



CITY OF KIRKLAND
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Stephen Padua, AICP Transportation Planner
David Godfrey, P.E. Transportation Engineering Manager
Kathy Brown, Public Works Director

Date: May 5, 2016

Subject: King County Metro Transit Long Range Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council review and approve a comment letter (Attachment A) to the King County Executive concerning the Metro Transit Long Range Plan (LRP).

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

Staff from Metro Transit presented a summary of the Draft LRP to Council at the May 3, 2016 Council meeting. In keeping with the request for comments from Metro, Council directed City of Kirkland staff to prepare a letter based on the questions and comments that were raised at the May 3 Council meeting.

A draft letter has been prepared that includes the following considerations for Metro as the LRP is finalized and implemented:

1. The types of partnerships with local jurisdictions that are necessary to implement the LRP need more definition.
2. Future transit service needs to be suited to the adjacent existing and planned land use.
3. Metro needs to better define their role in supporting Transit Oriented Development.
4. The future transit service network will require more transfers for transit riders to connect with regional centers; therefore, Metro needs to ensure a seamless transfer experience with provision and coordination of appropriate capital and service elements.
5. Kirkland residents depend on frequent direct service to Downtown Seattle, so changes to current service need to be clearly communicated and coordinated with the community. Also, future service must be of high quality.
6. Sound Transit is planning a study of high capacity transit (HCT) on the Cross Kirkland Corridor (CKC) and it will include an analysis of the appropriate mode for the corridor. The LRP should take into consideration the possibility that BRT could be the preferred mode and that Metro BRT service could use the CKC in the future.

The following highlights of the Draft LRP are presented as background.

Over the next 24 years, Metro's annual service is planned to increase by 2.3 million annual service hours, from 3.5 million hours today to 5.8 million hours in 2040. This expansion brings frequent service to within a half mile of 70 percent of the county's population and is expected to grow the percentage of commuters who use transit to 24 percent from the 14 percent that exists today.

The general philosophy for the LRP is that projected regional growth can only be supported by transit connections that are more frequent and more reliable. Kirkland's Transportation Master Plan also supports this philosophy. The future transit network must expand frequent and fast services to more areas in order to provide more convenient transportation options.

The future network will require more transfers for transit riders throughout the region. Growing ridership will need major investments to upgrade transit facilities and increase the number of regional hubs that have the capacity to operate the increase in services. These investments will require more partnerships with all stakeholders so Metro has the financial and social support necessary achieve the ambitious goals defined in LRP. Lastly, the LRP is a living document which aims to coordinate with local comprehensive plans so Metro can better integrate more efficient service with supportive land use. More information is available [at Metro's plan website \(http://www.kcmetrovision.org/\)](http://www.kcmetrovision.org/).

In the future network, there are three major categories of service:

- **Frequent Service**, which includes RapidRide lines, will run all day during normal operating hours with a peak frequency of 5 minutes and 15 minute frequency for non-peak service.
- **Express Service** focuses on connecting regional centers and will operate with fewer stops than frequent service, with a peak frequency of 15 minutes and 30 minutes during non-peak operations.
- **Local Service** will provide fixed services with a frequency of 60 minutes or better, but will also allow more flexible transit options to tailor services to the needs of the local community.

The attached draft comment letter provides input from the City of Kirkland on all three types of service in the LRP.

May 17, 2016

King County Executive Dow Constantine
c/o Council Administrator
516 3rd Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Executive Constantine:

1 The City of Kirkland appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the King County Metro
2 Transit Long Range Plan (LRP). The plan sets forth a compelling vision for future transit.

3 In order to achieve a livable and sustainable community, our region must have access to
4 convenient and frequent transportation options. The current population for Kirkland is 83,460
5 and it is expected to grow to 95,000 by the year 2035. The majority of this growth will be
6 focused within Kirkland's regional growth center in Totem Lake, and in Downtown Kirkland. For
7 these centers to meet growth management requirements and effectively move people, transit is
8 essential. Kirkland's signing of the Puget Sound Regional Council's Growing Transit Communities
9 Strategy is an example of our City's commitment to transit service that supports regional
10 growth.

