing transportation facilities. Metro contributes to King County's compliance with the GMA by focusing public transportation services on urban growth areas.

FIGURE 1: **Urban growth area, King County**

King County Urban Growth Area

Rural King County

Major Road

Federal planning and policies: Metro complies with federal laws that require the public transportation system to be equitable, accessible, and just. Civil rights statutes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (see sidebar, p.14), require that Metro provide public transportation in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that Metro ensure equal opportunities and access for

people with disabilities. A 1994 executive order requires that all federal agencies include environmental justice in their missions. This means that Metro cannot disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations and must ensure full and fair participation by all potentially affected groups. Metro provides public transportation that adheres to these and other federal requirements.

■ SECTION 1.2

Challenges and opportunities

Metro based this strategic plan in part on an assessment of the current environment and the opportunities and challenges we face both within and outside the organization; these are described below. The goals, objectives and strategies presented later in the plan address these challenges.

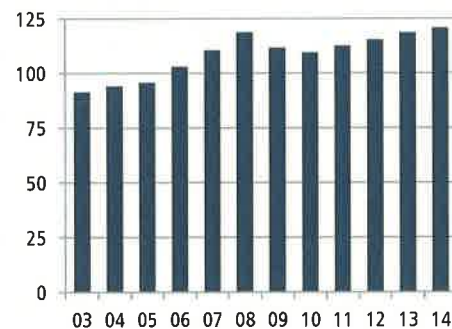## Regional growth, land use and the economy

King County is the most populous county in the state and the 13th most populous county in the nation. It has a variety of geographic characteristics and diverse communities; land uses, densities and population vary greatly.

The most densely developed parts of the county, where most people live and work, have little room to expand existing transportation infrastructure. Building new highways, roads, and other infrastructure would be costly, disruptive of existing property uses, and technically challenging. Consequently, the regional growth plans call for more intensive use of existing infrastructure by increasing both the number of people using transit services and the proportion of overall regional trips made on transit.

Regional population and economic growth: Since 2011, when this strategic plan was first produced, King County's population has grown by 5.6 percent to an estimated 2 million people in 2015. Practically every city in the county has seen population growth, and several cities have annexed large areas that previously were unincorporated. The number of jobs in the county has grown more than 10 percent since 2011, to about 1.3 million jobs, reflecting the local economy's recovery from the Great Recession.

Transit ridership tends to fluctuate with changes in population and jobs, as well as fuel prices and other factors. As shown in Figure 2, Metro's ridership grew steadily between 2003 and 2008, then dropped following the recession that began in 2008. Rider growth resumed in 2011 as the economy began to recover and population growth continued. Metro delivered 121 million passenger trips in 2014—a record high number.

FIGURE 2: **Metro ridership 2003-2014**
Annual boardings (millions)

In the broader Puget Sound region, the population is expected to surpass 4 million people in 2016 and then grow to nearly 5 million people by 2040 (2.4 million in King County). The region is expected to support 3 million jobs by 2040. More people and jobs (shown in

Centers

Centers are at the heart of the Puget Sound Regional Council's approach to growth management in Vision 2040. PSRC designates regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers as places that will receive a significant proportion of population and employment growth compared to the rest of the urban area. Concentrating growth in centers allows cities to maximize the use of existing infrastructure, make more efficient investments in infrastructure, and minimize the environmental impact of growth. Consequently, centers receive priority in regional and local investments in the infrastructure and services that support growth.

Regional growth centers are focal points of more dense population and employment. Linking these centers with a highly efficient transportation system allows the region to reduce the rate of growth in vehicle miles traveled by expanding transportation choices.

Manufacturing/industrial centers are employment areas with concentrated manufacturing and industrial land uses that cannot be easily mixed with other activities. They should continue to accommodate a significant amount of regional employment, and good access to the region's transportation system will contribute to their success.

In addition to PSRC's designated centers, Metro has identified "transit activity centers" in King County. These centers are served by and reflect the current transit network and are areas of the county that are important for Metro to serve to connect communities throughout the county. They are typically associated with higher levels of transit in their land-use context. Transit activity centers are further explained in the King County Metro Service Guidelines.

Regional growth, manufacturing/industrial, and transit activity centers are collectively referred to as "centers" in this strategic plan.

FIGURE 3: **Regional growth, manufacturing/ industrial, and transit activity centers**
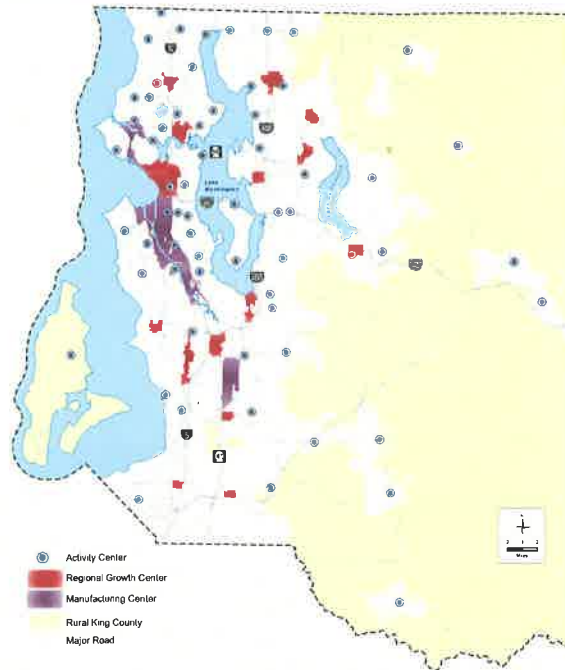
Figure 4) mean that Metro has an opportunity to serve a growing number of riders and major employment centers. Metro's annual service is expected to grow by 2.3 million annual service hours, from about 3.5 million hours in 2015 to 5.8 million hours by 2040—an amount that is beyond Metro's capacity to provide with current funding.

This growth will be focused in King County's centers (see sidebar, p. 15). The centers referred to in Metro's strategic plan are shown in Figure 3.

Demographic changes

King County's population is aging; people 65 and older now comprise more than 12 percent of the people who live here. Over the next 20 years, this age group will grow to about 18 percent of the population. An aging population may rely more on public transportation.

At the other end of the age scale, younger people are increasingly choosing transit. The share of driving trips in the Puget Sound region declined from 86 percent in 1999 to 82 percent in 2014, while the share of transit and nonmotorized trips increased. Between 2006 and 2014, the shift away from automobiles was most pronounced for 18-24 year olds, closely followed by 25-35 year olds.[1]

FIGURE 4: **Puget Sound region projected population and employment growth 2000-2040**

People with low incomes often rely heavily on transit, and while many King County residents are prospering, the percentage of people living in poverty or near-poverty has been growing. In 2013, about 12 percent or 240,000 people living in our county had incomes below the federal poverty level. Nearly 500,000 residents—a quarter of the county's total population—had incomes less than twice the federal poverty level (currently about $23,000 annually for a single person, or about $48,000 for a family of four). A growing number of people in poverty live in suburban areas. According to King County's 2014 Equity and Social Justice Annual Report, more than three in five county residents who are poor live outside of Seattle.

King County is also becoming more diverse. Immigrants from Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa, as well as native-born African Americans and Latinos, are making up a large part of our population growth. Overall, compared to White and Asian residents, Black and Latino residents have less education, higher unemployment, and lower incomes. Immigrants may have limited English proficiency. All of these conditions make public transportation critically important for enabling people to reach the jobs, education and services that can help reverse our society's inequities.

Metro plays an essential role in providing mobility to people who, for a variety of reasons, have limited transportation options or are increasingly choosing transit. We continue striving to find innovative solutions, such as the introduction of the ORCA LIFT reduced fare for people with low incomes and the expansion of the Alternative Services Program.
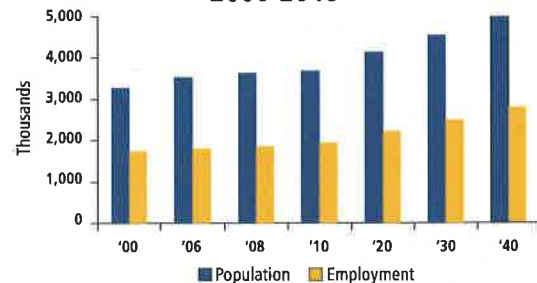
Metro's innovative ORCA LIFT program offers a reduced fare to people whose income is below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

---

[1] PSRC 2014 Regional Travel Survey, www.prsc.org/data/transportation/travel-surveys/2014-household

Customer service and satisfaction

Maintaining and improving customer satisfaction with Metro services is an ongoing process. Every experience a customer has on a Metro bus, at a Metro facility, or with Metro employees and information services affects perceptions about the quality of public transportation. Metro strives to make every customer's public transportation experience positive at every stage of a trip.

Metro continually gathers feedback about how well our services are meeting customer needs and expectations. We track customer correspondence and interactions and conduct an annual telephone survey of riders—including nonriders every two years.

Figure 5 illustrates the issues that have the most impact on customer satisfaction.[2]

FIGURE 5: **What's important to Metro riders**

LEVEL OF SERVICE	RANK IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE
Level of service	1
Personal safety	2
Comfort and cleanliness at stops	3
Comfort and cleanliness on board	4
Information sources	5
Metro drivers	6
Transferring	7

Another key to customer satisfaction is public involvement. Whenever we plan major changes to service, we conduct robust public engagement processes and use what we learn to shape our plans. Service change proposals are also guided by objective data and guidelines that help make the decision-making process transparent.

Funding

Approximately 55 to 60 percent of Metro's funding comes from local sales tax. This source has grown increasingly important since 2000, when the Washington legislature eliminated the motor vehicle excise tax for transit, which had provided nearly one-third of Metro's revenue.

About 20 percent of Metro's revenue comes from fares. Other sources include federal and state grants—which can fluctuate significantly—and contributions from service partners, vanpool operations, investment income, and a small portion of county property tax.

Metro's heavy reliance on sales tax makes it challenging to provide sustainable bus service because revenue from this source is dependent on economic conditions. Since 2000, two economic downturns forced Metro to scale back planned service

[2] King County Metro Transit 2014 Rider Survey

expansions. In the six years following the 2008 recession, Metro took numerous actions to cut costs, increase revenue and preserve most service. Although service reductions were necessary in September 2014, improved economic conditions enabled the County Council to adopt a 2015-2016 budget that maintained service.

In 2015, following Seattle voters' approval of a transit funding ballot measure, the City of Seattle entered into a Community Mobility Contract with Metro to purchase approximately 270,000 additional hours of bus service annually, about 8 percent of the Metro system, through 2020. Other economic improvements enabled Metro to invest in additional service in suburban areas around the county.

These developments enable Metro to sustain and enhance service during the 2015-2016 biennium and for some years beyond. However, funding from the City of Seattle will expire unless extended by Seattle voters in 2020, future economic downturns will again cause sales tax revenues to drop, and even today demand for transit service exceeds Metro's funding capacity. For these reasons Metro and other transit agencies continue to need long-term, sustainable and sufficient funding to deliver the public transportation services our region expects.

The environment

Metro strives to provide solutions to urgent environmental challenges: reduce greenhouse gas emissions, minimize energy consumption, shrink Metro's environmental footprint and improve the sustainability of transit operations.

King County's 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan makes a strong commitment ' to taking action to prevent and respond to the impacts of climate change. It establishes the targets in the Countywide Planning Polices that were adopted by the King County Growth Management Planning Council in 2014. These targets are: reduce countywide sources of greenhouse emissions by 25 percent by 2020, 50 percent by 2030, and 80 percent by 2050; and reduce emissions from County operations by at least 15 percent by 2015, 25 percent by 2020, and 50 percent by 2030. (Targets are compared to a 2007 baseline.)

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in King County, and our community must make major changes in how we live and travel if we are to significantly reduce emissions. Metro will play a leading role by providing transportation options that encourage transit ridership and help reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled. Fast, frequent RapidRide service and innovations like the Real-Time Rideshare app exemplify the strategies Metro will continue to pursue.

Metro can also support the development of compact, pedestrian-friendly communities that are easily served by transit by working closely with King County cities to coordinate development and transit plans.

The acquisition of hybrid buses and electric trolleys, and efforts to make Metro facilities more energy-efficient, advance King County's goal of reducing energy consumption. Metro is also testing zero-emission, battery-electric buses to determine how they will be used in Metro's fleet in the future.

Metro has developed a Sustainability Plan that calls for ongoing efforts to reduce energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, water use and waste and to increase transit ridership.

90%
of customers
Metro surveyed
said they
are satisfied
with our service

Source: 2014 Rider Survey

Access to transit

If people are going to use the public transportation system, they must be able to reach transit service and then get from transit service to their final destinations.

People's access depends on factors such as their proximity to bus stops or train stations, the quality of walking and biking pathways they can use to reach those places, the availability of parking spaces at park-and-rides, and the type and amount of transit service provided at the access point.

Metro will work with jurisdictions, public and private partners, transit agencies and the PSRC to identify where improvements are needed and actions that can be taken to address them. Partnerships among Metro, other transit agencies and local jurisdictions will be essential to improving transit access.

Evolving transportation system

The Puget Sound region's transportation system is constantly changing and adapting to the mobility needs of its residents, presenting numerous opportunities and challenges for Metro.

Metro has long worked closely with other agencies to plan and provide efficient, integrated travel options that enhance public transportation in King County. Metro works particularly closely with Sound Transit to realize efficiencies, achieve savings, and deliver better transit service for the people of our region. We also partner with Pierce Transit, Community Transit, Kitsap Transit, Everett Transit, Washington State Ferries and the King County Water Taxi as well as the Washington State Department of Transportation, PSRC, local and regional jurisdictions, and businesses such as Microsoft that provide direct transit service to their employees. The focus is on customers—offering them information about various agencies' services in one place, coordinating schedules for convenient transfers between agencies and modes, making fare payment simple, and collaborating in other ways to create a seamless, easy-to-use transportation network. This form of integration is critical because so many people cross county lines as part of their work commutes.

Metro collaborates on some of the region's most important transportation projects to ensure that public transportation continues to play a vital role in the region's broader transportation system. These projects include:

- **Sound Transit's Link light rail:** Sound Transit extended Central Link light rail to Seattle's Capitol Hill and the University of Washington in 2016 and has funding to extend Link north to Lynnwood, east to Redmond/Overlake and south to Kent/ Des Moines by 2023. The agency is developing plans to further expand. To optimize the public's investments in fast, high-capacity transit services, Metro will continue to work with Sound Transit and local jurisdictions to revise bus networks and supporting infrastructure in coordination with Link extensions. The goal is to improve the public transportation system's efficiency, effectiveness and ease of use.

- **Major highway projects:** Public transportation is an essential part of major transportation projects in the Puget Sound region. Metro provides public transportation service to mitigate the impacts of major projects—and is also affected by changes to the transportation infrastructure in the region. With financial support from partners, public transportation will continue to play a major role in the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project, the SR-520 Bridge Replacement Project, and other transportation infrastructure projects.

Metro also actively participates in regional fare coordination efforts and in ORCA, the regional fare payment system. The ORCA agencies are continually enhancing services and striving to extend the benefits of seamless fare payment to more people.

As the region's public transportation system evolves, Metro will actively engage with regional, local and state entities as well as businesses and communities to build an effective system. Development of Metro's long-range plan in 2015–2016 is a nexus for this process. This plan looks at projections about how communities in King County will change and defines what types of service will best serve the people who will live, work and visit those areas in the future. The collaborative plan development process has involved broad public outreach as well as an intensive process with local city staff members who served on a technical advisory committee.

Strategic plan development

Metro developed this strategic plan to define how we will meet the challenges and pursue the opportunities ahead.

Our plan builds on the foundation of King County's mission, vision, guiding principles (see sidebar), and goals, which were adopted in 2010 and updated in 2015. It defines specific goals, objectives and strategies for meeting the County's Mobility goal: Deliver a seamless, reliable network of transportation options to get people where they need to go, when they need to get there.

This plan and associated service guidelines also respond to the recommendations of two important task forces:

Regional Transit Task Force. King County formed the Regional Transit Task Force in March 2010 to consider a policy framework to guide service investments or—if necessary—reduction of the Metro system. The group was made up of community members who represented a diversity of interests and perspectives from across the county.

The task force was asked to identify short-term and long-term objectives for transit service investment, and to formulate a service implementation policy based on those objectives.

The task force unanimously approved seven recommendations reflecting the following themes:

- Metro should make its decision-making processes transparent to the public by adopting new performance measures and clear guidelines to be used in service allocation decisions.

- Metro should control costs and establish a sustainable financial structure that will work over time.

- Legislation should be pursued to ensure that Metro has a more sustainable financial base and can grow in the future.

- Productivity, social equity, and geographic value should be emphasized in service reduction and growth decisions.

- Metro should revise its mission statement and create a vision statement.

The task force also defined key system design factors (see sidebar on p. 22).

For the Regional Transit Task Force's full report, visit www.kingcounty.gov/transittaskforce.

Guiding principles from King County's strategic plan

Financially sustainable
Aligning funding, policy and operational goals of King County government.

Quality local government
Providing effective, efficient local governance and services to unincorporated areas.

Equitable and fair
Addressing the root causes of inequities to provide for equal access to opportunities for all.

Regionally collaborative
Engaging with partners, stakeholders, and public and private organizations to achieve goals.

Transit system design factors

The Council asked the Regional Transit Task Force to consider six design factors; the task force added one more. The following summarizes the task force's definitions of these factors:

Factor 1: Land use. To support regional and local growth plans by concentrating transit service coverage and higher service levels in corridors where residential and job density is greatest.

Factor 2: Social equity and environmental justice. To support social equity and environmental justice by providing mobility options to those who have no or limited transportation options.

Factor 3: Financial sustainability. To support financial sustainability through transit that achieves higher ridership and fare revenues combined with lower costs per rider.

Factor 4: Geographic value. To support geographic value by facilitating service allocation decisions (both for reductions and growth) that are perceived as "fair" throughout the county. This involves balancing access with productivity; maintaining some relationship between the tax revenue created in a subarea and the distribution of services; and providing access to job centers and other destinations that are essential to countywide economic vitality.

Factor 5: Economic development. To support economic development by achieving the largest number of work trips at all times of the day and all days of the week via transit.

Factor 6: Productivity and efficiency. To support productivity and efficiency by focusing on a system that results in high productivity and service efficiency based on performance measures for different types of transit services.

Factor 7: Environmental sustainability. To support environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing vehicle travel, reducing congestion, and supporting compact development.

Service Guidelines Task Force. In 2015, after Metro had used the adopted service guidelines for several years, the County Council formed a Service Guidelines Task Force to further analyze how transit service is evaluated and allocated and to consider changes in the guidelines.

The task force developed consensus recommendations that are incorporated into both this plan and Metro's service guidelines. In brief, the recommendations were:

- Modify the way transit corridors are evaluated to better reflect productivity, social equity and geographic value.

- Change the definition of "low income" used in setting target service levels from 100 percent of the federal poverty level to 200 percent of the federal poverty level, in line with Metro's ORCA LIFT program.

- Modify the definition of Metro's service types so that comparable services are measured against one another.

- Expand alternative services as a way to meet diverse needs.

- Establish a minimum service level of every 60 minutes for corridors and routes.

- Provide greater protection for peak-only services in the event of major service reductions.

- Improve Metro's planning process, focusing more attention on information about where riders start and end their trips, for example, and let local governments know in advance about potential changes.

- Give more consideration to the relative impacts to all parts of the county when making service reductions.

- Describe more fully the different factors Metro considers when making investments.

- Expand partnerships between Metro, communities, and private entities.

- Seek new resources to support growth of the transit system, while continuing to focus on efficiency and accountability.

The path ahead

Some elements of this plan—the mission, vision, goals and objectives—are expected to be realized over many years. The strategies are expected to be realized in a shorter time frame. The plan will be reviewed periodically as circumstances warrant, and plan elements may be modified, added or substituted if needed.

Although this plan is intended to inform the biennial budget process, funding constraints may limit Metro's ability to implement every strategy in the plan in any given year. Many of the goals and objectives represent ideals that Metro will continually strive to achieve, and which are likely to be included in subsequent plans.

CHAPTER 2: A PATHWAY TO THE FUTURE

Metro's goals

The "what we deliver" goals are:

- **Safety:** Support safe communities.

- **Human potential:** Provide equitable opportunities for people from all areas of King County to access the public transportation system.

- **Economic growth and built environment:** Encourage vibrant, economically thriving and sustainable communities.

- **Environmental sustainability:** Safeguard and enhance King County's natural resources and environment.

The "how we deliver" goals are:

- **Service excellence:** Establish a culture of customer service and deliver services that are responsive to community needs.

- **Financial stewardship:** Exercise sound financial management and build Metro's long-term sustainability.

- **Public engagement:** Promote robust public engagement that informs, involves, and empowers people and communities.

- **Quality workforce:** Develop and empower Metro's most valuable asset, its employees.

Goals, objectives and strategies

The goals, objectives and strategies in this plan reflect the priorities of King County residents, businesses, and leaders. They are designed to guide budget and management decisions that help Metro fulfill our mission and move us toward our vision.

Goals: The strategic plan has eight goals, including "what" goals that state what Metro intends to accomplish or services it intends to provide, and "how" goals that articulate how Metro intends to conduct its work (see sidebar).

Metro plans to move toward the goals by implementing this plan, but the goals are also intended to endure beyond the life of this plan.

Objectives: Objectives describe what Metro must do to achieve the goals. An objective may serve multiple goals, but each objective is listed with a specific goal to which it is most closely tied. Each objective has an associated outcome. Chapter 3, Plan Performance Monitoring, describes how Metro will measure progress toward the desired outcomes.

Strategies: This plan contains 40 strategies for achieving the objectives. Even though strategies may serve multiple objectives and goals, each strategy is listed with a specific objective to which it is most closely tied. Chapter 3 describes how Metro will measure our success in carrying out these strategies.

METRO'S GOALS: GOAL 1

SAFETY

Support safe communities.

Metro provides a safe and secure transportation environment and ensures emergency preparedness.

Metro's **All Hazards Response Plan** is designed to ensure the safety of all responders, deter and prevent incidents, guide the response of Metro and partnering agencies so it is quick and effective, and appropriately manage Metro's resources during an incident.

The **Adverse Weather Plan** matches service delivery to the severity of the incident and outlines procedures for internal and external communications.

Objective 1.1: Keep people safe and secure.

Metro protects the safety and security of customers, employees and facilities in a variety of ways, including planning, policing, facility design, operational practices, safety training, and collaboration with local jurisdictions and other agencies on safety-related matters. *Intended outcome: Metro's services and facilities are safe and secure.*

Strategy 1.1.1: Promote safety and security in public transportation operations and facilities.

The Metro Transit Police (MTP) protects Metro's operators and riders by patrolling the Metro system and facilities by bus, bike and car. The MTP leverages its resources by creating partnerships with community groups, police and other government agencies, and other public transportation organizations. These partnerships allow the MTP to share information, ideas, and solutions to common safety issues.

Metro educates and trains its employees to improve the safety and security of the public transportation system and Metro's offices and facilities. A major focus of safety efforts is operator training, as transit operators directly impact the safety of riders and other road users. Metro also strives to ensure that its facilities use principles of safe design, such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, to maximize environmental safety.

Metro's Accident Prevention Program Plan and System Security Plan guide Metro's efforts to maintain and improve the safe operations of its vehicles and the safety and security of its facilities.

Strategy 1.1.2: Plan for and execute regional emergency response and homeland security efforts.

Metro prepares for emergency situations so we can help the Puget Sound region adapt and continue functioning when emergencies happen. Metro has developed two major plans for continuing to provide reliable transportation in "all-hazard" incidents ranging from major service interruptions to civil unrest as well as the more common adverse weather occurrences such as snow or flooding. These are the All Hazards Response Plan and the Adverse Weather Plan (see sidebar).

Metro also regularly conducts emergency-preparedness field exercises with local, county, state and federal agencies.

HUMAN POTENTIAL

Provide equitable opportunities for people from all areas of King County to access the public transportation system.

Metro provides equitable and accessible transportation options.

Objective 2.1 Provide public transportation products and services that add value throughout King County and that facilitate access to jobs, education, and other destinations.

Metro strives to provide transportation choices that make it easy for people to travel throughout King County and the region. Metro provides a range of public transportation products and services, and coordinates and integrates its services with others. *Intended outcome: More people throughout King County have access to public transportation products and services.*

- **Strategy 2.1.1: Design and offer a variety of public transportation products and services appropriate to different markets and mobility needs.**

  The traditional fixed-route transit system is the largest of Metro's services, but it cannot meet every public transportation travel need. Metro provides a range of public transportation products and services to augment the fixed-route transit system and provide geographic value throughout King County.

  Within the fixed-route system, Metro provides several levels of service: very frequent, frequent, local, hourly and peak. Each level can be matched to the community served. Metro's companion piece to the strategic plan, the King County Metro Service Guidelines, considers data for productivity, social equity, and geographic value to help identify which level of service will be appropriate for transit corridors throughout King County.

  Corridors that have the potential for high ridership give Metro opportunities to focus transit service and facility investments. Metro is pursuing these opportunities through the RapidRide program. Six RapidRide lines are in operation, and additional lines could be developed in the future. Communities can leverage Metro's transit investments with supportive development along each line.

  In other parts of the county, fixed-route transit—even at an hourly or peak-only level—is not efficient. In these cases, Metro will work with the community to create alternative service options such as community shuttles, real-time rideshare, community vans, or other innovative ways to provide mobility responsive to community needs. Metro will foster local partnerships and work with local partners to develop and implement these alternative transit services.

- **Strategy 2.1.2: Provide travel opportunities and supporting amenities for historically disadvantaged populations, such as low-income people, students, youth, seniors, people of color, people with disabilities, and others with limited transportation options.**

  Metro serves historically disadvantaged populations with a wide variety of public transportation services and supporting amenities such as bus stops, bus shelters, seating, lighting, waste receptacles. and public information. All buses on the fixed-route system are accessible for most people with disabilities, complementary paratransit services are available for eligible individuals with disabilities who cannot use regular bus service, and facilities are accessible in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Metro offers other services as well, such as the innovative Community Transportation Program which includes the Taxi Scrip Program, Transit Instruction Program, and Community Access Transportation (CAT). Metro also provides programs such as Jobs Access and Reverse Commute

(JARC), a federal program that is intended to connect low-income populations with employment opportunities through public transportation. Metro also works with local school districts to respond to student transportation needs. Metro regularly reports on its services in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Strategy 2.1.3: Provide products and services that are designed to provide geographic value in all parts of King County.

Metro provides public transportation products and services that offer flexible travel options for King County residents and visitors. Metro makes public transportation investments that are appropriate to the land use, employment densities, housing densities, and transit demand in various communities. Metro will continue to provide public transportation to all communities currently served by transit.

There should be a relationship, but not an exact formula, between the tax revenue created in an area of King County and the distribution of public transportation products and services. Service design should also recognize all of the revenues (taxes and fares) generated in the various areas of King County.

Public transportation investments are critical for economic prosperity and the future growth of the region. Metro should get the greatest number of workers to and from job centers. Metro will support access to destinations that are essential to countywide economic vitality.

▪ Strategy 2.1.4: In areas that are not well-served by fixed-route service or where geographic coverage service gaps exist, seek to complement or "right-size" transportation service by working with partners to develop an extensive range of alternative services to serve the general public.

Innovative public transportation services and delivery strategies may meet mobility needs more effectively than regular bus service does in areas not well-suited to fixed-route transit. Metro will seek to replace poorly performing fixed-route services under certain circumstances, to provide better connections to, from and between centers, to serve rural communities, and to seed new routes that would serve emerging markets. These services may also be less costly and more cost-effective than traditional bus service. Metro is exploring opportunities to expand effective and lower-cost alternatives to fixed-route bus service to a broader range of users.

Partnerships are essential to expanding alternative services to these new users. A local partner organization, such as a municipality, nonprofit or business, must be actively engaged and contribute to the development and implementation of the project. Partnerships may include sharing the cost of community engagement, planning, equipment, contracted services, promotions, or other project elements and may involve either cash or in-kind contributions from the partner organization. Local partners may also enact transit-supportive land-use policy or may make infrastructure investments that support transit. Metro will invite certain communities to partner on alternative services projects based on a defined set of allocation criteria. Metro will also create opportunities for local partners to submit alternative services project ideas for consideration. When considering where to implement alternative services projects, Metro will give special consideration to communities with high proportions of low-income or minority populations who depend on public transportation.

To provide an extensive array of services to the general public, changes may be necessary to current code. Metro should consider code changes that clarify eligibility criteria for special programs to allow use by the general public when appropriate.

Existing Alternative Services	Community Shuttle	Community Van	Real-Time Rideshare	TripPool
VanShare VanPool Rideshare Matching DART and CAT	Metro route with a Flexible Service Area, provided through community partnerships.	A fleet of Metro vans for local group trips that are scheduled by a local transportation coordinator to meet locally identified transportation needs.	Leveraging mobile applications to enable private carpool ridematching to take place in real-time.	Real-time ridesharing between home neighborhood and a transit center. Uses Metro Vans and ORCA fares.

Metro's suite of alternative services and products

Alternative services are a combination of traditional and innovative mobility services. Metro has been offering rideshare services like VanPool, Rideshare Matching, and VanShare for many years. Under the Alternative Services program Metro will be developing a new suite of products that leverage emerging technologies and trends. Current products, shown above, include: Community Shuttles, Community Vans, Real-Time Rideshare, and TripPool.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Encourage vibrant, economically thriving and sustainable communities.

Metro supports economic vitality in the region by moving people efficiently and improving the performance of the transportation system.

Objective 3.1 Support a strong, diverse, sustainable economy.

A transportation system that moves people and goods efficiently is critical to economic vitality and the achievement of the region's vision for growth. The regional growth strategy emphasizes the need for an integrated, multimodal transportation system that links major cities and centers. Metro plays an important role in the growth strategy by offering travel options that connect people to areas of concentrated activity, providing affordable access to jobs, education and important social and retail services. *Intended outcome: Public transportation products and services are available throughout King County and are well-utilized in centers and areas of concentrated economic activity.*

- **Strategy 3.1.1: Encourage land uses, policies, and development that lead to communities that have good access to transit and that transit can serve efficiently and effectively.**

  Metro provides a range of services to get people to work, school, and other places they want to go. The backbone of Metro's system is a network of all-day, two-way bus routes between residential centers, business centers and transit activity centers. Metro also provides commuter service to major destinations from many neighborhoods as well as from a network of park-and-ride lots. Metro provides local services to connect people to the larger transportation system. Rideshare services such as commuter vans and Rideshare-Online.com, as well as community programs such as In Motion and car-sharing, promote alternative travel options.

  Metro augments its own investments by developing mutually beneficial partnerships with public and private entities to improve public transportation. Partners may include local jurisdictions, other agencies, employers, and institutions. Metro enters into agreements in which partners may contribute funding directly for service, including service that complements fixed-route service, that increases service in communities where corridors are below their target service levels, or that supports more service hours or service efficiencies. Partners also may invest in transit speed or reliability improvements. Partnerships may include local government land-use policy changes that promote higher concentrations of residential and employment density, which is conducive to transit. Metro also forms partnerships to develop and promote alternative commute programs and to manage parking and traffic to make public transportation more efficient and attractive. Metro works with the Washington State Department of Transportation and local cities to provide services that help mitigate the impacts of major construction projects. Metro also works with private transportation operators (employee and residential shuttles, transportation network companies, taxis, and other commercial transportation entities) to enable complementary use of Metro services and facilities with those operators.

Strategy 3.1.2: Partner with employers to make public transportation products and services more affordable and convenient for employees.

Metro develops and pursues market-based strategies with employers, institutions and property managers to encourage the use of alternatives to driving alone. Metro offers employers and organizations technical assistance, marketing and training to establish commute benefit programs. These programs give commuters access and incentives for using transit and rideshare services, cycling, walking and teleworking. Examples are ORCA business products and Home Free Guarantee (Metro's emergency ride home service). Metro also coordinates with employer-sponsored transportation services to avoid duplicating existing public services. Metro seeks to identify potential new community and employer-based partnerships that would support transit options for low-income workers.

By working with employers, Metro can increase the use of its products and services as well as those of other transit agencies. Metro can also support progress toward community objectives, while helping employers manage parking and traffic, attract and retain employees, and meet commute trip reduction and sustainability goals.

Objective 3.2: Address the growing need for transportation services and facilities throughout the county.

The number of people and jobs in King County is growing, and the demand for public transportation continues to rise. Metro will prepare for this growth by seeking opportunities to expand service, by being more efficient, and by partnering with others to maximize the travel options available. Metro will also strive to improve access to transit—the ability of people to get to transit service and to get from transit service to their final destinations using a range of modes such as walking, biking, driving and other public transportation services. Access is affected by the environment—such as surrounding land use and connectivity, by the safety and security of the surrounding street and sidewalk network, by the availability of service at the access point, and other factors. *Intended outcome: More people have access to and regularly use public transportation products and services in King County.*

- ### Strategy 3.2.1: Expand services to accommodate the region's growing population and serve new transit markets.

Population and employment growth are creating emerging and expanding travel markets throughout King County. These markets range from expanding employment centers such as Kirkland's Totem Lake or Seattle's South Lake Union to developing residential communities throughout King County. Metro has many tactics for accommodating growth, such as starting a new route, adding peak trips, extending hours of service to include the midday or evening, or modifying a route to serve a new location.

- **Strategy 3.2.2: Coordinate and develop services and facilities with other providers, local jurisdictions and the private sector to create an integrated and efficient regional transportation system that takes innovative approaches to improving mobility.**

  Metro collaborates with other agencies and organizations to build the best possible regional public transportation network, to make it easy for people to travel between transportation services, to maximize travel options, and to achieve efficiencies by providing services that are complementary rather than duplicative. For example, when Sound Transit introduces new services, Metro explores opportunities to restructure bus routes, improve service integration, enhance service and increase efficiency. By reconfiguring, reducing or eliminating poorly performing routes, Metro can free up resources to invest in routes with greater demand and unmet service needs. Where parallel services exist, Metro can restructure routes to create service that is more frequent, productive and reliable.

  Metro also coordinates with other agencies and jurisdictions to improve the efficiency of the system through transit speed and reliability improvements. Metro works independently and in coordination with local jurisdictions to implement improvements such as traffic signal coordination, transit queue-bypass lanes, transit signal queue jumps, transit signal priority, safety improvements, and stop consolidations. Metro also supports investments that improve service, attract transit riders, and achieve land-use goals that support transit services.

  Metro also coordinates with other regional and local public transportation entities and the private sector on funding, design, construction and maintenance of capital facilities such as transit hubs, park-and-rides and stations to optimize intermodal connections, promote efficient operation and enhance access. Metro will take innovative approaches to improving mobility.

- **Strategy 3.2.3: Facilitate convenient and safe access to transit by all modes.**

  Metro will work with public and private partners to promote access to transit through all modes, including walking, bicycling, taking connecting transit or paratransit services, or driving to a pick-up/drop-off point or park-and-ride. Tactics include facility design and infrastructure investments to enhance safety, security and connectivity.

FIGURE 6: **Fourth quarter park-and-ride capacity and use, 2010-2014**
(number of parking spaces)
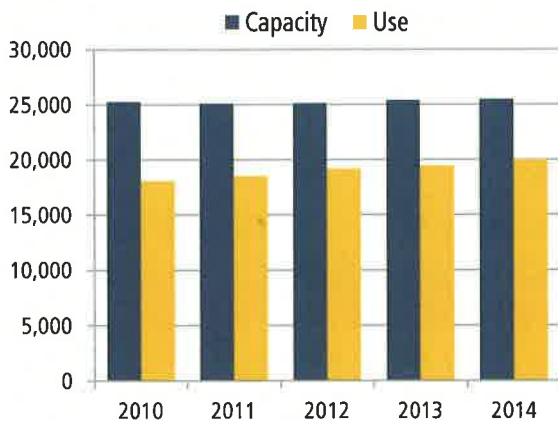
Strategy 3.2.4: Work in collaboration with transit partners, WSDOT and other public and private partners to address transit parking capacity demand through a range of approaches that use resources efficiently and enable more people to access transit.

Park-and-ride locations provide access to the public transportation system for people who do not live near a bus route or who want the many service options available at park-and-rides. These facilities serve as a meeting place for carpool and vanpool partners, and add to the capacity of the state and interstate highway system. The use of park-and-rides continues to grow, and many lots are at or over capacity every day.

Metro will work with Sound Transit, WSDOT, local cities and others to explore affordable opportunities to increase park-and-ride capacity and enhance transit access. Tactics for responding to demand include managing existing lots including ensuring adequate signage, maximizing occupancy of existing spaces, considering additional potential for leased lots and shared parking, and creating new parking stalls. When creating new capacity, Metro will strive to meet multiple goals that respond to parking capacity demand while also creating mixed-use, transit-supportive development.

Metro will also pursue strategies to improve first/last mile connections and improve education and marketing. Metro will explore opportunities to improve bike and pedestrian access to park-and-rides and other hubs through improved connections, internal circulation, and enhanced facilities such as secure bike storage.

Objective 3.3: Support compact, healthy communities.

Communities that are compact and friendly to pedestrians and bicycles are most easily served by transit. Such communities foster healthier, more active lifestyles while reducing auto-dependency and associated road investments. By the same token, transit service can support and encourage development that is more compact. *Intended outcome: More people regularly use public transportation products and services along corridors with compact development.*

- **Strategy 3.3.1: Encourage land uses, policies, and practices that promote transit-oriented development and lead to communities that have good access to transit and that transit can serve efficiently and effectively.**

  Metro encourages the development of transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly communities by working with jurisdictions and providing services to transit-oriented developments. Metro recommends strategies for jurisdictions and agencies to make communities more transit-friendly. Metro also partners with jurisdictions, other agencies and the private sector to spur transit-oriented development through redevelopment opportunities at, or adjacent to, park-and-rides, transit hubs and stations along major transit corridors.

- **Strategy 3.3.2: Support bicycle and pedestrian access to jobs, services, and the transit system.**

  Metro collaborates with local jurisdictions, transit agencies and others to enhance bike and walk connections to transit. Metro develops programs and facilities to improve bicyclists' and pedestrians' connections to transit. Metro also collaborates with public and private partners to enhance the use of bicycles for commute and non-commute purposes to help reduce drive-alone travel. Metro provides three-position bike racks on transit vehicles and is working to increase the availability of secure bicycle parking at new and existing Metro transit facilities. Metro will also explore opportunities to coordinate with local jurisdictions to address safety and security concerns and improve wayfinding measures for all populations. Metro will seek opportunities to improve nonmotorized access and facilities at park-and-rides and major transit hubs.

Objective 3.4: Support economic development by using existing transportation infrastructure efficiently and effectively.

Use of transit can increase the efficiency of King County's transportation infrastructure. By carrying more people in fewer vehicles, transit reduces the need for parking spaces at major employment centers and other activity hubs, keeping development costs down. Transit also moves more people on existing roadways, reducing the need for expansion. *Intended outcome: Regional investments in major highway capacity projects and parking requirements are complemented by high transit service levels in congested corridors and centers.*

- **Strategy 3.4.1: Serve centers and other areas of concentrated activity, consistent with Transportation 2040.**

  Metro focuses on serving King County's designated centers and other areas of concentrated activity, as shown in Figure 3 on page 15 and as prescribed in Transportation 2040 (see below).

  Metro also works with property owners, building managers and employers on a variety of efforts to increase the use of transit. These include parking management, fare media programs, outreach, incentives, work-option programs such as telework, and community programs such as In Motion.

Transportation 2040

Transportation 2040 is an action plan for transportation in the central Puget Sound region that was developed and adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

The region's population is projected to grow from 3.9 million in 2015 to nearly 5 million by the year 2040. The number of jobs in projected to increase from 2.2 million in 2015 to 3 million in 2040. This growth is expected to boost demand for travel within and through the region. Metro's annual service is expected to grow by 2.3 million annual service hours, from about 3.5 million hours in 2015 to 5.8 million hours by 2040. Metro expects to serve about 800,000 weekday boardings.