11 The Kirkland City Council is pleased that the LRP supports the goals and policies adopted in
12 Kirkland's Transportation Master Plan (TMP). Policies in both documents strive to achieve
13 plentiful, reliable and equitable transit service for all of our residents, improve connections to
14 the region, and minimize our impact on the environment with investments in "green"
15 infrastructure and a more environmentally friendly bus fleet. Both plans also support
16 partnerships and the use of innovative technology to improve transportation. Kirkland has
17 committed to advancing Intelligent Transportation Systems in order to improve efficiencies of
18 traffic management processes and support the integration of frequent transit service in
19 Kirkland.

20 The combination of the new frequent, express, and local services will operate all-day to better
21 connect more Kirkland residents with regional centers and major destinations. The addition of
22 two RapidRide lines through Kirkland will enrich these connections to regional centers and
23 support the growth within our own centers. Kirkland supports Metro's commitment to focus on
24 more flexible services within all service types. Flexible services and the advancement of
25 technological innovations will significantly improve access to transit for the populations with the
26 highest need, and provide more efficient services to more of Kirkland's residents. Kirkland is
27 particularly interested in working with Metro to explore innovations in transit technology to
28 enhance the rider experience as the new transit system is implemented.

29 The City of Kirkland offers the following considerations for refinements to the LRP as it is
30 finalized:

31 1. The City of Kirkland is anxious to work with Metro to better understand the types of
32 partnerships necessary to implement the LRP. The capital needs to implement the plan

- 33 seem ambitious, but we recognize the proposed changes are necessary to ensure
34 mobility in Kirkland and our region. Kirkland would like to work closely with Metro to
35 understand the investments necessary to support future transit service in our
36 community.
- 37 2. Metro needs to carefully consider the local and regional non-motorized connections in
38 each jurisdiction when considering transit expansion. Coordination of non-motorized
39 connections with transit facilities will mitigate the parking demand related to the
40 increase in transit ridership.
41
- 42 3. We understand the LRP is a living document and the routes proposed in the transit
43 network represent conceptual connections. Metro should coordinate carefully with
44 Kirkland to ensure the new service types and route locations are tailored to land use
45 throughout the city.
46
- 47 4. Kirkland is interested in exploring Transit Oriented development (TOD) projects and
48 would like to partner with Metro to determine potential locations. In the LRP, Metro
49 should consider refining their role in partnerships with local jurisdictions.
50
- 51 5. We recognize the future transit network will require more transfers for transit users. In
52 order for this transfer-based environment to be successful, route timing and frequency
53 should minimize wait times between route transfers. Transit facilities should continue to
54 be upgraded with the latest real-time information technology and transit stop amenities
55 to enhance the rider experience. Metro needs to ensure a seamless transfer experience
56 for transit riders in Kirkland and throughout the system.
- 57 6. Many Kirkland residents rely on a frequent and seamless connection to Downtown
58 Seattle for their daily commute and as a connection to other services and conveniences.
59 Metro needs to better communicate the coming changes to the Seattle connections and
60 work closely with Kirkland to determine the type of changes that not only maintains, but
61 improves, the quality of trips between Kirkland and Seattle.
- 62 7. As the regional network expands, Kirkland envisions the role for the South Kirkland Park
63 and Ride to become a major transit hub which will support frequent and reliable services
64 to Seattle. Metro should consider connecting more routes which run along SR-520 to the
65 South Kirkland Park and Ride.
- 66 8. Sound Transit is contemplating a study of high capacity transit (HCT) on the Kirkland-
67 owned segment of the Eastside Rail Corridor, known as Cross Kirkland Corridor. One of
68 the outcomes of the study will be a selection of the appropriate HCT mode. If BRT is
69 the mode selected, it will create an ideal corridor for Metro service and the LRP should
70 take this potential outcome into consideration.

71 Thank you again for the opportunity to review and comment on the LRP. Please do not hesitate
72 to contact City Manager Kurt Triplett or me if you have any questions or require clarification on
73 any of this feedback. The City of Kirkland is excited to work with Metro in the near future to

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74 begin implementation of the necessary transit service to help Kirkland and other jurisdictions in
75 the region to thrive.

Sincerely,

Kirkland City Council

Amy Walen
Mayor

DRAFT