Transportation 2040 outlines a long-term vision for how the Puget Sound region should invest in transportation to accommodate rising travel demand. The plan identifies investments in roads, transit and non-motorized travel that will support this growth and improve the transportation system. The document lays out a financing plan with more reliance on user fees to fund transportation improvements. It also proposes a strategy for reducing transportation's contribution to climate change and its impact on air pollution and the health of Puget Sound.
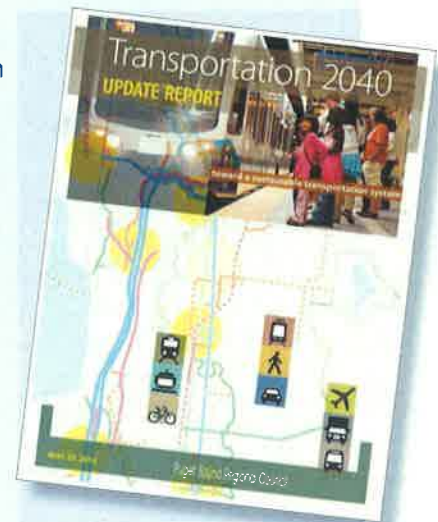
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Safeguard and enhance King County's natural resources and environment.

Metro provides transportation choices and supports travel that uses less energy, produces fewer pollutants and reduces greenhouse gases in the region.

Objective 4.1: Help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

King County has a long-term target of reducing greenhouse-gas emissions from countywide sources by 80 percent by 2050 (compared to a 2007 baseline), and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from its operations by at least 50 percent by 2030 (also compared to a 2007 baseline). The transportation sector is the source of more than half the emissions in the region, so reducing vehicle-miles traveled and emissions is critical to achieving these goals. Every step Metro takes to make transit a more accessible, competitive and attractive transportation option helps to counter climate change and improve air quality. *Intended outcome: People drive single-occupant vehicles less.*

- **Strategy 4.1.1: Increase the proportion of travel in King County that is provided by public transportation products and services.**
  Metro offers an array of alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel, and will continue to improve the attractiveness of Metro's products and services and promote them to existing and potential customers.

Objective 4.2: Minimize Metro's environmental footprint.

King County's 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan provides a road map for confronting climate change in King County, with new targets adopted by the King County Council. These targets include: reduce normalized energy use in County-owned facilities by at least 5 percent by 2020 and 10 percent by 2025, and reduce normalized energy use in Metro's vehicle operations by at least 10 percent by 2020 (all target reductions are compared to a 2014 baseline). In support of this plan, Metro is committed to being a leader in green operating and maintenance practices and minimizing both energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Metro also educates its employees about reducing energy consumption at work and using public transportation to commute. *Intended outcome: Metro's environmental footprint is reduced (normalized against service growth).*

- **Strategy 4.2.1: Operate vehicles and adopt technology that has the least impact on the environment and maximizes long-term sustainability.**
  Metro will continue exploring opportunities to employ energy-efficient vehicles for both fixed-route and other services, such as its commuter van programs. Metro has already reduced vehicle emissions by developing and using clean-fuel bus technologies, such as hybrid diesel-electric coaches and zero-emission electric trolleys. Metro is committed to being a leader in the adoption of new energy-efficient and low-emission technologies.

- **Strategy 4.2.2: Incorporate sustainable design, construction, operating, and maintenance practices.**
  Metro incorporates cost-effective green building and sustainable development practices in all capital projects that it plans, designs, constructs, remodels, renovates, and operates. Metro will continue seeking opportunities to improve energy efficiency and conservation and to decrease energy use in its facilities. Metro follows King County's Green Building and Sustainable Development Ordinance and strives for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification where possible.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Establish a culture of customer service and deliver services that are responsive to community needs.

Metro seeks to provide reliable, safe and convenient transportation services that are valued by customers and responsive to the needs of people, businesses and communities.

Objective 5.1: Improve satisfaction with Metro's products and services and the way they are delivered.

Metro associates customer satisfaction with a favorable public image, customer loyalty, and strong community support, as well as the provision of quality service. Metro is committed to giving its customers a positive experience at every stage, from trip planning to arrival at a destination. *Intended outcome: People are more satisfied with Metro products and services.*

▪ Strategy 5.1.1: Provide service that is easy to understand and use.

A public transportation system that is easy to understand and use is important to attracting and retaining riders and increasing market share. People may not try public transportation if they do not know which bus routes or other services to use, how to pay a fare, how to transfer among services, or where to get off. Customer information tools are essential to inform riders about services and help them easily navigate the public transportation system. These include tools that remove barriers for people with disabilities, such as auditory stop announcements. Products such as the ORCA fare card simplify fare payment and transfers among transit agencies in the Puget Sound region. Customer information tools ease public transportation use for new and existing riders alike.

▪ Strategy 5.1.2: Emphasize customer service in transit operations and workforce training.

Every customer experience affects perceptions of the quality of Metro service. Metro operators are at the front lines of transit service, interacting with customers daily. Other Metro employees interact with customers at service centers, over the phone, or at public meetings. Metro will work to achieve high levels of customer service in all of these interactions, and to continually emphasize to employees the importance of good customer service.

▪ Strategy 5.1.3: Improve transit speed and reliability.

Transit speed and reliability is an important aspect of customer satisfaction. Metro regularly monitors the on-time performance of its bus routes and strives to achieve its performance guidelines. To help improve transit speed and reliability, Metro is committed to managing transit pathways. Its speed-and-reliability program places high priority on corridors with high ridership and bus volumes, such as Metro's six RapidRide corridors, and on corridors impacted by major construction projects, such as replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the SR-520 bridge. A range of speed and reliability improvements including traffic signal coordination, transit signal priority, bus lanes, queue bypass, safety improvements and stop consolidation can be implemented on a corridor or spot basis. Metro works independently and in coordination with local jurisdictions to make improvements that enhance the speed and reliability of bus service, help maintain even intervals between buses, and reduce overcrowding and delays.

Objective 5.2: Improve public awareness of Metro products and services.

People will use public transportation products and services that meet their needs, but they must first learn about the service that is available. Marketing and customer information tools are critical for increasing ridership by communicating the availability, value, benefits and "how to" of using public transportation. *Intended outcome: People understand how to use Metro's products and services and use them more often.*

- ### Strategy 5.2.1: Use available tools, new technologies, and new methods to improve communication with customers.

  Metro currently uses a range of tools to give customers up-to-date information on public transportation services and service disruptions and to promote Metro products and services. Internet-based media will offer new opportunities to reach even more people and keep them informed. Independent application developers augment and support Metro's efforts to improve customer communications. Metro will continue to improve its communications so that customers can easily access information when they need it most.

- ### Strategy 5.2.2: Promote Metro's products and services to existing and potential customers.

  Effective marketing generates ridership and improves overall awareness and understanding of the public transportation system. Marketing activities include direct promotion, advertising, product branding and positive customer service. These activities can support events such as periodic service changes, major initiatives such as Transit Now, and campaigns focused on target groups. As Metro seeks to grow overall ridership and increase efficiency by attracting riders to services with existing capacity, expanded marketing efforts—including market research and promotion—will make a difference.
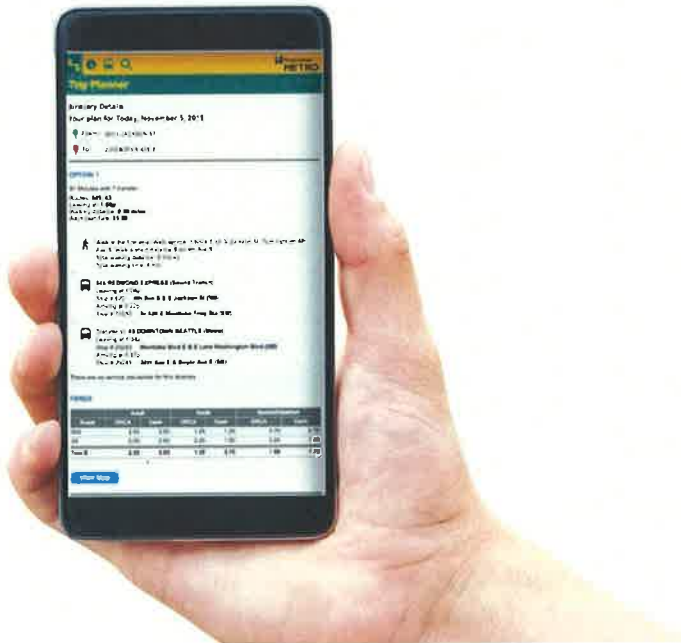
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Exercise sound financial management and build Metro's long-term sustainability.

Metro is committed to using resources wisely and increasing the efficiency of its operations.

Objective 6.1: Emphasize planning and delivery of productive service.

Metro should create a public transportation system that emphasizes productivity, while ensuring social equity and providing geographic value. A focus on productivity will support regional and local growth and economic development as well as environmental and financial sustainability. *Intended outcome: Service productivity improves.*

- **Strategy 6.1.1: Manage the transit system through service guidelines and performance measures.**

  Service guidelines and performance measures will help the public, Metro and King County decision-makers determine the appropriate level and type of service for different corridors and destinations. Metro will use the service guidelines to plan and manage the transit system. The Guidelines will clearly state how the priorities of productivity, social equity and geographic value will be used to establish service levels for the All-Day and Peak-Only Network. The guidelines also provide direction for evaluating system performance, restructuring service, designing service, planning alternative services, planning service changes, and working with partners. The establishment and use of route, system and peer-comparison performance measures will enable Metro and the public to better understand how Metro's services are performing.

- **Strategy 6.1.2: Establish and maintain a long-range transit service and capital plan developed in collaboration with local comprehensive and regional long-range transportation planning.**

  To implement the vision for public transportation, as established in the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, King County shall establish and maintain a long-range plan that: (1) reflects regional transit service and capital plans identified through Sound Transit's adopted long-range plan and incorporates transit service needs identified through adopted local comprehensive and other transportation plans; (2) uses, as a starting point, today's transit network and needs as defined by the King County Metro Service Guidelines; and (3) remains consistent with the policies and values of the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation. The Metro Transit long-range plan adopted by the King County Council should include the unmet transit service needs throughout King County as identified by the existing Metro Service Guidelines, as well as the service and capital elements of a future Metro transit network at various funding levels that support local jurisdiction and regional plans. The plan shall take into consideration the Puget Sound Regional Council's economic, growth management, and transportation plans.

  King County shall develop the long-range plan in coordination with local jurisdictions and regional transit agencies. Development of the long-range plan shall be based on the principle that jurisdiction comprehensive and transportation plans inform the long-range plan and the long-range plan informs jurisdiction comprehensive and transportation plans. The specific approach to coordination shall be subject to the financial and staffing constraints of Metro as specified at the time of developing or updating the plan. In order to provide a realistic funding framework for addressing existing unmet and future system needs, this plan shall reflect resource availability and financial estimates of the total Metro transit need to support regional and local comprehensive and other transportation plans.

This strategy shall be implemented within the approved financial, staffing and policy framework of King County Metro, especially as it pertains to inputs from other plans and jurisdictions. Nothing in this strategy is intended to infer a responsibility for jurisdictional planning beyond King County's direct authority.

Objective 6.2: Control costs.

Metro should control costs to provide a structure that is sustainable over time. *Intended outcome: Metro costs grow at or below the rate of inflation.*

- **Strategy 6.2.1: Continually explore and implement cost efficiencies, including operational and administrative efficiencies.**

  Metro will continue to seek efficiencies in the administration and operation of the agency, including overhead costs, to ensure that Metro develops a more sustainable financial structure in the long term. Opportunities to improve service and increase efficiency include restructuring service and maintaining the practices that were recommended in the 2009 King County auditor's performance audit of Metro and subsequently adopted by Metro. This audit identified areas where Metro could achieve cost efficiencies, such as in the way it schedules fixed-route service. Metro will continue striving to maximize cost-efficiency in all sections of the agency through the use of Lean and other process improvement methods.

- **Strategy 6.2.2: Provide and maintain capital assets to support efficient and effective service delivery.**

  Metro's capital program supports service delivery and provides for ongoing replacement of aging infrastructure. Regular maintenance and upgrades keep Metro's facilities in good repair and support efficient, safe and reliable transit operations. Metro also invests in new operations facilities, on-board systems, signal priority improvements, and real-time technology. Strategic investments in new infrastructure allow Metro to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the public transportation system.

  Metro will develop a prioritized set of strategic procurement goals to guide procurement processes and decisions. Metro will replace and adjust the transit bus fleet so that the size, fleet mix, and fleet age are consistent with service projections and operating characteristics of the regular bus system. Metro will replace and expand its vanpool fleet to provide the appropriate mix of vehicle sizes, both to encourage and support vanpool program participants and to minimize costs. Metro will also replace and expand the fleet of Access paratransit vehicles to support efficient operations.

- **Strategy 6.2.3: Develop and implement alternative public transportation services and delivery strategies.**

  Fixed-route transit service is most cost-efficient in areas of King County where housing and employment are concentrated, and where neighborhood design supports walking as the first- and last-mile mode choice. Fixed-route transit service is not cost-effective in some areas of King County because of the type of land uses, infrastructure, or density. However, people in these areas still have mobility needs and, by circumstance or choice, require public transportation services. Metro provides alternative service products such as ridesharing, community vans, community shuttles, Dial-A-Ride Transit, and Community Access Transportation in these areas. Metro will continue to complement the fixed-route system with these

and other innovative public transportation services and delivery strategies that keep costs down while providing mobility to people throughout King County.

- **Strategy 6.2.4: Provide alternative or "right-sized" services in the context of overall system financial health and the need to reduce, maintain or expand the system.**

  Metro will extend alternative service delivery products to communities according to market characteristics and resources available. Alternative or "right-sized" services can provide cost-effective mobility options for communities. Depending on Metro's financial standing and financial outlook, it may provide these services as a cost-effective alternative to a fixed-route service or as a complement to the public transit network.

  When financial challenges require Metro to consider service reductions, alternative services can provide a lower-cost service option in low-density areas that are surrounded by or adjacent to rural areas, or provide a lower-cost service in place of an existing fixed route in other areas. When revenues are stable or growing, Metro will consider alternative services in other corridors to provide a cost-effective complement to existing public transit services.

Objective 6.3: Seek to establish a sustainable funding structure to support short- and long-term public transportation needs.

New, sustainable funding sources are critical if Metro is to continue current operations and achieve the region's goals and vision for the future. Additional and sustainable revenue sources, along with changes in the way service decisions are made and public transportation resources are allocated, will allow Metro to support the growth and economic development of King County. *Intended outcome: Adequate funding to support King County's short- and long-term public transportation needs.*

- **Strategy 6.3.1: Secure long-term sustainable funding.**

  Even with efficiency measures, Metro's resources must increase over time to meet growing customer demand. New, sustainable funding sources are crucial to ensure that Metro can support existing transit service and plan for future growth. Funding that reduces Metro's reliance on sales tax revenue, which fluctuates significantly as economic conditions change, is also critically important for maintaining the transit system. Metro is exploring several potential revenue sources that would improve Metro's funding situation. Among these potential sources are fares, grants, advertising, and partnerships with local jurisdictions and businesses. Metro places high priority on funding sources that enable sustained operations over time and on one-time revenue sources that allow implementation of a particular project or program. When revenue-backed funding expires or a partner ends a partnership with Metro, Metro will strive to continue the service if resources are available and if the service supports Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines goals. If sufficient resources are not available, Metro will seek efficiencies in existing service in the same general area, or propose a restructure in collaboration with the affected communities, to support the continuation of revenue-backed service that supports Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines goals. If these options are not feasible, Metro may reduce service to pre-grant or partner-contribution levels.

Metro will also pursue new revenue sources through state legislation, including sources that are currently authorized and those that may require new legislation. Metro must establish a stable revenue source or program that allows for system growth and keeps pace with changes in regional growth and employment.

- **Strategy 6.3.2: Establish fare structures and fare levels that are simple to understand, aligned with other service providers, and meet revenue targets established by Metro's fund management policies.**
  Metro's fare structure and fare levels should enable Metro to meet cost-recovery targets that are established by fund management policies adopted by the King County Council. Fares should be set to reflect the cost of service, promote operational efficiency, ensure regional coordination, minimize impacts of fares on those least able to pay, and reduce the cost of fare collection. Metro fare prices should strike a balance between revenue generation objectives and the need to maintain existing service and attract new ridership. Metro's fares will comply with state and federal regulations. The fare structure and level should be reviewed biennially.

  Metro works with the region's transit agencies to coordinate fares and schedules. Several transportation agencies, including Metro, collaborated to introduce ORCA, the regional fare payment method that enables customers to use one card to pay their fare on multiple systems throughout the Puget Sound area.

  Metro also regularly works with other agencies to coordinate policies, practices and services throughout the Puget Sound region to provide a consistent transit experience for customers. Simple and consistent fares are important to make transit easy to use for both new and existing transit riders.

- **Strategy 6.3.3: Establish fund management policies that ensure stability through a variety of economic conditions.**
  Metro is committed to comprehensive and prudent financial planning and forecasting that uses reasonable economic assumptions along with specific programmatic plans to project future revenues, expenditures, and resulting fund balances. Metro's fund management policies guide the development of a six-year financial plan that is produced through the budget process and adopted by the King County Council. Metro's fund management policies, planning, and ongoing forecasting allow the transit system to respond effectively to unforeseen emergencies and changes in the economy without large impacts to existing services.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSPARENCY

Promote robust public engagement that informs, involves, and empowers people and communities.

Metro is committed to informing and engaging the public as it develops products and services.

Objective 7.1: Empower people to play an active role in shaping Metro's products and services.

Metro is committed to being responsive and accountable to the public. One way Metro will meet this commitment is by continuing to conduct a community planning process and public outreach as part of any major service change or new service initiative. *Intended outcome: The public plays a role and is engaged in the development of public transportation.*

- **Strategy 7.1.1: Engage the public in the planning process and improve customer outreach.**

  Metro's community engagement work is consistent with King County's Equity and Social Justice ordinance. Metro seeks to build its capacity to engage all communities in a manner that promotes and fosters trust among people across geographic, race, class and gender lines, resulting in more effective policies, processes, and services as well as supporting community-based solutions to problems.

  Metro's planning process provides opportunities for the public to help design public transportation services. It involves riders, non-riders, elected officials, community leaders, city and County staff members, and social service agencies. Outreach targets historically under-represented populations, using translated materials or interpretation services as needed. Metro uses public meetings, open houses and a sounding board process to engage customers. Metro also does extensive public communication using direct mail, newspaper and radio ads, surveys and online information, and continually explores new media to reach a larger audience. Metro will strive to involve the public early in any planning process and offer opportunities for ongoing involvement.

Objective 7.2: Increase customer and public access to understandable, accurate and transparent information.

Transparent decision-making processes and information will help build public trust in Metro and acceptance of the decisions made. *Intended outcome: Metro provides information that people use to access and comment on the planning process and reports.*

- **Strategy 7.2.1: Communicate service change concepts, the decision-making process, and public transportation information in language that is accessible and easy to understand.**

  Metro's decision-making process should be clear, transparent and based on criteria that are easy for customers to understand. Metro considers equity and social justice in its decision-making process, particularly for people of color, low-income communities, people with limited English proficiency, and people with other communications barriers consistent with King County's Equity and Social Justice Ordinance, Executive Order on Translation, and federal law. Service guidelines and performance measures provide an outline of Metro's approach to decision-making. Guidelines are based on data that are understandable to the public and provide for a transparent process for making service allocation decisions. Performance measures will give the public a snapshot of Metro's performance on a systemwide level and allow for comparisons between service types and between peer

agencies. Using a variety of forums, media channels and accessible formats, Metro will reach out to customers and the public to share information on the decision-making process and on the performance measures that are the basis of Metro service changes and new service initiatives.

- **Strategy 7.2.2: Explore innovative ways to report to and inform the public.**
New forums for public outreach can help Metro reach more new and existing riders and make it easier for them to find the information they need. Metro will continue providing information to the public through various channels including printed materials, Metro Online, social media and other channels.
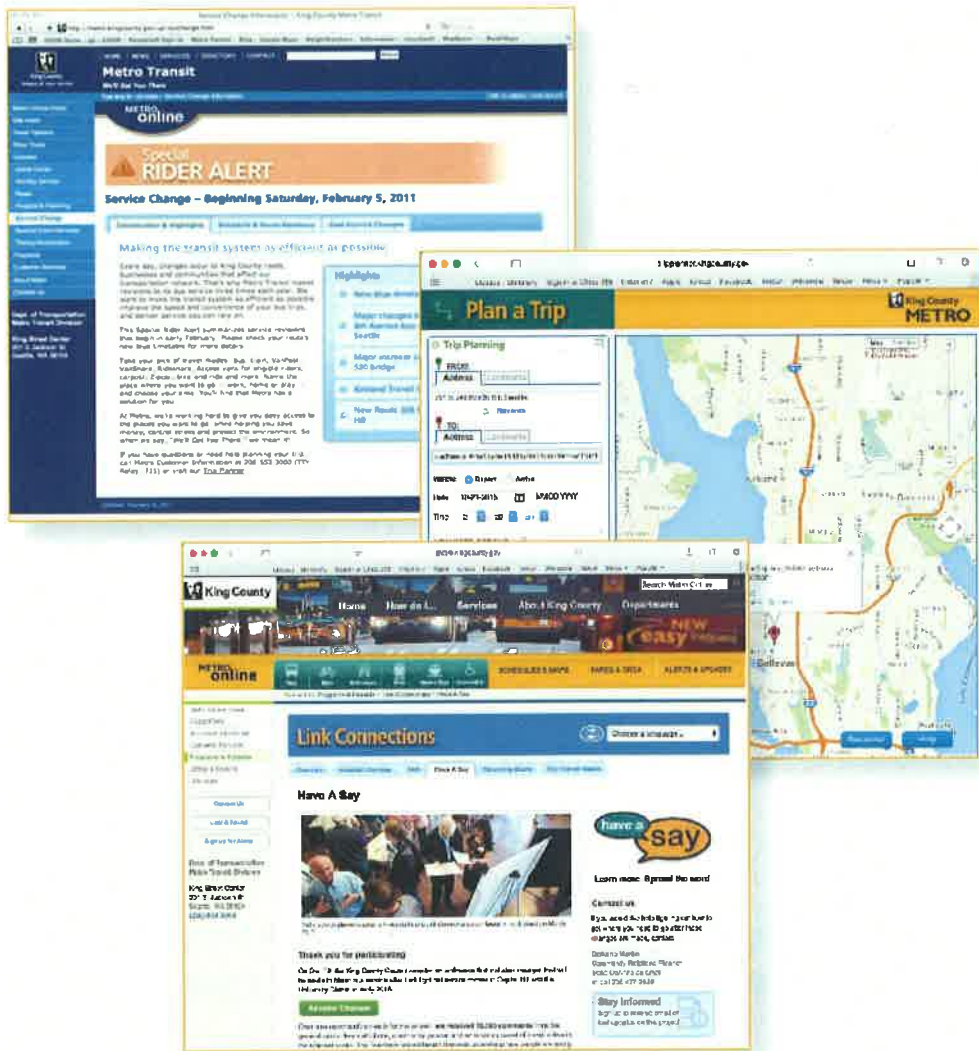
QUALITY WORKFORCE

Develop and empower Metro's most valuable asset, its employees.

Metro strives to develop and retain an effective, customer-oriented workforce that embraces collaboration, innovation and diversity.

Objective 8.1: Attract and recruit quality employees.

Metro's products and services are a reflection of the employees who deliver them. To maintain excellent services, Metro recruits quality and committed employees and creates a positive work environment. Metro prides itself as being a great place to work and a fair and just employer that values a diverse and skilled workforce. *Intended outcome: Metro is satisfied with the quality of its workforce.*

- **Strategy 8.1.1: Market Metro as an employer of choice and cultivate a diverse and highly skilled applicant pool.**

  Metro makes itself a prominent employer through local and national recruiting. Networking with local community-based agencies and professional organizations encourages the development of a highly skilled applicant pool.

- **Strategy 8.1.2: Promote equity, social justice and transparency in hiring and recruiting activities.**

  Metro constantly seeks to improve its hiring and recruitment process to ensure that it is open and competitive. Successful candidates are objectively selected on the basis of their qualifications. Metro promotes diversity in its hiring process. Metro believes that its workforce should reflect the populations it serves and recruits from the local workforce.

Objective 8.2: Empower and retain efficient, effective, and productive employees.

Metro strives to support its employees, empower them to excel, recognize their achievements, and help them develop professionally. Metro values input from employees on ways to improve business practices and make Metro more efficient. *Intended outcome: Metro employees are satisfied with their jobs and feel their work contributes to an improved quality of life in King County.*

- **Strategy 8.2.1: Build leadership and promote professional skills.**

  Metro employs thousands of individuals in management, maintenance and operations positions. Metro management encourages a high level of collaboration with its employees, maintains effective labor relations, and identifies situations for improvement and for employee advancement. Metro recognizes that the next generation of leaders is likely already among us and seeks to identify and develop those leaders.

- **Strategy 8.2.2: Recognize employees for outstanding performance, excellent customer service, innovation and strategic thinking.**

  The most effective way for Metro to remain a resilient organization is to develop a work environment where employees are rewarded for high performance and innovation. Metro empowers its employees to engage in problem-solving and service improvement by collaborating with them and recognizing their efforts. Developing a work force driven by excellence will help Metro reduce costs while providing high-quality, customer-driven service.
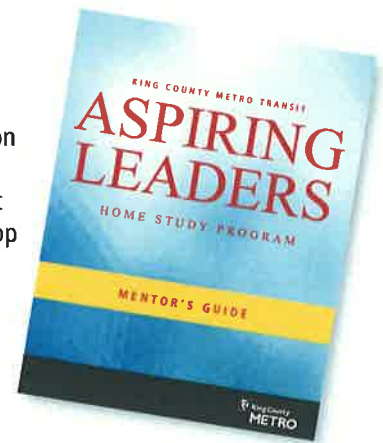
■ Strategy 8.2.3: Provide training opportunities that enable employees to reach their full potential.

Training offers opportunities for employees to learn new skills, develop existing skills and grow professionally. Metro offers employees a number of training resources through national transit organizations, county agencies and other professional development groups. A focus of Metro's training efforts is its operators, as they interact most directly with customers. Developing the workforce further is essential to Metro's success as the organization continues to grow and plan for the future.

PACE

The Partnership to Achieve Comprehensive Equity (PACE), is a partnership between Metro employees, labor unions and managers who are working together to build and sustain an inclusive, fair and equitable workplace for everyone.

PACE asks employees to help identify barriers they see to inclusion and to recommend strategies for overcoming those barriers. PACE is also a platform for learning about sensitive issues like cultural competence, implicit bias, and power and privilege.

Formed in 2013, PACE seeks to:

- Respect, engage, and empower employees
- Create shared responsibility for the work culture
- Use proven processes for transforming organizations
- Be intentionally inclusive

In the culture PACE strives to achieve, all Metro employees will be respected, engaged, and empowered at work, enabling them to provide the best possible service to the community.

An example of a PACE-driven initiative was a recruitment effort to fill seven Transit Chief vacancies in 2015. Metro's Human Resources group focused on increasing transparency about the hiring process and helping applicants learn about the chief position and navigate the recruitment process. The result was a highly qualified and diverse group of new Transit Chiefs.

CHAPTER 3: **PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Metro's strategic plan is a blueprint for Metro to improve its public transportation products and services in meaningful and measurable ways. Performance monitoring will help Metro evaluate its progress, plan and budget for the future, and improve agency practices. By making performance reports readily available, Metro can make its progress transparent to internal and external audiences. This section gives an overview of how Metro and its stakeholders can measure the progress and impacts of the strategic plan.

■ SECTION 3.1
How Metro measures performance

Metro measures the performance of individual routes, of the Metro system as a whole, and of various products and services. Metro reports various measures in the Federal Transit Administration's National Transit Database, in monthly and annual management reports (see sidebar), and in project-specific performance reports. These reports serve a number of purposes: They comply with federal and state reporting requirements, give public transportation managers the data they need, assess progress towards goals and objectives, inform management and policy decisions, and give the public a way to assess Metro's performance.

Measuring strategic plan progress

Reporting for this strategic plan will focus primarily on objectives and strategies. Metro will use some of the measures already used for other reporting purposes, augmented by measures specific to the strategic plan. Reporting for this plan will support and enhance Metro's ongoing measurement and use of performance data.

This plan provides for performance measurement at three levels:

- **Objectives**
- **Strategies**
- **Peer comparison**.

The following pages describe these measurement levels and associated measures. Metro will report on strategic plan measures annually, and will update this section of the plan as necessary to improve performance measurement.

After January 1, 2012, prior to proposing any budget that includes a change in the system greater than 10 percent of the system hours during the next two-year period, Metro will report on strategic plan measures if a report has not been delivered within the last 12 months.

Metro performance measurement information

Metro launched an online "Monthly Performance Indicators" website to give the public current information about Metro's performance.

On this site, people can find graphs and data showing trends in ridership, service quality, safety and security, finances, and service effectiveness.

Find this site and links to other Metro reports at www.metro.kingcounty.gov/metro/accountability

Measuring objectives

Each objective in the plan has an intended outcome that relates to an aspect of Metro's vision. Metro will measure progress toward these broad outcomes at the systemwide level using metrics and measurement methods that incorporate many factors. The combined results will give an indication of Metro's overall progress toward achieving its vision. Objectives could be measured in a variety of different ways, and techniques for measurement may change over time. Table 2 shows each objective and its related outcome. These outcomes will be reported in a variety of ways, including maps, graphs and text.

TABLE 2: **Objectives and related outcomes**

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	OUTCOME
1	Keep people safe and secure.	Metro's services and facilities are safe and secure.
2	Provide public transportation products and services that add value throughout King County and that facilitate access to jobs, education and other destinations.	More people throughout King County have access to public transportation products and services.
3	Support a strong, diverse, sustainable economy.	Public transportation products and services are available throughout King County and are well-utilized in centers and areas of concentrated economic activity.
3	Address the growing need for transportation services and facilities throughout the county.	More people have access to and regularly use public transportation products and services in King County.
3	Support compact, healthy communities.	More people regularly use public transportation products and services along corridors with compact development.
3	Support economic development by using existing transportation infrastructure efficiently and effectively.	Regional investments in major highway capacity projects and parking requirements are complemented by high transit service levels in congested corridors and centers.
4	Help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region.	People drive single-occupant vehicles less.
4	Minimize Metro's environmental footprint.	Metro's environmental footprint is reduced (normalized against service growth).
5	Improve satisfaction with Metro's products and services and the way they are delivered.	People are more satisfied with Metro products and services.
5	Improve public awareness of Metro products and services.	People understand how to use Metro's products and services and use them more often.
6	Emphasize planning and delivery of productive service.	Service productivity improves.
6	Control costs.	Metro costs grow at or below the rate of inflation.
6	Seek to establish a sustainable funding structure to support short- and long-term public transportation needs.	Adequate funding to support King County's short- and long-term public transportation needs.
7	Empower people to play an active role in shaping Metro's products and services.	The public plays a role and is engaged in the development of public transportation.
7	Increase customer and public access to understandable, accurate and transparent information.	Metro provides information that people use to access and comment on the planning process and reports.
8	Attract and recruit quality employees.	Metro is satisfied with the quality of its workforce.
8	Empower and retain efficient, effective, and productive employees.	Metro employees are satisfied with their jobs and feel their work contributes to an improved quality of life in King County.

Measuring strategies

The strategies in the plan support the objectives. Strategies will be assessed using discrete, quantifiable metrics to determine if they are being successfully implemented and are having the intended impact. Strategies could be assessed in a variety of ways and measurement techniques may change over time. The performance measures for assessing strategies are listed in Table 3. These measures focus on different aspects of the public transportation system, including transit use, productivity, cost, social equity and geographic value. Specific thresholds and targets for these measures will be established in Metro's business plans.

TABLE 3: **Strategy performance measures**

	GOAL 1: SAFETY
1	Preventable accidents per million miles
2	Operator and passenger incidents and assaults
3	Customer satisfaction regarding safety and security
4	Effectiveness of emergency responses

	GOAL 2: HUMAN POTENTIAL
1	Population within a $\frac{1}{4}$-mile walk to a transit stop
2	Number of jobs within a $\frac{1}{4}$-mile walk to a transit stop
3	Number of students at universities and community colleges that are within a $\frac{1}{4}$-mile walk to a transit stop
4	Percentage of households in low-income census tracts within a $\frac{1}{4}$-mile walk to a transit stop
5	Percentage of households in minority census tracts within a $\frac{1}{4}$-mile walk to a transit stop
6	Population within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of stops with frequent service
7	Number of jobs within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of stops with frequent service
8	Households within specific ranges of distance from frequent service
9	Average number of jobs and households accessible within 30 minutes countywide (total population, low-income population, minority population)
10	Average number of jobs and households accessible within 30 minutes from regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, and transit activity centers
11	Vanpool boardings
12	Transit mode share by market
13	Student and reduced-fare (youth, seniors, people with disabilities) and low-income fare permits and usage
14	Accessible bus stops
15	Access registrants
16	Access boardings/number of trips provided by the Community Access Transportation (CAT) program
17	Requested Access trips compared to those provided
18	Access applicants who undertake fixed-route travel training

GOAL 3: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT	
1	All public transportation ridership in King County
2	Transit rides per capita
3	Ridership in population/business centers
4	Employees at CTR sites sharing non-drive-alone transportation modes during peak commute hours
5	Employer-sponsored passes and usage
6	Park-and-ride capacity and utilization (individually and systemwide); capacity and utilization of park-and-ride lots with frequent service
7	HOV lane passenger miles
8	Bike locker capacity and utilization (including number of locations with bike lockers)
GOAL 4: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	
1	Average miles per gallon of Metro's bus fleet
2	Vehicle energy use (diesel, gasoline, kWh) normalized by miles
3	Vehicle fuel use (diesel, gasoline, kWh) normalized by boardings
4	Total facility energy use
5	Energy use at Metro facilities: kWh and natural gas used in facilities, normalized by area and temperature
6	Per-capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
7	Transit mode share
GOAL 5: SERVICE EXCELLENCE	
1	Customer satisfaction
2	Customer complaints per boarding
3	On-time performance by time of day
4	Crowding
5	Use of Metro's web tools and alerts
GOAL 6: FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP	
1	Service hours operated
2	Service hours and service hour change per route
3	Boardings per vehicle hour
4	Boardings per revenue hour
5	Ridership and ridership change per route
6	Passenger miles per vehicle mile
7	Passenger miles per revenue mile
8	Cost per hour
9	Cost per vehicle mile
10	Cost per boarding
11	Cost per passenger mile
12	Cost per vanpool boarding
13	Cost per Access boarding
14	Fare revenues
15	Farebox recovery

GOAL 6: FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP CONTINUED	
16	ORCA use
17	Asset condition assessment
18	For new or nontraditional alternative services, cost per boarding, ride or user, as appropriate (Note: different performance measures may be used to evaluate different types of services.)
GOAL 7: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSPARENCY	
1	Public participation rates
2	Customer satisfaction regarding Metro's communications and reporting
3	Social media indicators
4	Conformance with King County policy on communications accessibility and translation to other languages
GOAL 8: QUALITY WORKFORCE	
1	Demographics of Metro employees
2	Employee job satisfaction
3	Promotion rate
4	Probationary pass rate

Peer comparison

Comparisons with peer transit agencies provide an additional benchmark for measuring Metro's performance.

Peer comparisons provide a general sense of whether Metro is improving, maintaining or falling behind in comparison to national trends. These comparisons often raise questions about why Metro is improving or not. Answering these questions typically requires further analysis, which Metro does by examining its relevant business processes or conducting in-depth research on peer agencies that are making the greatest improvements on the measure in question.

Strategic plan reporting will compare Metro with other large bus agencies in the U.S. in three key areas of performance: effectiveness, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The specific indicators for each will be calculated using the Federal Transit Administration's annual National Transit Database reports.

TABLE 4: **Peer comparison—key areas of performance**

EFFECTIVENESS	EFFICIENCY	COST EFFECTIVENESS
1) Percent change in boardings per capita	1) Percent change in cost per vehicle hour	1) Percent change in cost per boarding
2) Percent change in boardings per vehicle hour	2) Percent change in cost per vehicle mile	2) Percent change in cost per passenger mile
3) Percent change in passenger miles per vehicle mile		

Route performance

Metro uses service guidelines to evaluate the performance of individual routes in the fixed-route system. Performance management guidelines are applied to individual routes to identify high and low performance, areas where investment is needed, and areas where resources are not being used efficiently and effectively. Both productivity and service quality are measured.

Metro may adjust routes to improve the performance of the individual route as well as the performance of the entire Metro fixed-route system. Metro revises service two times a year. Significant changes to routes generally have a large public outreach process and are subject to approval by the King County Council. Minor changes, as defined by the King County Code, may be made administratively. More information is available in the service guidelines.

KING COUNTY METRO
Service Guidelines

2015 UPDATE

King County
METRO

We'll Get You There

April 27, 2016

18301

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Metro uses service guidelines to evaluate, design and modify transit services to meet changing needs and to deliver efficient, high-quality service. The guidelines help us make sure that our decision-making and recommendations to policy makers are objective, transparent, and aligned with the region's goals for public transportation. Use of the guidelines fulfills Metro's Strategic Plan Strategy 6.1.1, "Manage the transit system through service guidelines and performance measures."

The service guidelines establish criteria and processes that Metro uses to analyze and plan changes to the transit system. They provide direction in the following areas:

Evaluating and Reporting on the Exisiting Network

SETTING TARGET SERVICE LEVELS
Define a process for assessing the market potential of corridors in Metro's bus network using factors of corridor productivity, social equity, and geographic value, and determining the appropriate level of service for each corridor.

EVALUATING AND MANAGING SYSTEM PERFORMANCE
Establish measures for evaluating route productivity, passenger loads, and schedule reliability for every route based on service type (urban, suburban, DART/community shuttles) to identify where changes may be needed to improve efficiency, effectiveness and quality.

Planning and Designing Service and Service Changes

DESIGNING SERVICE
Provide qualitative and quantitative guidelines for designing specific transit routes and the overall transit network.

RESTRUCTURING SERVICE
Define the circumstances that should prompt Metro to restructure multiple routes along a corridor or within a larger area and how restructures should be done.

PLANNING ALTERNATIVE SERVICES
Help Metro plan, implement and manage the Alternative Services Program.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS
Describe how Metro can form partnerships to complement and expand service.

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Guide the public engagement process that is part of Metro's service planning.

Adding, Reducing and Changing Service

ADDING, REDUCING AND CHANGING SERVICE
Establish the priority order in which the guidelines will be considered as Metro makes recommendations about adding, reducing, or adjusting service and describe how Metro will report on the performance of individual bus routes and the Metro system as a whole.

How the guidelines are used

Every year, Metro uses the service guidelines to analyze the corridors and bus routes in the transit system. The results are published in an annual Service Guidelines Report that is transmitted to the King County Council and made available to the public.

Metro uses the results of this analysis, as well as guidelines concerning service design and alternative services, to develop service change proposals. The guidelines analysis is one step in a planning process that starts with the adoption of Metro's budget and results in changes to transit service (see chart below).
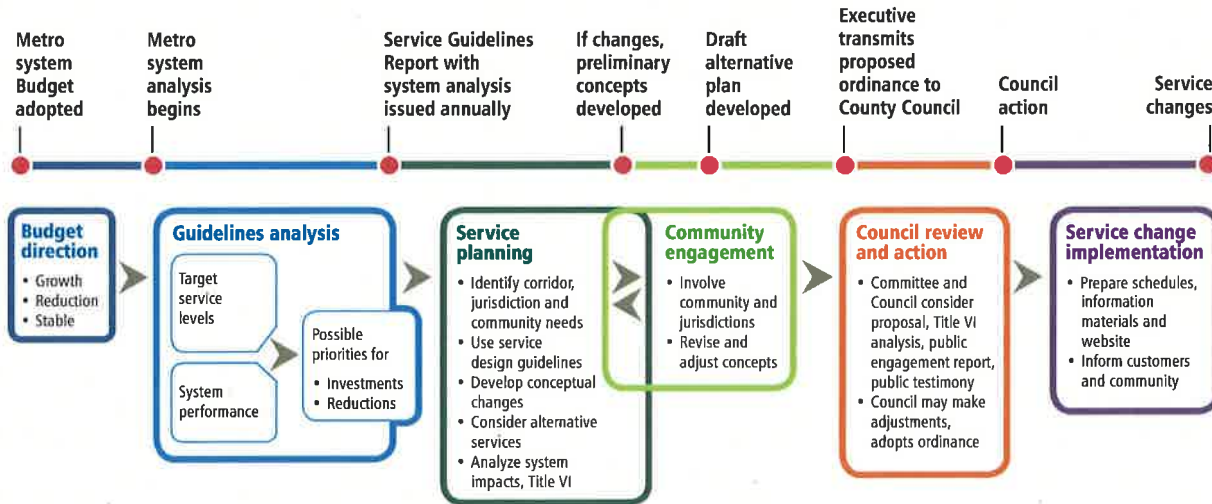
Why the guidelines were created and how they have changed

Metro's original service guidelines resulted from the work of the 2010 Regional Transit Task Force (RTTF). King County formed the RTTF to consider a policy framework to guide service investments or—if necessary—reduction of the Metro Transit system.

The RTTF recommended that Metro adopt transparent, performance-based guidelines for planning service that emphasize productivity, social equity, and geographic value.

In the four years after the service guidelines were adopted, Metro completed five Service Guidelines Reports that evaluated system performance and identified countywide service needs, and adjusted service using the results 12 times. The County made revisions to the Service Guidelines in 2012 and 2013.

The County formed a Service Guidelines Task Force (SGTF) in 2015 to consider further refinements to the guidelines based on the experience using them. The SGTF used the solid foundation developed in the 2010 effort to further analyze how transit service is allocated and measured across the region. The success of the RTTF was due in part to collaboration among King County, partner cities, regional decision makers, and diverse stakeholders. This same approach helped the SGTF develop recommendations for improving King County's transit system.

This 2015 update of the service guidelines incorporates the recommendations of the Service Guidelines Task Force. We also revised the explanation of the guidelines to make them clearer and easier to understand. The update includes the following changes:

- Modifies the way Metro evaluates corridors to better reflect productivity, social equity and geographic value.

- Changes the definition of "low income" used in setting target service levels from 100 percent to 200 percent of the federal poverty level, in line with Metro's ORCA LIFT program.

- Establishes a minimum target service level of every 60 minutes for corridors and routes.

- Provides greater protection for peak-only services in the event of major service reductions.

- Modifies Metro's service types so that comparable services are measured against one another.

- Expands the description of Metro's planning and public engagement process and how the agency engages and works with the community.

- Expands the description of the Alternative Services Program as a way to meet diverse needs.

- Expands the descriptions of how Metro will partner with communities and with private partners to build the best transit network possible.

- Expands the description of the different factors Metro considers when making investments.

- Gives more consideration to the relative impacts in all parts of the county when making service reductions.

Future guidelines

From the beginning, policymakers and Metro intended the service guidelines to be a living document; regular updates were required by the ordinance approving the guidelines. Updates to the guidelines will continue to be considered along with updates to the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021.

In 2016, Metro expects to transmit a long-range plan to the King County Council for consideration and adoption. This long range plan establishes a future network for transit that Metro will work toward and hopes to complete in 2040. It will include new transit corridors and connections between centers to meet the growing demand. The network will include fixed-route service as well as a variety of Alternative Services products and ADA Paratransit, depending on the diverse travel needs of the local community. This network will reflect local jurisdictions' planning efforts.

In future updates to the guidelines, Metro will respond to near-term issues and will seek to align the guidelines with the network defined in the long-range plan. In turn, the long-range plan will reflect the productivity, social equity and geographic value principles defined in the strategic plan and service guidelines.

Evaluating and Reporting on the Existing Network

 SETTING TARGET SERVICE LEVELS

A major function of the service guidelines is to assess and set target service levels for the corridors that make up Metro's All-Day and Peak-Only Network.

This network is a set of corridors that connect designated regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, and transit activity centers. All-day service is two-way service designed to meet a variety of travel needs and trip purposes throughout the day. The network also includes peak-only service that tends to travel in one direction and provides faster travel times, accommodates high demand for travel to and from major employment centers, and serves park-and-ride lots that are collection points for transit users.

For Metro's service guidelines, **corridors** are defined as major transit pathways that connect regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, activity centers, park-and-rides and transit hubs, and major destinations throughout King County. **Routes** are the actual bus services provided. Service within a single corridor might be provided by multiple bus routes. Almost all corridors have at least one route that operates on it, but not all routes in Metro's network operate on a corridor.

Target service levels are set by corridor rather than by route because a corridor could be served by a single route or by multiple routes.

As the region changes and corridors are added to the network, a similar evaluation process is used to set target service levels for the new corridors.

Productivity

Productivity is a primary value for transit service in King County. It means making the most efficient use of resources and targeting transit service to the areas of the county with the most potential for use. Metro uses the term productivity in two important ways in the service guidelines:

1. **Corridor productivity** is the *potential* market for transit based on the number of households, jobs, students, and park-and-rides along the corridor. Higher concentrations of people support higher use of transit.

2. **Route productivity** is the *actual* use of transit, determined using two performance measures of ridership—rides per platform hour and passenger miles per platform mile.

Corridor analysis

Metro establishes target service levels for the corridors in the All-Day and Peak-Only Network using a three-step process. Service levels are very frequent, frequent, local, or hourly (see chart on p. 11).

STEP 1

Step one sets target service levels for each corridor based on measurable indicators of corridor productivity, social equity, and geographic value. Indicators of productivity make up 50 percent of the total score, while geographic value and social equity indicators each comprise 25 percent of the total score in this step.

The use of measures related to social equity and geographic value is consistent with Metro's Strategic Plan. The use of social equity factors helps Metro plan transit service that provides travel opportunities for historically disadvantaged populations (Strategy 2.1.2). Factors concerning transit activity centers and geographic value guide service to areas of concentrated activity (Strategy 3.4.1) and ensure that services provide value in all areas of King County. The use of productivity factors helps Metro plan and deliver productive service throughout King County (Objective 6.1).

- **Corridor productivity** indicators demonstrate the potential demand for transit in a corridor using land-use factors: the number of households, jobs, enrolled students[1], and park-and-ride stalls[2] located within a quarter-mile walk to a bus stop. These factors are used because areas where many people live, work, or go to school have high potential transit use. The quarter-mile calculation considers how well streets are connected; only those areas that have an actual path to a bus stop are considered to have access to transit. This is an important distinction in areas that have a limited street grid or barriers to direct access, such as lakes or freeways. Park-and-rides are included because many people who access the transit system live outside of the quarter-mile draw area.

- **Social equity** indicators show how well a corridor serves any areas where there are concentrations of minority and low-income populations along the corridor. This is done by comparing boardings in these areas against the systemwide average of all corridor boardings within minority and low-income census tracts.[3] Metro assigns the highest value to corridors with concentrations of boardings in low-income or minority census tracts that are higher than the system average. Those close to the system average, but just below, are also awarded value in this process.

- **Geographic value** indicators establish how well a corridor supports connections and service to transit activity centers, regional growth centers, and manufacturing/industrial centers[4] throughout King County. All connections between centers are important and are given value in this process. Corridors that are the primary connections between centers, based on ridership and travel time, receive higher value in this process. King County centers are described on p. 15 of the strategic plan and are listed in Appendix 1 of this document.

---

[1] An enrolled student is one who attends classes in a degree-conferring institution.

[2] Park-and-ride stalls are added at a factor of 1.1 to account for carpool usage. According to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the average occupancy of a parked car is very near 1 with the highest being 1.102 passengers per parked car. See WSDOT's report: How Can We Maximize Efficiency and Increase Person Occupancy at Overcrowded Park and Rides?

[3] Low-income tracts are those where a greater percentage of the population than the countywide average has low incomes (less than 200% of the federal poverty level depending on household size), based on current American Community Survey data. Minority tracts are defined as tracts where a greater percentage of the population than the countywide average is minority (all groups except White, non-Hispanic), based on current census data.

[4] "Centers" are areas that are important for Metro to serve. Transit activity centers, identified by Metro, are areas with relatively high transit use. Regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers, designated by the Puget Sound Regional Council, are areas with dense population, employment, and manufacturing and industrial activity.

Scoring: The following table shows the measures of corridor productivity, social equity and geographic value and the points that would be assigned (out of a total 40) to determine the corridor's preliminary score in the corridor analysis.

THRESHOLDS AND POINTS USED TO SET SERVICE LEVELS

Factor	Measure	Threshold	Points
Corridor productivity	Households and park-and-ride stalls (with a factor of 1.1 to include carpools) within ¼ mile of stops per corridor mile	>3,000 Households & park-and-ride stalls/ Corridor mile	10
		>2,400 Households & park-and-ride stalls/ Corridor mile	8
		>1,800 Households & park-and-ride stalls/ Corridor mile	6
		>1,200 Households & park-and-ride stalls/ Corridor mile	4
		>600 Households & park-and-ride stalls/ Corridor mile	2
	Jobs and student enrollment at universities and colleges within ¼ mile of stops per corridor mile	>10,250 Jobs & students/Corridor mile	10
		>5,500 Jobs & students/Corridor mile	8
		>3,000 Jobs & students/Corridor mile	6
		>1,400 Jobs & students/Corridor mile	4
		>500 Jobs & students/Corridor mile	2
Social equity	Percent of boardings in low-income census tracts	Above system average	5
		Just below system average (.5 standard deviations[5])	3
		Below system average	0
	Percent of boardings in minority census tracts	Above system average	5
		Just below system average (.5 standard deviations[5])	3
		Below system average	0
Geographic value	Primary connection between regional growth, manufacturing/industrial centers	Yes	10
	Primary connections between transit activity center and regional growth, manufacturing/ industrial centers	Yes	7
	Primary connection between transit activity centers	Yes	5
	Other connection to any center	Yes	2

[5] Standard deviation is a measure of how spread out the numbers are. It is a statistic that describes the average difference between the values in the dataset and the average value of that dataset.

The table below shows the initial target service level that would be assigned to a corridor based on the number of points awarded for the corridor productivity, social equity and geographic value factors of that corridor. Service levels are very frequent, frequent, local, or hourly.

SCORES USED TO SET INITIAL SERVICE LEVELS (STEP 1)

Scoring Range	Minimum Peak Service Frequency (minutes)	Minimum Off-Peak Service Frequency (minutes)	Minimum Night Service Frequency (minutes)	Service Level Assigned
25-40	15	15	30	Very frequent
19-24	15	30	30	Frequent
10-18	30	30	--*	Local
0-9	60	60	--	Hourly

*Night service on local corridors is determined by ridership and connections.

Step two adjusts the target service level assigned in step one to accommodate actual ridership. Metro increases a corridor's target service level if service at the level established under step one would not accommodate existing riders, would be inconsistent with policy-based service levels set for RapidRide, or would result in an incomplete network of night service[6]. Adjustments are only made to assign a higher service level to a corridor; service levels are not adjusted downward in this step.

The table below shows how Metro adjusts the target service levels set in step one to ensure that the All-Day and Peak-Only Network accommodates current riders or to preserve a complete network of night service.

[6] Night service includes any trips between 7 p.m. and 5 a.m., seven days a week. Please refer to the Summary of Typical Service Levels table for target night service levels (p. 13). An incomplete network of night service is defined as a network in which night service is not provided on a primary connection between regional growth centers or on a corridor with frequent peak service. Provision of night service on such corridors is important to ensure system integrity and social equity during all times of day.

THRESHOLDS USED TO ADJUST SERVICE LEVELS (STEP 2)

Factor	Measure	Threshold	Adjustment to Warranted Frequency		
			Service Level Adjustment	Step 1 Frequency (minutes)	Adjusted Frequency (minutes)
Ridership (Load)	Estimated ratio of maximum load to the established passenger load threshold[7] by time of day – if existing riders were served by step-one service levels	>110% of the established passenger load threshold	Increase two service levels	15 or 30	15 or more frequent
				≥ 60	15
		>55% of the established passenger load threshold	Increase one service level	15	15 or more frequent
				30	15
				≥ 60	30
Service span[8]	Connection at night	Primary connection between regional growth centers	Add night service	--	≥ 60
		Frequent peak service	Add night service	--	30

[7] This ratio is calculated by dividing the maximum load along a route by the passenger load threshold. The passenger load threshold is equal to the number of seats on the bus, plus an allowance of four square feet per standing passenger.

[8] Service span: The span of hours over which service is operated. Service span often varies by day of the week. For example, a route's service span could be from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Metro also adjusts service levels on existing and planned RapidRide corridors to ensure that assigned target service frequencies are consistent with policy-based service frequencies for the RapidRide program: more frequent than 15 minutes during peak periods, 15 minutes or more frequent during off-peak periods, and 15 to 30 minutes at night. Where policy-based service frequencies are higher than service frequencies established in step two, frequencies are improved to the minimum specified by policy.

The combined outcome of steps one and two is a set of corridors with all-day service levels that reflect factors concerning productivity, social equity, geographic value, and actual ridership. These corridors are divided into service levels based on the frequency of service, as described in the "Service Levels" section that follows. Corridors with the highest frequency would have the longest span of service.

Step three evaluates peak-only service to determine the value it provides in addition to other service provided on corridors in the network. Peak-only service operates only during peak travel periods (5-9 a.m. and 3-7 p.m. weekdays), primarily in one direction. Peak-only service typically brings riders from residential areas to job centers in the morning with return service from the job centers in the afternoon.

All-day routes also offer service during peak periods, but are not included in the peak-only analysis.

Peak service thresholds ensure that peak-only service has higher ridership and/or faster travel times than provided in the network of all-day service. Service levels on peak-only routes are established separately from the all-day network because of this specialized function within the transit network.

THRESHOLDS FOR PEAK SERVICE

Factor	Measure	Threshold
Travel time	Travel time relative to all-day service provided during peak periods	Travel time should be at least 20% faster than the all-day service, as measured during peak periods
Ridership	Rides per trip	Rides per trip should be 90% or greater compared to the all-day service provided during peak periods

Peak-only service is provided for a limited span compared to all-day service. Peak-only service generally has a minimum of eight trips per day on weekdays only (morning trips travel from residential areas to job centers, and afternoon trips take riders from the job centers back to the residential areas). The exact span and number of trips for each peak-only route are determined by the level of demand for service that meets the travel time and ridership criteria.

Because of the value that peak-only service provides in the network, it is protected in any potential reduction scenario. Peak-only service is lower priority for reduction if it is in the bottom 25 percent, but passes one or both of the travel time and ridership criteria described above. If peak-only service does not meet the load and travel-time thresholds but serves an area that has no other service, Metro may consider preserving service or providing service in a new or different way, such as connecting an area to a different destination or providing alternatives to fixed-route transit service, consistent with strategic plan Strategy 6.2.3.

Service levels

All-day services are categorized by level of service into four levels, plus peak-only and alternative services. Service levels are primarily defined by the frequency and span of service they provide. The table below shows the typical characteristics of each level. Some services may fall outside the typical frequencies, depending on specific conditions in the corridor served.

SUMMARY OF TYPICAL SERVICE LEVELS

Service Level	Service Level: Frequency (minutes) and Time Period			Days of Service	Hours of Service
	Peak	Off-peak	Night		
Very frequent	15 or more frequent	15 or more frequent	30 or more frequent	7 days	16-24 hours
Frequent	15 or more frequent	30	30	7 days	16-24 hours
Local	30	30 - 60	--*	5-7 days	12-16 hours
Hourly	60	60	--	5 days	8-12 hours
Peak-only	8 trips/day minimum	--	--	5 days	Peak
Alternative Services	Determined by demand and community collaboration process				

*Night service on local corridors is determined by ridership and connections.

- **Very frequent** services provide the highest levels of all-day service. Very frequent corridors serve very large employment and transit activity centers and very dense residential areas.

- **Frequent** services provide high levels of all-day service. Frequent corridors generally serve major employment and transit activity centers and very dense residential areas.

- **Local** services provide a moderate level of all-day service. Local corridors generally serve regional growth centers and residential areas with low to medium density.

- **Hourly** services provide all-day service at 60 minute frequencies. Corridors generally connect low-density residential areas to regional growth centers.

- **Peak-only** services provide specialized service in the periods of highest demand for travel. Peak services generally provide service to a major employment center in the morning and away from a major employment center in the afternoon.

- **Alternative** service is any non-fixed-route service directly provided or supported by Metro. These are further described in the "Planning Alternative Services" section, p. 23.

Target service level comparison

The corridors in the All-Day and Peak-Only Network are analyzed annually in Metro's Service Guidelines Report. The report compares the target service levels set through the corridor analysis with existing levels of service. A corridor is determined to be either "below," "at" or "above" its target service level. This process is called the target service-level comparison, and is used to inform potential changes to bus routes. For example, in simple terms, a corridor below its target service level would be a candidate for investment and a corridor above its target service level could be a candidate for reduction. This target service level comparison is a factor in both the investment and reduction priorities, as described in the "Adding, Reducing and Changing Service" section. Using the results of the annual corridor analysis and as resources allow, Metro adjusts service levels to better meet the public transportation needs of King County. The corridor analysis process is summarized in the chart below.

CORRIDOR ANALYSIS SUMMARY

STEP 1 — SET INITIAL TARGET SERVICE LEVELS

Factor	Purpose
Corridor productivity	Support areas of higher employment and household density
	Support areas with high student enrollment
	Support function of park-and-rides in the transit network
Social equity and geographic value	Serve historically disadvantaged communities
	Provide appropriate service levels throughout King County for connections between all centers

STEP 2 — ADJUST TARGET SERVICE LEVELS

Factor	Purpose
Ridership (Loads)	Provide sufficient capacity for existing transit demand
Service span	Provide adequate levels of service throughout the day to meet demand

STEP 3 — EVALUATE PEAK-ONLY SERVICE

Factor	Purpose
Travel time	Ensure that peak-only service provides a travel time advantage compared to other service alternatives
Ridership	Ensure that peak-only service is well utilized compared to other service alternatives

OUTCOME: ALL-DAY AND PEAK-ONLY NETWORK

Evaluating new service

Metro's long-range plan will respond to King County growth by defining a future transit network and service levels that are based on the current network with additional corridors. Metro will use the service guidelines, along with extensive input from cities and community members, to identify and evaluate service corridors in the long-range plan. As the region continues to grow, new services and service corridors can be added to future long-range plan updates through a planning process guided by the principles in the service guidelines.

Centers in King County

The list of centers associated with the All-Day and Peak-Only Network is adopted by the King County Council as part of the service guidelines. The region's growth and travel needs change over time, and centers may be added to the list in future updates of the service guidelines as follows:

Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

Additions to and deletions from the regional growth and manufacturing/industrial centers lists should be based on changes approved by the Puget Sound Regional Council and defined in the region's growth plan, Vision 2040, or subsequent regional plans.

Transit Activity Centers

Additions to the list of transit activity centers will be nominated by the local jurisdictions and must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Is located in an area of mixed-use development that includes concentrated housing, employment, and commercial activity.

- Includes a major regional hospital, medical center or institution of higher education located outside of a designated regional growth center.

- Is located outside other designated regional growth centers at a transit hub served by three or more all-day routes.

In addition to meeting at least one of the criteria above, a transit activity center must meet the following criteria:

- Pathways through the transit activity centers must be located on arterial roadways that are appropriately constructed for transit use.

- Identification of a transit activity center must result in a new primary connection between two or more regional or transit activity centers in the transit network, either on an existing corridor on the All-Day and Peak-Only Network or as an expansion to the network to serve an area of projected all-day transit demand.

- When a corridor is added to the network, step one of the All-Day and Peak-Only Network analysis must result in an assignment of a 30-minute target service level or better.

The size of transit activity centers varies, but all transit activity centers represent concentrations of activity in comparison to the surrounding area.

- Additional centers and corridors may be established by Metro's long-range plan network, under development with the community and local jurisdictions.

EVALUATING AND MANAGING SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

Metro manages the performance of bus routes to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of the transit system. Performance management guidelines are applied to individual routes to identify high and low performance, areas where investment is needed, and areas where resources are not being used efficiently and effectively.

Service types and route productivity

When comparing the productivity of individual bus routes, Metro classifies them by service type, which indicates the primary market served as well as other characteristics of service described below. These service types allow Metro to measure the performance of routes against similar services.

- **Urban** routes primarily serve the densest parts of the county: the PSRC-designated Regional Growth Centers of Seattle Downtown, First Hill/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, the University Community, and Uptown.

- **Suburban** routes primarily serve passengers in suburban and rural areas in Seattle and King County.

- **Dial-A-Ride Transit and shuttles** are those that provide flexible, community-based service that has different characteristics than the fixed-route system. These services are held to different standards than those outlined for the fixed-route network below. These standards are under development and will be included in Metro's annual service guidelines reports. These services are described in more detail in the "Planning Alternative Services" section, p. 23.

High and low performance thresholds differ for routes that serve urban areas and those that serve suburban areas. Regional growth centers in the Seattle core and the University District have the highest job and residential densities in the county. Because the potential market for transit is so high, routes serving these areas are expected to perform at a higher level. These routes comprise the Urban category and are given higher performance thresholds compared to other routes. The other routes, which make up the Suburban category, meet important transit needs of areas that generally have lower job and residential densities. Performance thresholds are lower for these routes because they are different from markets served in other areas of King County. Service types are based on these two primary market types, as well as other characteristics of service, to ensure that like services are compared.

The performance management analysis uses route productivity measures to identify fixed-route service where performance is strong or weak as candidates for addition, reduction, or restructuring for each service type.

The measures for evaluating fixed-route service productivity are **rides per platform hour** and **passenger miles per platform mile**.

- **Rides per platform hour** is a measure of the number of riders who board a transit vehicle relative to the total number of hours that a vehicle operates (from leaving the base until it returns).

- **Passenger miles per platform mile** is a measure of the total miles riders travel on a route relative to the total miles that a vehicle operates (from leaving the base until it returns).

Two measures are used to reflect the different values that services provide in the transit system. Routes with a higher number of riders getting on and off relative to the time in operation perform well on the rides-per-platform-hour

measure; an example is a route that goes through the urban core with lots of riders taking short trips. Routes with full and even loading along the route perform well on the passenger-miles-per-platform-mile measure; an example is a route that fills up at a park-and-ride and is full until reaching its destination.

Low performance is defined as route productivity that ranks in the bottom 25 percent of all routes within a service type and time period; high performance is defined as route productivity in the top 25 percent. Fixed-route services in the bottom 25 percent on both route productivity measures are identified as the first candidates for potential reduction if service must be reduced. However, reduction of these routes is not automatic; other factors are considered as well. For more information, see p. 30.

Thresholds for the top 25 percent and the bottom 25 percent are identified for peak, off-peak, and night time periods and Urban and Suburban destinations for each of the two performance measures.

Passenger loads

Passenger loads are measured to identify overcrowded services as candidates for increased investment. Overcrowding is a problem because buses may pass up riders waiting at stops, riders may choose not to ride if other transportation options are available, and overcrowded buses often run late because it takes longer for riders to board and to get off at stops.

Passenger loads are averaged on a per trip basis using counts from an entire service change period (about six months). Trips must have average maximum loads higher than the thresholds for the entire service change period to be identified as overcrowded. Two metrics are used to measure passenger loads: crowding and the amount of time the bus has a standing load (standing load time).

Overcrowding occurs when the average maximum load of a trip exceeds its passenger load threshold. A passenger load threshold is calculated for each trip, based on the characteristics of the bus type scheduled for the trip. This threshold is determined by:

- The number of seats on the bus, plus

- The number of standing people that can fit on the bus, when each standing person is given no less than 4 square feet of floor space.

A trip's standing load time is determined by measuring the amount of time that the number of passengers on the bus exceeds the number of seats.

- No trip on a route should have a standing load for more than 20 minutes.

Routes with overcrowded trips or standing loads for more than 20 minutes are identified as candidates for investment. These candidates are analyzed in detail to determine appropriate actions to alleviate overcrowding, including:

- Assigning a larger vehicle to the trip, if available

- Adjusting the spacing of trips within a 20-minute period

- Adding trips.

Schedule reliability

Metro measures schedule reliability to identify routes that are candidates for investment because they provide poor quality service.

Schedule reliability is measured for all Metro transit service. Service should adhere to published schedules, within reasonable variance based on time of day and travel conditions. "On time" is defined as an arrival at designated points along a route[9] that is no more than five minutes late or one minute early relative to the scheduled arrival time. When identifying candidates for remedial action, Metro focuses on routes that are regularly running late.

To do this, Metro identifies trips that exceed the lateness thresholds (shown below). If a trip experiences lateness that exceeds the thresholds, it can be identified for investment. Investment can include improvements in route design, schedule, or traffic operations. Schedule reliability can also be improved through speed and reliability improvements, such as business access and transit lanes, queue jumps, transit signal priority and other transit priority treatments.

Time Period	Lateness Threshold
Weekday average	> 20%
Weekday PM peak average	> 35%
Weekend average	> 20%

Metro allows for a higher lateness threshold in the PM peak period to account for increased passenger demand and higher levels of roadway congestion experienced during this time period.

Metro actively manages the headways of RapidRide service, primarily in peak periods, with a goal of providing riders with a high-frequency service where they do not rely on paper timetables. High frequencies and real-time information are intended to give riders a reliable service. When actual service has gaps that are three minutes more than the intended headway, service is considered late. With that difference in mind, "lateness" on RapidRide service uses the same thresholds as shown above.

Routes that operate with a headway that is less frequent than every 10 minutes that do not meet performance thresholds will be given priority for schedule adjustment or investment. Routes that operate with a headway of every 10 minutes or more frequent that do not meet performance thresholds will be given priority for speed and reliability investments to improve traffic operations. It may not be possible to improve through-routed routes[10] that do not meet performance thresholds because of the high cost and complication of separating routes.

Other considerations: External factors affecting reliability

Action alternatives:

- Adjust schedules/add run time

- Adjust routing

- Invest in speed and reliability improvements.

---

[9] Metro measures schedule reliability based on the arrival time of a given coach at designated points along a route. At the time the Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines were transmitted to the King County Council, Metro calculated this measure using the coach's arrival at time points. As Metro transitions with the Stop-Based Scheduling project, Metro will calculate this measure based on the coach's arrival at stops along a route, providing Metro with more data and improved accuracy for measuring schedule reliability.

[10] Through-routed services are routes that arrive at the end of one route and continue on as a different route. For example, Route 5 between Shoreline and Downtown Seattle continues on as Route 21 between downtown Seattle and Westwood Village.

Planning and Designing Service and Service Changes

DESIGNING SERVICE

Metro uses the following service design guidelines to develop transit routes and the overall transit network. Based on industry best practices for designing service, these guidelines help us enhance transit operations and improve the rider experience. The guidelines include both qualitative considerations and quantitative standards for comparing and measuring specific factors.

1 Network connections

Routes should be designed in the context of the entire transportation system, which includes local and regional bus routes, light-rail lines, commuter rail lines and other modes. When designing a network of services, Metro should consider locations where transfer opportunities could be provided for the convenience of customers and to improve the efficiency of the transit network. Where many transfers are expected to occur between services of different frequencies, timed transfers should be maintained to reduce customer wait times.

2 Multiple purposes and destinations

Routes are more efficient when designed to serve multiple purposes and destinations rather than specialized travel demands. Routes that serve many rider groups rather than a single group appeal to more potential riders and are more likely to be successful. Specialized service should be considered when there is sizable and demonstrated demand that cannot be adequately met by more generalized service.

3 Easy to understand, appropriate service

A simple transit network is easier for riders to understand and use than a complex network. Routes should have predictable and direct routings, and the frequency and span of service should be appropriate to the market served. As budget allows, routes should be targeted for a minimum service level of at least every 60 minutes. If a route cannot support this frequency level, it should be a candidate for alternative services as funding allows and the service meets the allocation criteria. Routes should serve connection points where riders can transfer to frequent services, opening up the widest possible range of travel options.

4 Route spacing and duplication

Routes should be designed to avoid competing for the same riders. Studies indicate that people are willing to walk 1/4 mile on average to access transit, so in general routes should be no closer together than 1/2 mile. Services may overlap where urban and physical geography makes it necessary, where services in a common segment serve different destinations, or where routes converge to serve regional growth centers. Where services do overlap, they should be scheduled together, if possible, to provide effective service along the common routing.

Routes are defined as duplicative in the following circumstances:

- Two or more parallel routes operate less than 1/2 mile apart for at least one mile, excluding operations within a regional growth center or approaching a transit center where pathways are limited.

- A rider can choose between multiple modes or routes connecting the same origin and destination at the same time of day.

- Routes heading to a common destination are not spaced evenly (except for operations within regional growth centers).

5 Route directness

A route that operates directly between two locations is faster and more attractive to riders than one that takes a long, circuitous path. Circulators or looping routes do not have competitive travel times compared to walking or other modes of travel, so they tend to have low ridership and poor performance. Some small loops may be necessary to turn the bus around at the end of routes and to provide supplemental coverage, but such extensions should not diminish the overall cost-effectiveness of the route. Directness should be considered in relation to the market for the service.

Route deviations are places where a route travels away from its major path to serve a specific destination. For individual route deviations, the delay to riders on board the bus should be considered in relation to the ridership gained on a deviation. New deviations may be considered when the delay is less than 10 passenger-minutes per person boarding or exiting the bus along the deviation.

$$\frac{\text{Riders traveling through x Minutes of deviation}}{\text{Boardings and exitings along deviation}} \leq 10 \text{ minutes}$$

6 Bus stop spacing

Bus stops should be spaced to balance the benefit of increased access to a route against the delay that an additional stop would create for all other riders. While close stop-spacing reduces walk time, it may increase total travel time and reduce reliability, since buses must slow down and stop more frequently.

Service	Average Stop Spacing
RapidRide	½ mile
All other services	¼ mile

Portions of routes that operate in areas where riders cannot access service, such as along freeways or limited-access roads, should be excluded when calculating average stop spacing. Additional considerations for bus stop spacing include the pedestrian facilities, the geography of the area around a bus stop, passenger amenities, and major destinations.

7 Route length and neighborhood route segments

A bus route should be long enough to provide useful connections for riders and to be more attractive than other travel modes. A route that is too short will not attract many riders, since the travel time combined with the wait for the bus is not competitive compared to the time it would take to walk. Longer routes offer the opportunity to make more trips without a transfer, resulting in increased ridership and efficiency. However, longer routes may

also have poor reliability because travel time can vary significantly from day to day over a long distance. Where many routes converge, such as in regional growth centers, they may be through-routed to increase efficiency, reduce the number of buses providing overlapping service, and reduce the need for layover space in congested areas.

In some places, routes extend beyond regional growth centers and transit activity centers to serve less dense residential neighborhoods. Where routes operate beyond centers, ridership should be weighed against the time spent serving neighborhood segments, to ensure that the service level is appropriate to the level of demand. The percent of time spent serving a neighborhood segment, which are defined as ≤ 20% of the total mileage length of a route, should be considered in relation to the percent of riders boarding and exiting on that segment.

$$\frac{\text{Percent of time spent serving neighborhood segment}}{\text{Percent of riders boarding/exiting on neighborhood segment}} \leq 1.2^{11}$$

8 Operating paths and appropriate vehicles

Buses are large, heavy vehicles and cannot operate safely on all streets. Services should operate with vehicles that are an appropriate size to permit safe operation while accommodating demand. Buses should be routed primarily on arterial streets and freeways, except where routing on local or collector streets is necessary to reach layover areas or needed to ensure that facilities and fleet used in all communities is equivalent in age and quality. Appropriate vehicles should be assigned to routes throughout the county to avoid concentrating older vehicles in one area, to the extent possible given different fleet sizes, technologies and maintenance requirements.

Bus routes should also be designed to avoid places where traffic congestion and delay regularly occur, if it is possible to avoid such areas while continuing to meet riders' needs. Bus routes should be routed, where possible, to avoid congested intersections or interchanges unless the alternative would be more time-consuming or would miss an important transfer point or destination.

9 Route terminals

The location where a bus route ends and the buses wait before starting the next trip must be carefully selected. Priority should be given to maintaining existing layover spaces at route terminals to support continued and future service. People who live or work next to a route end may regard parked buses as undesirable, so new route terminals should be placed where parked buses have the least impact on adjoining properties, if possible. Routes that terminate at a destination can accommodate demand for travel in two directions, resulting in increased ridership and efficiency. Terminals should be located in areas where restroom facilities are available for operators, taking into account the times of day when the service operates and facilities would be needed. Off-street transit centers should be designed to incorporate layover space.

10 Fixed and variable routing

Bus routes should operate as fixed routes in order to provide a predictable and reliable service for a wide range of potential riders. However, in low-density areas where demand is dispersed, demand-responsive service may be used to provide more effective service over a larger area than could be provided with a fixed route. Demand-responsive service may be considered where fixed-route service is unlikely to be successful or where unique conditions exist that can be met more effectively through flexible service.

---

[11] The value of the service extended into neighborhoods beyond major transit activity centers should be approximately equal to the investment made to warrant the service. A 1:1 ratio was determined to be too strict, thus this ratio was adjusted to 1.2.

11 **Bus stop amenities and bus shelters**

Bus stop amenities should be installed based on ridership in order to benefit the largest number of riders. Bus stop amenities include such things as bus shelters, seating, waste receptacles, lighting, information signs, maps, and schedules. In addition to ridership, special consideration may be given to areas where:

- high numbers of transfers are expected

- waiting times for riders may be longer

- stops are close to facilities such as schools, medical centers, or senior centers

- the physical constraints of bus stop sites, preferences of adjacent property owners, and construction costs could require variance from standards.

Major infrastructure such as elevators and escalators will be provided where required by local, state, and federal regulations.

RIDERSHIP GUIDELINES FOR BUS STOP AMENITIES

RapidRide Routes	
Level of amenity	Weekday Boardings
Station	150+
Enhanced stop	50-149
Standard stop	Less than 50

All Other Metro Routes		
Location	Level of amenity	Weekday Boardings
City of Seattle	Standard shelter and bench	50
Outside Seattle	Standard shelter and bench	25

RESTRUCTURING SERVICE

Service restructures are changes to multiple routes along a corridor or within a large area consistent with the service design criteria in this document. Restructures may be prompted by a variety of circumstances, and in general are made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of transit service as a whole, to better integrate with the regional transit network, or to reduce Metro's operating costs because of budget constraints. When planning for service restructures, factors other than route performance are taken into account, such as large-scale service and capital infrastructure enhancements. Restructures may result in the modification, addition, and deletion of corridors that align with future corridors in the long-range plan. These changes must be approved by council as part of a service change package.

- Under all circumstances, whether adding, reducing or maintaining service hours, service restructures will have the goals of focusing frequent service on the service segments with the highest ridership and route productivity, creating convenient opportunities for transfer connections between services, and matching capacity to ridership demand to improve the productivity and cost-effectiveness of service.

- Service restructures to manage the transit system will have a goal of increasing ridership.

- Under service reduction conditions, service restructures will have an added goal of an overall net reduction of service hours invested.

- Under service addition conditions, service restructures will have the added goals of increasing service levels and ridership.

When one or more circumstances trigger consideration of restructures, Metro specifically analyzes:

- Impacts on current and future travel patterns served by similarly aligned transit services.

- Passenger capacity of the candidate primary route(s) relative to projected consolidated ridership.

- The cost of added service in the primary corridor to meet projected ridership demand relative to cost savings from reductions of other services.

Restructures will be designed to reflect the following:

- Service levels should accommodate a projected minimum of 80 percent of the expected passenger loads per the established loading guidelines.

- When transfers are required as a result of restructures, the resulting service will be designed for convenient transfers. Travel time penalties for transfers should be minimized.

- A maximum walk distance goal of 1/4 mile in corridors where service is not primarily oriented to freeway or limited-access roadways. Consideration may be given to exceeding this maximum distance where the walking environment supports pedestrians or at transfer locations between very frequent services.

Based on these guidelines, Metro will recommend specific restructures that have compatibility of trips, have capacity on the consolidated services to meet anticipated demand, and can achieve measurable savings relative to the magnitude of necessary or desired change.

After a service restructure, Metro will regularly evaluate the resulting transit services and respond to chronically late performance and passenger loads that exceed the performance management guidelines as part of the ongoing management of Metro's transit system.

Key reasons that will trigger consideration of restructures include:

Sound Transit or Metro service investments
- Extension or service enhancements to Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail, and Regional Express bus services.

- Expansion of Metro's RapidRide network, investment of partner or grant resources, or other significant introductions of new Metro service.

Corridors above or below the All-Day and Peak-Only Network target service level
- Locations where the transit network does not reflect current travel patterns and transit demand due to changes in travel patterns, demographics, or other factors.

Services compete for the same riders
- Locations where multiple transit services overlap, in whole or in part, or provide similar connections.

Mismatch between service and ridership
- Situations where a route serves multiple areas with varying demand characteristics or situations where ridership has increased or decreased significantly even though the underlying service has not changed.

- Opportunities to consolidate or otherwise reorganize service so that higher ridership demand can be served with improved service frequency and fewer route patterns.

Major transportation network changes
- Major projects such as SR-520 construction and tolling and the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement; the opening of new transit centers, park-and-rides, or transit priority pathways.

Major development or land use changes
- Construction of a large-scale development, new institutions such as colleges or medical centers, or significant changes in the overall development of an area.

PLANNING ALTERNATIVE SERVICES

King County is a diverse county with different travel demands in different parts of the county. The King County Metro Alternative Services Program brings a range of mobility services to parts of King County that do not have the infrastructure, population density, or land use to support traditional fixed-route bus service.

Prioritization criteria

The Alternative Services Program aims to right-size and complement existing fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART) service. Right-sizing may include restructuring underperforming fixed-route bus services and mitigating the impact of lost or reduced fixed-route service. Complementary alternative services may address: the need to serve rural communities, the need to seed emerging markets, and gaps in time-of-day service or geographic coverage of existing fixed-route services. These time-based or geographic coverage gaps might include areas with a concentration of shift jobs, industrial locations, or areas of potential transit activity that are geographically isolated. By employing Alternative Services products like TripPool or Community Vans to fill service gaps, right-size services, or complement existing services, Metro will enhance mobility options for residents while making optimal use of finite transit dollars. The diagram below shows the current range of alternative services. As new potential alternative services products, such as Trip Pool, become available, Metro will explore how best to implement these products and consider how subsidies, fares and promotional efforts can expand these programs and ensure their success.

Existing Alternative Services
VanShare
VanPool
Rideshare Matching
DART and CAT

Community Shuttle
Metro route with a Flexible Service Area, provided through community partnerships.

Community Van
A fleet of Metro vans for local group trips that are scheduled by a local transportation coordinator to meet locally identified transportation needs.

Real-Time Rideshare
Leveraging mobile applications to enable private carpool ridematching to take place in real-time.

TripPool
Real-time ridesharing between home neighborhood and a transit center. Uses Metro Vans and ORCA fares.

Alternative service projects may be initiated by Metro identifying communities that meet one or more of the prioritization criteria listed below or by a competitive process involving a letter of interest by local jurisdictions or community organizations, evaluated against the prioritization criteria listed below. When considering where to implement alternative service projects, Metro will give special consideration to communities with high proportions of low-income or minority populations who depend on public transportation. Prioritization criteria for alternative service efforts in communities include:

1. Fixed-route transit service performs below service guidelines performance standards (measured in rides/platform hour, and passenger miles/platform mile)

2 Time-based service gaps

3 Geographic coverage service gaps

4 Rural communities or emerging transit markets (as identified through land-use targets, designated growth areas, demonstration of local transportation needs, and Metro's Long-Range Public Transportation Plan)

5 Market potential, considering jobs, student enrollment, household density, park-and-rides, high concentrations of low-income or minority populations, and proximity to centers, the regional transit network, and major institutions

6 Partnership opportunities for service or infrastructure with jurisdictions or communities as described in the "Working with Partners" section, p. 25.

Metro will use the Alternative Services Program's community planning process to better identify the needs of transit riders and potential riders, including traditionally isolated or disadvantaged communities, such as those with limited English proficiency, low-income and homeless populations, minorities, people with disabilities and Access users, youth, elderly people, and those who are currently unserved or underserved by transit (within the context of applicable federal laws, such as Americans with Disabilities Act and others). This community planning process will consider needs identified by riders and potential riders for access to social service agencies, health care facilities, jobs, education, and other destinations.

Community partnerships

Demonstrated partner participation is a key component of a successful alternative services project. A local partner organization, such as a municipality or nonprofit organization, must be actively engaged and contributing to the development and implementation of the project. Partnerships may include sharing the cost or staffing of community engagement, planning, equipment, contracted services, promotions, or other project elements and may involve either cash or in-kind contributions from the partner organization. Local jurisdictional partners may also enact transit-supportive land-use policy or may make infrastructure investments that support transit. Types of partnership are further described in the partnership section, p 25.

Performance evaluation

The Alternative Services Program conducts demonstration projects that are intended to identify new service offerings. These may include a range of transportation options that cannot be compared directly with each other or with fixed-route service. Each service needs to be evaluated independently. Given the experimental nature of the different projects under the Alternative Services umbrella, performance evaluation efforts will focus on product testing and continuous service improvement.

Metro will identify performance measures that reflect the unique nature of each service and different performance measures may be used to evaluate different types of services. Performance will be measured against the market potential for each project area. The market potential will be estimated prior to project launch based on the project's stated goals and the community's market characteristics, including population and demographic, land-use, and employment statistics. Past transit performance will also be factored into the development of market potential goals.

Metro will monitor and evaluate performance of all alternative service projects to ensure that service quality, customer satisfaction, and cost effectiveness objectives are being met. Performance measures may include usage/ridership rates and cost per boarding/ride. To the extent possible, performance of alternative services will be measured against similar services.

Conversion to fixed route

Communities with successful alternative service partnerships could transition to fixed-route bus service under certain circumstances. If funding is available, the partner jurisdiction or community is supportive, the alternative service is regularly over capacity, the density has increased, and the cost per boarding justifies a greater investment in transit, then Metro can consider converting an alternative service into fixed-route bus service.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

A partnership is a relationship in which Metro and an external organization work together to help advance opportunities and conditions for travelers to use alternatives to driving alone. Partnerships enable Metro to leverage public and private resources to design and deliver services, facilities, access, policies, program/product design and incentives. Partners have included local, regional and state agencies; employers, institutions, schools, community and human service organizations, other transit providers, property owners or managers, and other businesses and entities.

Metro forms a variety of partnerships with local jurisdictions, community organizations, and other stakeholders. These partnerships are mainly related to service and infrastructure. The guidelines for partnerships are described in more detail below. When a proposed or changed partnership agreement addresses specific routes, services or infrastructure, Metro shall ensure that the proposal incorporates adequate public outreach to the affected communities.

Service partnerships

Metro seeks to actively collaborate with cities, communities and private companies to explore service partnerships that:

- Are mutually beneficial to the agency and customers

- Extend service in complementary ways to current fixed-route bus service

- Extend mobility benefits to communities that have corridors below their target service level

- Enable more service hours, or extend service efficiencies

- Support transit options for low-income workers.

Services provided via a partnership may reflect the needs identified by the partner and may be implemented in a variety of ways, including alternative services. More information about alternative services partnerships can be found in the Planning Alternative Services section.

For fixed-route service, Metro is open to forming partnerships with cities, communities and private companies that would fully or partially fund transit service. The "Adding, Reducing and Changing Service" section establishes investment priorities for new Metro resources: Priority 1, Passenger loads (crowding); Priority 2, Schedule reliability; Priority 3, All-Day and Peak-Only Network (corridors connecting centers); and Priority 4, Route productivity. Metro will use new Metro resources to address priorities 1 and 2 first; Metro encourages partners to do the same.

Metro will make exceptions to these investment priorities to leverage partner funding according to the following:

1 Service funded fully by Metro's partners generally will be implemented at the next feasible service change subject to operational infrastructure constraints and contract terms[†].

---

† Operational infrastructure constraints include but are not limited to bus fleet availability to run new service (including potential maintenance downtime requirements), base capacity limitations, and operator availability.

2 On corridors identified for priority 3 investments (as below their target service levels in the All-Day and Peak-Only Network), Metro will direct new Metro resources remaining after addressing priority 1 and 2 needs—subject to operational infrastructure constraints—to those corridors for which partners agree to fund at least one-third of investments to help meet target service levels, regardless of these corridors' positions in the prioritized investment list (as published in the annual Service Guidelines Report).

Infrastructure partnerships

Local jurisdictional partners may also enact transit-supportive land-use policy or may make infrastructure investments that support transit. These partnerships can include:

- Zoning measures that support increased density and mixed-uses within Urban Growth Areas

- Investments in cycling and pedestrian facilities that significantly enhance access to transit service

- Parking management programs that provide new sources of park-and-ride spaces or transit layover or make more efficient use of off-street parking to support transit ridership and /or operations

- Urban design guidelines that support transit and active transportation

- In-fill over greenfield development prioritization

- Street network connectivity improvements

- Other land-use measures that contribute to higher concentrations of potential transit riders.

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

For each major service change, Metro will undertake a significant planning process that includes outreach to involve the public in shaping the change. Through the outreach, Metro planners will better understand community mobility needs, where people are traveling and when, and how to provide the best service possible. During the planning process, Metro typically will engage with the community through several phases of outreach, and will complete a comprehensive community engagement report at the end that summarizes the results of this work and how public input was used to shape a final recommendation for change.

Each outreach effort will be guided by several goals:

- Transit planners are informed by members of the public who are reflective of those who may be affected by the change.

- Metro's outreach process is transparent, accessible, welcoming and understandable. Participants understand what is being considered, the timeline and how decisions are made, and that their input is valuable and welcome.

- The outreach process is meaningful. Regardless of how participants feel about the final result, they can see how public input shaped what is being considered and the final result.

Outreach should be scaled relative to the magnitude of the change being considered as well as the potential impacts of the change on riders.

For each outreach effort, Metro should identify the demographics of those who may be affected by the change being considered. Then, outreach strategies should be designed to inform and solicit input from these populations, creatively seeking to engage those who would not otherwise learn about our process via mainstream communication channels.

These outreach strategies should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- posting of information at bus stops or onboard buses and at community gathering places such as libraries, schools, and community centers

- conversations with people on the bus and at stops, community events, and information tables

- public meetings

- questionnaires

- conversations with community or stakeholder groups

- online and/or mailed information, social media, news releases, and advertisements

- community advisory groups or sounding boards

- outreach to community groups in the Community Service Areas of unincorporated King County

- translation and distribution of materials in accessible formats and/or provision of interpretation for populations with limited or no English proficiency and people with disabilities

- work with community partners that serve transit riders, such as those with limited English proficiency, low-income and homeless populations, youth, minorities, people with disabilities, elderly people, and those who are currently unserved or underserved by transit, to engage these populations in formats, locations and at times that work best for them.

For service changes that affect multiple routes or large areas, Metro may convene a community-based sounding board composed of people who may be affected by the change. Sounding board members attend public meetings, offer advice about public outreach, and provide feedback about what changes to bus service would be best for the local communities. Metro should consider both sounding board recommendations and public feedback in developing recommendations.

Proposed changes may require County Council approval. The Council holds a public hearing before making a final decision on changes.

Through the planning and outreach process, Metro should strive to:

- Understand and address potential issues regarding major travel origins and destinations

- Engage with key stakeholders including community-based organizations and the general public to understand the needs of transit riders and potential riders, such as those with limited English proficiency, low-income and homeless populations, youth, minorities, people with disabilities and Access users, elderly people, and those who are currently unserved or underserved by transit

- Match community needs with service provided. Metro may identify potential alternative services projects through the planning and outreach process.

ADDING, REDUCING, AND CHANGING SERVICE

Metro uses the following guidelines when adding or reducing service as well as in the ongoing development and management of transit service.

GUIDELINES FOR ADDING OR REDUCING SERVICE

Guideline	Measures
Passenger loads	Passenger load thresholds (see p. 15)
Schedule reliability	On-time performance (see p. 16) Schedule reliability (see Appendix 3: Glossary) Lateness (see p. 16)
All-Day Network	Current service relative to All-Day Network (see p. 12)
Peak-only service	Travel time or ridership advantage (see p. 10)
Route productivity	Rides per platform hour (see p. 14) Passenger miles per platform mile (see p. 14)

Adding service: investment priorities

Metro invests in service by using guidelines in the following order:

1. Passenger loads
2. Schedule reliability
3. All-Day and Peak-Only Network
4. Route productivity

When prioritizing investments in the transit network, Metro considers local and regional planning efforts, including Metro's future long-range plan; changes to the transportation network; operational considerations; productivity, geographic value and social equity impacts; service quality needs; and corridor score.

Passenger loads and schedule reliability

Metro's first investments are based on the passenger load and schedule reliability guidelines used to assess service quality. Routes that do not meet the standards are considered to have low-quality service that has a negative impact on riders and could discourage them from using transit. These routes are the highest priority candidates for investment. Routes that are through-routed but suffer from poor reliability may be candidates for investment, but because of the size and complexity of changes to through-routes, they would not be automatically given top priority.

All-Day and Peak-Only Network

Metro next uses the All-Day and Peak-Only Network guidelines and the target service level comparison (as described on p. 14) to determine if corridors are below their target levels. If a corridor is below the target service level, it is an investment priority. Metro uses the list of All-Day and Peak-Only Network investments which, are ordered for implementation in the service guidelines report by their geographic value score, followed by the corridor productivity score, then the social equity score.

Route productivity

The fourth and final guideline Metro uses to determine if additional service is needed is the route productivity rank. Routes with productivity in the top 25 percent perform well in relation to other routes; investment in these services would improve service where it is most efficient.

Reducing service

When Metro must reduce service, these guidelines help identify the services to be reduced. While the guidelines form the basis for identifying services for reduction, Metro also considers other factors. These include community input, opportunities to achieve system efficiencies and to simplify the network through restructures, and the potential for offering alternative services. Once the long-range plan is complete, we will also consider the long-range service network and priorities, particularly when reducing service through restructures. The use of these other factors means that some routes may not be reduced in the priority order stated below. Some factors that Metro considers when reducing service include:

- **The relative impacts to all areas of the county in order to minimize or mitigate significant impacts in any one area.** Metro seeks to balance reductions throughout the county so that no one area experiences significant negative impacts beyond what other areas experience.

- **Ways to minimize impacts through the type of reduction, particularly through restructuring service.** Reduction of service can range from deleting a single trip to eliminating an entire route. Metro will also consider restructuring service in an area to make it more efficient or will consider alternative services. By consolidating service to eliminate duplication, and by closely matching service with demand, Metro may be able to provide needed trips at reduced cost and minimize impacts on riders. Service consolidation may lead to increased frequency of service on some routes to accommodate projected loads, even though the overall result of the restructure is a reduction in service hours.

- **The identified investment need on corridors.** While no route or area would be exempt from change during a large-scale system reduction, Metro will try to maintain the target level of service on corridors in the All-Day and Peak-Only Network levels, and will seek to avoid reducing service on corridors that are already below their target service levels.

- **Preservation of last connections.** Metro serves some urbanized areas of east and south King County adjacent to or surrounded by rural land. Elimination of all service in these areas would result in significant reduction in the coverage that Metro provides. To ensure that Metro continues to address mobility needs, ensure social equity and provide geographic value to people throughout King County, connections to these areas would be preserved when making service reductions, regardless of route productivity.
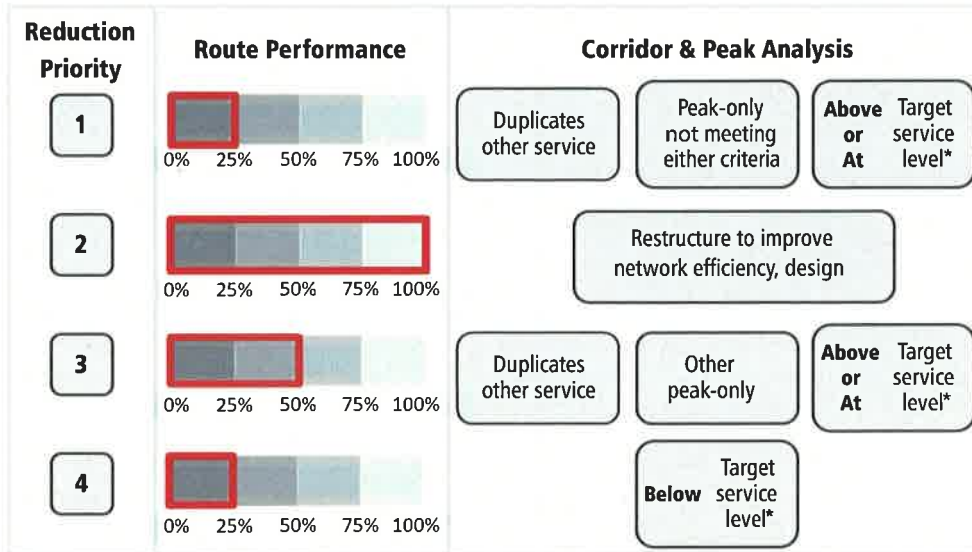
• **Applicability of alternative services.** In many areas of King County, and especially in urbanized areas adjacent to or surrounded by rural land, Metro may provide cost-effective alternatives to fixed-route transit service. These alternatives could avoid a significant reduction in the coverage Metro provides while better meeting community needs (Strategy 6.2.3). During service reductions Metro will consider the use of alternative services that can reduce costs on corridors with routes that are in the bottom 25 percent in one or both productivity measures. Alternative services will be evaluated differently than the fixed-route system, according to the measures and performance thresholds developed through the Alternative Services Program.

Reduction priorities

Priorities for reduction are listed below. Within all of the priorities, Metro ensures that social equity is a primary consideration in any reduction proposal, complying with all state and federal regulations.

1 Reduce service on routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold for a given time period. Routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold on both measures are considered for reduction before routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold for only one measure in the following order:

1. Routes that duplicate or overlap with other routes on corridors on the All-Day and Peak-Only Network.

2. Peak-only routes that do not have a travel time or ridership advantage.

3. All-day routes that operate on corridors that are above their target service levels.

4. All-day routes that operate on corridors that are at their target service levels. Reductions or deletions of these routes would worsen the deficiency between existing service levels and target service levels.

2 Restructure service to improve efficiency of service.

3 Reduce service on routes that are above the 25 percent productivity threshold for a given time period. Routes that are between the 25 and 50 percent productivity threshold on both measures are considered for reduction before routes that are above the 50 percent productivity threshold for either measure, in the following order:

1. Routes that duplicate or overlap with other routes on corridors on the All-Day and Peak-Only Network.

2. Any other peak-only route that was not considered as part of priority 1.2.

3. All-day routes that operate on corridors that are above their target service levels.

4. All-day routes that operate on corridors that are at their target service levels. Reductions or deletions of these routes would worsen the deficiency between existing service levels and target service levels.

4 Reduce services on routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold for a given time period on corridors identified as below their target service levels. Routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold on both measures are considered for reduction before routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold for only one measure. This worsens the deficiency between existing service levels and target service levels.

The chart below summarizes how service is reduced.

Reduction Priority	Route Performance	Corridor & Peak Analysis		
1	0% 25% 50% 75% 100%	Duplicates other service	Peak-only not meeting either criteria	Above or At — Target service level*
2	0% 25% 50% 75% 100%	Restructure to improve network efficiency, design		
3	0% 25% 50% 75% 100%	Duplicates other service	Other peak-only	Above or At — Target service level*
4	0% 25% 50% 75% 100%	Below — Target service level*		

*Target service level is based on demographics and demand between connections served by transit

Implementation

Metro revises service twice a year—in spring and fall. In rare cases of emergency or time-critical construction projects, Metro may make changes at times other than the two regularly scheduled service changes. However, such situations are kept to a minimum because of the high level of disruption and difficulty they create. Many alternative service projects can be implemented at any time and do not need to follow the same schedule as fixed-route service.

Proposed route changes are subject to approval by the Metropolitan King County Council except as follows (per King County code 28.94.020):

- Any single change or cumulative changes in a service schedule which affect the established weekly service hours for a route by 25 percent or less.

- Any change in route location which does not move the location of any route stop by more than 1/2 mile.

- Any changes in route numbers.

Each year, Metro publishes a Service Guidelines report that outlines the analysis of target service levels and route performance management. The annual report will include a comprehensive list of the prior years' service changes and will identify and discuss service changes that address performance-related issues. Metro works to provide transparency in Metro's process and help jurisdictions plan for the future by conducting regular outreach throughout the county about the results of the Service Guidelines Report.

Adverse effect of a major service change

An adverse effect of a major service change is defined as a reduction of 25 percent or more of the transit trips serving a census tract, or 25 percent or more of the service hours on a route. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires all transit agencies to evaluate major service change impacts on minority and low-income populations; the King County Strategic Plan and the County's Equity and Social Justice ordinance reflect similar commitments to addressing these impacts.

Disparate impact threshold

A disparate impact occurs when a major service change results in adverse effects that are significantly greater for minority populations than for non-minority populations. Metro's threshold for determining adverse effects is when the percentage of routes or tracts adversely affected by a major service change and classified as minority is 10 or more percentage points higher than the percentage of routes or tracts classified as minority in the system as a whole. Should Metro find a disparate impact, consideration will be given to modifying the proposed changes in order to avoid, minimize or mitigate the disparate impacts of the proposed changes.

Metro will measure disparate impacts by comparing changes in the number of trips serving minority or non-minority census tracts, or by comparing changes in the number of service hours on minority or non-minority routes. Metro defines a minority census tract as one in which the minority population percentage is greater than that of the county as a whole. For regular fixed-route service, Metro defines a minority route as one for which the percentage of inbound weekday boardings in minority census tracts is greater than the average percentage of inbound weekday boardings in minority census tracts for all Metro routes.

Disproportionate burden threshold

A disproportionate burden occurs when a major service change results in adverse effects that are significantly greater for low-income populations than for non-low-income populations. Metro's threshold for determining adverse effects is when the percentage of routes or tracts adversely affected by a major service change and classified as low-income is 10 or more percentage points higher than the percentage of routes or tracts classified as low-income in the system as a whole. Should Metro find a disproportionate burden, consideration will be given to modifying the proposed changes in order to avoid, minimize or mitigate the disproportionate burden of the proposed changes.

Metro will measure disproportionate burden by comparing changes in the number of trips serving low-income or non-low-income census tracts, or by comparing changes in the number of service hours on low-income or non-low-income routes. Metro defines a low-income census tract as one in which the percentage of low-income population is greater than that of the county as a whole. For regular fixed-route service, Metro defines a low-income route as one for which the percentage of inbound weekday boardings in low-income census tracts is greater than the average percentage of inbound weekday boardings in low-income census tracts for all Metro routes.

APPENDIX 1: CENTERS IN KING COUNTY

The list of centers associated with the All-Day and Peak-Only Network is adopted by the King County Council as part of the service guidelines. To plan its service, Metro utilizes the 18 Regional Growth Centers, four Manufacturing/Industrial Centers, and 64 Transit Activity Centers.

Regional Growth and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

The Puget Sound Regional Council designates regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers as places that will receive a significant proportion of population and employment growth compared to the rest of the urban area.

Regional Growth Centers

Auburn	Redmond	**Manufacturing/Industrial Centers**
Bellevue Downtown	Renton	Ballard/Interbay
Burien	SeaTac	Duwamish
Federal Way	Seattle Downtown	Kent
First Hill/Capitol Hill	South Lake Union	North Tukwila
Issaquah	Totem Lake	
Kent	Tukwila	
Northgate	University Community	
Overlake	Uptown	

Transit Activity Centers

Each transit activity center identified below meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Is located in an area of mixed-use development that includes concentrated housing, employment, and commercial activity

- Includes a major regional hospital, medical center or institution of higher education located outside of a designated regional growth centers

- Is located outside other designated regional growth centers at a transit hub served by three or more all-day routes.

The size of these transit activity centers varies, but all transit activity centers represent concentrations of activity in comparison to the surrounding area. Transit activity centers are listed below:

Alaska Junction	Columbia City Station	Factoria (Factoria Blvd SE/SE Eastgate Wy)
Aurora Village Transit Center	Covington (172nd Ave SE/SE 272nd St)	Fairwood (140th Ave SE/SE Petrovitsky Rd)
Ballard (Ballard Ave NW/NW Market St)	Crossroads (156th Ave NE/NE 8th St)	Maple Valley (Four Corners, SR-169/Kent-Kangley Rd)
Beacon Hill Station	Crown Hill (15th Ave NW/NW 85th St)	Fremont (Fremont Ave N/N 34th St)
Black Diamond	Des Moines (Marine View Dr/S 223rd St)	Georgetown (13th Ave S/S Bailey St)
Bothell (UW Bothell/Cascadia Community College)	Duvall	Green River Community College
Carnation	Eastgate (Bellevue College)	
Central District (23rd Ave E/E Jefferson St)	Enumclaw	
Children's Hospital		

Greenwood
(Greenwood Ave N/N 85th St)

Harborview Medical Center

Highline College

Issaquah Highlands

Issaquah
(Issaquah Transit Center)

Juanita
(98th Ave NE/NE 116th St)

Kenmore
(Kenmore Park and Ride)

Kent East Hill
(104th Ave SE/SE 240th St)

Kirkland (Kirkland Transit Center)

Kirkland (South Kirkland Park and
Ride)

Lake City

Lake Forest Park

Lake Washington Institute of
Technology

Madison Park
(42nd Ave E/E Madison St)

Magnolia
(34th Ave W/W McGraw St)

Mercer Island

Mount Baker Station

Newcastle

North Bend

North City (15th Ave NE/NE 175th St)

Oaktree (Aurora Ave N/N 105th St)

Othello Station

Rainier Beach Station

Renton Highlands
(NE Sunset Blvd/NE 12th St)

Renton Technical College

Roosevelt
(12th Ave NE/NE 65th St)

Sammamish
(228th Ave NE/NE 8th St)

Sand Point
(Sand Point Way/NE 70th St)

Shoreline
(Shoreline Community College)

Snoqualmie

SODO
(SODO Busway/Lander St)

South Mercer Island

South Park
(14th Ave S/S Cloverdale St)

South Seattle College

Tukwila International Blvd Station

Twin Lakes
(21st Ave SW/SW 336th St)

Valley Medical Center

Vashon

Wallingford
(Wallingford Ave N/N 45th St)

Westwood Village

Woodinville
(Woodinville Park and Ride)

APPENDIX 2: CORRIDORS EVALUATED FOR ALL-DAY AND PEAK NETWORK

Note: Shaded corridors do not currently have service on them.

Connections		
Between	And	Via
Admiral District	Southcenter	California Ave SW, Military Rd, TIBS
Alki	SODO Station	Alaska Junction
Auburn	Burien	Kent, SeaTac
Auburn	Pacific	Algona
Auburn/GRCC	Federal Way	15th St SW, Lea Hill Rd
Aurora Village	Northgate	Meridian Ave N
Aurora Village	Seattle CBD	Aurora Ave N
Avondale	Kirkland	NE 85th St, Redmond Way, Avondale Rd NE
Ballard	Northgate	Holman Road
Ballard	Seattle CBD	15th Ave W
Ballard	Seattle CBD	Fremont, South Lake Union
Ballard	University District	Green Lake, Greenwood
Ballard	University District	Wallingford (N 45th St)
Beacon Hill	Seattle CBD	Beacon Ave
Bellevue	Eastgate	Lake Hills Connector
Bellevue	Redmond	NE 8th St, 156th Ave NE
Bellevue	Renton	Newcastle, Factoria
Burien	Seattle CBD	1st Ave S, South Park
Burien	Seattle CBD	Delridge, Ambaum
Burien	Seattle CBD	Des Moines Mem Dr S, South Park
Capitol Hill	Seattle CBD	15th Ave E
Capitol Hill	Seattle CBD	Madison St
Capitol Hill	White Center	South Park, Georgetown, Beacon Hill, First Hill
Central District	Seattle CBD	E Jefferson St
Colman Park	Seattle CBD	Leschi, Yesler Way
Discovery Park	Seattle CBD	Gilman Ave W, 22nd Ave W, Thorndyke Ave W
Eastgate	Bellevue	Newport Way , S. Bellevue, Beaux Arts
Eastgate	Bellevue	Somerset, Factoria, Woodridge
Eastgate	Overlake	Phantom Lake
Enumclaw	Auburn	Auburn Way S, SR 164
Fairwood	Renton	S Puget Dr, Royal Hills
Federal Way	Kent	Military Road S
Federal Way	SeaTac	SR-99
Fremont	Broadview	8th Ave NW
Fremont	Seattle CBD	Dexter Ave N
Fremont	University District	N 40th St
Green River CC	Kent	132nd Ave SE
Greenwood	Seattle CBD	Greenwood Ave N
High Point	Seattle CBD	35th Ave SW
Issaquah	Eastgate	SE Newport Way
Issaquah	North Bend	Fall City, Snoqualmie

Connections		
Between	**And**	**Via**
Issaquah	Overlake	Sammamish, Bear Creek
Kenmore	Kirkland	Juanita
Kenmore	Shoreline	Lake Forest Park, Aurora Village TC
Kenmore	Totem Lake	Finn Hill, Juanita
Kennydale	Renton	Edmonds Ave NE
Kent	Burien	Kent-DM Rd, S. 240th St, 1st Ave S
Kent	Maple Valley	SE Kent-Kangley Road
Kent	Renton	84th Ave S, Lind Ave SW
Kent	Renton	Kent East Hill
Kent	Seattle CBD	Tukwila
Kirkland	Bellevue	South Kirkland
Kirkland	Factoria	Overlake, Crossroads, Eastgate
Lake City	Seattle CBD	NE 125th St, Northgate, I-5
Lake City	University District	35th Ave NE
Lake City	University District	Lake City, Sand Point
Laurelhurst	University District	NE 41st St
Madison Park	Seattle CBD	Madison St
Madrona	Seattle CBD	Union St
Magnolia	Seattle CBD	34th Ave W, 28th Ave W
Mercer Island	S Mercer Island	Island Crest Way
Mirror Lake	Federal Way	S 312th St
Mount Baker	Seattle CBD	31st Ave S, S Jackson St
Mount Baker	University District	23rd Ave E
Mount Baker Transit Ctr	Seattle Center	Martin Luther King Jr Way, E John St, Denny Way
Mountlake Terrace	Northgate	15th Ave NE, 5th Ave NE
Northeast Tacoma	Federal Way	SW 356th St, 9th Ave S
Northgate	Seattle CBD	Green Lake, Wallingford
Northgate	University District	Roosevelt Way NE
Othello Station	SODO	Columbia City Station
Overlake	Bellevue	Bell-Red Road
Overlake	Bellevue	Sammamish Viewpoint, Northup Way
Queen Anne	Seattle CBD	Queen Anne Ave N
Queen Anne	Seattle CBD	Taylor Ave N
Rainier Beach	Capitol Hill	Rainier Ave S
Rainier Beach	Mount Baker Transit Ctr	Martin Luther King Jr Way S
Rainier Beach	Seattle CBD	Rainier Ave S
Redmond	Duvall	Avondale Rd NE
Redmond	Eastgate	148th Ave, Crossroads, Bellevue College
Redmond	Totem Lake	Willows Road
Renton	Burien	S 154th St
Renton	Enumclaw	Maple Valley, Black Diamond
Renton	Rainier Beach	West Hill, Rainier View
Renton	Renton Highlands	NE 4th St, Union Ave NE
Renton	Seattle CBD	Martin Luther King Jr Way S, I-5
Renton	Seattle CBD	Skyway, S. Beacon Hill
Renton Highlands	Renton	NE 7th St, Edmonds Ave NE
Richmond Beach	Northgate	Richmond Beach Rd, 15th Ave NE
Roosevelt	UW	University Way

Connections		
Between	And	Via
Sand Point	Cowen Park	View Ridge, NE 65th St
Sand Point	University District	NE 55th St
Shoreline	University District	Jackson Park, 15th Ave NE
Shoreline CC	Greenwood	Greenwood Ave N
Shoreline CC	Lake City	N 155th St, Jackson Park
Shoreline CC	Northgate	N 130th St, Meridian Ave N
Totem Lake	Seattle CBD	Kirkland, SR-520
Tukwila	Des Moines	McMicken Heights, Sea-Tac
Tukwila	Fairwood	S 180th St, Carr Road
Tukwila	Seattle CBD	Pacific Hwy S, 4th Ave S
Twin Lakes	Federal Way	S 320th St
Twin Lakes	Federal Way	SW Campus Dr, 1st Ave S
University District	Bellevue	SR-520
University District	Seattle CBD	Broadway
University District	Seattle CBD	Eastlake, Fairview
UW Bothell	Redmond	Woodinville, Cottage Lake
UW Bothell	University District	Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Lake City
UW Bothell/CCC	Kirkland	132nd Ave NE, Lake Washington Tech
Vashon	Tahlequah	Valley Center
West Seattle	Seattle CBD	Fauntleroy, Alaska Junction
White Center	Seattle CBD	16th Ave SW, South Seattle College
Woodinville	Kirkland	Kingsgate

APPENDIX 3: GLOSSARY

Access service: *See Paratransit (Access) service.*

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: Civil rights legislation that provides a national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities with specific requirements for public transit agencies. ADA requires the provision of demand response transportation service for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use fixed route transportation systems.

All-day service: Routes that operate in two directions throughout the majority of the day. These routes are the basis of Metro's network and account for the most service resources. All-day services operate during the peak, off-peak, and night time periods on weekdays and weekends.

Alternative services: Transportation services tailored to community needs that Metro plans and provides with partners throughout King County. Often, these communities lack the infrastructure, density or land use to support traditional, fixed-route bus service. Metro's alternative services include VanPool, VanShare, Community Access Transportation (CAT), Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART), Community Shuttles, Community Hub, TripPool, Community Van, and Real Time Rideshare. Additional alternative services will be developed as market conditions and technology evolves.

Base: A site where buses are fueled, stored, and maintained. Bases include parking, maintenance bays, parts storage, fuel storage, cleaning facilities, and operation facilities. Bases also include facilities to support employees such as office space, driver lockers, and meeting rooms.

Boarding: *See Ride.*

Centers: Activity nodes throughout King County that form the basis for the countywide transit network. See Manufacturing/industrial center, Regional growth center and Transit activity center.

Community Access Transportation (CAT): A program that complements paratransit (Access) service by filling service gaps in partnership with nonprofit agencies, such as those serving seniors or people with disabilities.

Community Shuttle: A route that Metro provides through a community partnership; these shuttles can have flexible service areas if it meets the community needs.

Corridor: A major transit pathway that connects regional growth, manufacturing/industrial, and/or activity centers; park-and-rides and transit hubs; and major destinations throughout King County.

Crowding: A transit trip that, on average, has more passengers than the acceptable passenger load, based on each type of bus. The acceptable passenger load calculation is based on the number of seats and an allowance of four square feet of floor space per standing passenger. A transit trip is considered crowded when, on average, it has a passenger load over the acceptable passenger load. Trips with standing loads for 20 minutes or longer are also considered to be crowded. This can also be referred to as "overcrowding" or "passenger crowding."

Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART) service: Scheduled transit routes in which individual trips may deviate from the fixed route to pick up or drop off a passenger closer to their origin or destination. All current DART routes include a fixed route portion in which passengers can access service from regular bus stops. DART routes can also be referred to as Demand Area Response Transit routes.

Equity and Social Justice (ESJ): King County's Equity and Social Justice work is grounded in the 2010 "fair and just" ordinance (Ordinance 16948), which requires King County to intentionally consider equity and integrate it into our decisions and policies, county practices and engagement with the organization as well as communities. Equity is defined as all people having full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. Social justice is defined as all aspects of justice, including legal, political and economic, and requires the fair distribution of public goods, institutional resources and life opportunities for all people.

Fixed-route service: Scheduled transit service in which trips follow a specified path and passengers can access service from regular bus stops.

Geographic value: Providing public transportation products and services throughout King County, connecting centers, and facilitating access to jobs, education and other destinations for as many people as possible. Metro provides services that are appropriate to the land use, employment and housing densities and transit demand in various communities.

Headway: The time interval between buses traveling on the same route in the same direction. This can also be referred to as "frequency."

Layover: Time built into a schedule between arrival at the end of a route and the departure for the return trip, used for the recovery of delays and preparation for the return trip. Layover can also be used to describe a designated location for a transit vehicle at or near the end of the route where the vehicle operates out of service and takes its scheduled layover time.

Load: The number of passengers on the bus at a given time. This is a method of measuring the ridership demand on a bus trip at a given time.

Long-range plan: The King County Metro Long Range Public Transportation Plan is a 25-year service, capital and financial plan for transit services operated, or planned by King County Metro. Along with the near-term needs identified through the service guidelines, the long-range plan guides future service and capital investments and forecasted financial needs.

Low income: A household earning less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Low-income census tract: A census tract in which the percentage of the population that is low-income is greater than that of the county as a whole.

Low-income corridor: A corridor in which the percentage of inbound weekday boardings in low-income census tracts is greater than the average percentage of inbound weekday boardings in low-income census tracts for the county.

Low-income route: A route in which the percentage of inbound weekday boardings in low-income census tracts is greater than the average percentage of inbound weekday boardings in low-income census tracts for the county.

Manufacturing/industrial center: As defined in Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Vision 2040 plan, an area of intensive manufacturing and/or industrial activity. PSRC expects these centers to accommodate a significant share of the region's manufacturing industrial employment growth.

Maximum (Max) load: The highest number of passengers on the bus at a given time, averaged on a per trip basis over the course of a service change. This is a method of measuring the highest demand for a specific bus trip.

Minority census tract: A census tract in which the minority population percentage is greater than that of the county as a whole.

Minority corridor: A corridor in which the percentage of inbound weekday boardings in minority census tracts is greater than the average percentage of inbound weekday boardings in minority census tracts for the county.

Minority route: A route in which the percentage of inbound weekday boardings in minority census tracts is greater than the average percentage of inbound weekday boardings in minority census tracts for the county.

Night: *See Time period.*

Off-peak: *See Time period.*

On-time: An arrival at a timepoint that is no more than five minutes late or one minute early relative to the scheduled arrival time.

Overcrowding: *See Crowding.*

Paratransit (Access) service: King County Metro's ADA service, which is a primarily van-operated, demand responsive service with variable routes and schedules. Access provides trips to eligible people with disabilities who are unable to use Metro's fixed-route or DART service. Passengers must apply and be found eligible to use Access service in advance of making a trip.

Park-and-ride: A facility where transit passengers may park their personal vehicles and catch a bus, train, vanpool or carpool to reach their final destination. Park-and-ride lots are built, owned, leased, and maintained by a number of different agencies.

Partner: Any organization external to King County Metro that shares resources with Metro to help advance opportunities and conditions for using alternatives to driving alone. Metro has worked with partners to design and deliver services, facilities, access, policies, program/product design, and incentives. Partners have included local, regional and state agencies; employers, institutions and schools; community and human service organizations; other transit providers, property owners or managers; and other businesses and entities.

Partnership: A relationship in which King County Metro and an external organization work together to help advance opportunities and conditions for travelers to use alternatives to driving alone. Partnerships enable Metro to leverage public and private resources to design and deliver services, facilities, access, policies, program/product design and incentives. Partners have included local, regional and state agencies; employers, institutions and schools; community and human service organizations; other transit providers, property owners or managers; and other businesses and entities. Partnerships as described in the Service Guidelines do not indicate a legal relationship and are not the same as vendor or contractor relationships.

Passenger miles per platform mile: Total miles traveled by all passengers divided by the total miles the bus operates from the time it leaves its base until it returns. One of two measures Metro uses to assess the service performance of each route. *See also, Base and Rides per platform hour.*

Passenger-minutes: The total number of minutes traveled by all passengers on the bus.

Passenger crowding: *See Crowding.*

Peak-only service: Routes that operate primarily during peak travel periods on weekdays from 5:00-9:00 a.m. and 3:00-7:00 p.m., primarily in one direction. Peak-only service connects passengers between residential areas and job centers and back.

Productivity: Making the most efficient use of resources and targeting transit service to the areas of the county with the most potential for use. Metro uses the term productivity in two important ways in the service guidelines:

1. **Corridor productivity:** The potential market for transit based on the number of households, park-and-ride stalls, jobs and students along the corridor. Higher concentrations of people support higher use of transit.

2. **Route productivity:** The actual use of transit, determined using two performance measures of ridership—rides per platform hour and passenger miles per platform mile.

Real-Time Rideshare: An on-demand carpool program using mobile and web-based applications to match up drivers with passengers who want to share a ride. Riders pay a small fare through the app, and drivers earn a per-mile fee. The program is being piloted in Southeast Redmond and Willows Road. This is one of Metro's alternative services.

Regional growth center: As defined in PSRC's Vision 2040 plan, a defined focal area within a city or community that has a mix of housing, employment, retail, services and entertainment uses, and that is pedestrian-oriented. PSRC expects these centers to receive a significant portion of the region's growth in population and jobs.

Ride: Every time a passenger boards a bus. This can also be referred to as a "boarding."

Ridership: Sum of rides over a specified time period. For purposes of the Service Guidelines corridor analysis, ridership is accounted for by measuring passenger loads. *See Load.*

Rides per platform hour: Total number of rides divided by the total hours a bus travels from the time it leaves its base until it returns. One of two measures Metro uses to assess the service performance of each route. *See also, Base and Passenger miles per platform mile.*

Route: A single path of travel, with identified stops and scheduled service. Routes are typically identified with numbers, such as Route 1.

Schedule adherence: *See Schedule reliability.*

Schedule reliability: A measure used to determine how often a route is late, measured as the percentage of trips that, on average, arrive more than 5 minutes late. This threshold allows for variations in travel time, congestion and ridership.

Service restructure: Changes to multiple Metro routes along a corridor or within a large area consistent with the service design criteria in the Service Guidelines. Restructures may be prompted by a variety of circumstances, and in general are made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of transit service as a whole, to better integrate with the regional transit network, or to reduce Metro's operating costs because of budget constraints.

Service types: Categories of service based on chosen criteria. Metro's current service types are Urban and Suburban.

- **Urban** routes primarily serve the densest parts of the county, including Seattle Downtown, First Hill/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, the University Community, or Uptown

- **Suburban** routes primarily serve passengers in suburban and rural areas in Seattle and King County

- **Dial-a-Ride Transit and shuttles** are those that provide flexible, community-based service that has different characteristics than the fixed-route system. These services are held to different standards than those outlined for the fixed-route network below. These standards are under development and will be included in Metro's annual service guidelines reports. These services are described in more detail in the Alternative Services section of the guidelines on page 25.

Service span: The span of hours over which service is operated. Service span often varies by weekday. For example, a route's service span could be from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Social equity: All people having full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. As applied to transit, social equity involves ensuring there are travel opportunities for historically disadvantaged populations, such as people of low-income, students, youth, seniors, minorities, people with disabilities, and others with limited transportation options. Metro measures social equity in a quantitative way using low-income and minority populations, in accordance with federal law.

Span: *See Service span.*

Standing load time: The number of consecutive minutes where there are more people on the bus than the number of seats provided.

Target service level: A goal amount of service Metro assigns each corridor in the All-Day and Peak-Only Network, based on measures of productivity, social equity and geographic value. The All-Day and Peak-Only Network analysis compares the target service levels to existing service to determine whether a corridor is below, at, or above the target levels. Target service levels are Very Frequent, Frequent, Local, Hourly, Peak-only, and Alternative Services (defined below). If a corridor is below its target service level, it is identified for investment need. *See also, Productivity, Social Equity and Geographic Value.*

- **Very frequent** corridors serve very large employment and transit activity centers and very dense residential areas.

- **Frequent** corridors generally serve major employment and transit activity centers and very dense residential areas.

- **Local** corridors generally serve regional growth centers and residential areas with low- to medium-density.

- **Hourly** corridors generally connect low-density residential areas to regional growth centers.

- **Peak-only** services provide specialized service in the periods of highest demand for travel. Peak-only services generally provide service to a major employment center in the morning and away from a major employment center in the afternoon.

- **Alternative Services** *(see entry on p.41)*

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlaws discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Title VI prevents discrimination by government agencies that received federal funds.

Transit priority treatment: Any operational practice or infrastructure element that helps buses move more quickly along a street or along their route, with more consistent travel times. Within this definition there are four categories of strategies—bus operations, traffic control, infrastructure and bus lanes.

TripPool: Real-time ridesharing in which neighbors share a ride to the Park-and-Ride in a Metro van using a smartphone app to coordinate rides. TripPool vans get reserved parking at Park-and-Rides.

Through-route: When a bus on one route reaches the end of its route and immediately begins service on another route within a layover. Passengers can remain on the bus and continue from one route to the other without transferring or paying another fare.

Time period: An interval of time that identifies different passenger travel patterns and service levels. Metro has three time periods: Peak, Off-Peak, and Night (defined below).

- **Peak** period is from 5-9 a.m. and 3-7 p.m. on weekdays. This is the highest demand time period for the road network and transit service.

- **Off-Peak** period is from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on weekdays and 5 am-7 pm on weekends.

- **Night** period is from 7 p.m.-5 a.m. every day of the week.

Trip: A single journey from one place to another. There are two types of trips that Metro considers: a person trip and a vehicle trip.

- **Person trip:** An individual's journey from an origin to a destination; can involve multiple rides and multiple modes.

- **Vehicle trip:** The scheduled movement of a transit vehicle from an origin (often a route start point) to a destination (often a route end point) at a particular time on a particular day (weekday, Saturday, or Sunday).

Transit activity centers: Areas of activity that include major destinations and transit attractions, such as large employment sites, significant healthcare institutions and major social service agencies. Transit activity centers form the basis for an interconnected transit network throughout the urban growth area and support geographic value in the distribution of the network. See p. 34 for a list of Metro-defined transit activity centers.

VanPool: A high-occupancy transportation mode in which groups of five or more commuters share a ride to work, using a Metro-supplied van.

VanShare: A high-occupancy transportation mode in which groups of five or more commuters share the ride between home or work and a public transit link or transit hub.