Council Meeting: 06/21/11
Agenda: New Business
Item #: 11. b.

CITY OF KIRKLAND
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: David Godfrey, P.E., Transportation Engineering Manager
Ray Steiger, P.E., Public Works Director

Date: June 9, 2011

Subject: KING COUNTY METRO STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council review and discuss the proposed King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, accompanying Service Guidelines, and the King County ordinance that adopts the plan and guidelines.

BACKGROUND

The King County Metro Strategic Plan (the Plan) and the Service Guidelines propose new methods for how service will be evaluated, added, cut, and restructured. Future bus service in Kirkland will be directly affected by polices included in the Plan as specified by the methods in the Service Guidelines. Attachment 1 contains the adoption ordinance (pages 1-13), the Plan (pages 14-63) and the Service Guidelines (pages 64-92).This memo focuses mainly on the Service Guidelines and the adoption ordinance, since these documents contain the practices that guide how the Plan is implemented. The Regional Transit Committee is scheduled to take action to refer the Plan to the County Council on June 15. More information on this meeting will be provided at the June 21 City Council meeting. Metro staff are also scheduled to be available at the Council meeting to answer any questions the Council might have.

With adoption of their 2010 budget, and in light of deep reductions to the sales tax revenue that funds Metro Transit, the King County Council directed the County Executive to convene a Regional Transit Task force, charged with making recommendations to improve the policy framework for Metro Transit. The Plan is an implementation of the recommendations of Regional Transit Task Force. The Regional Transit Committee (RTC) is charged with proposing legislation to the King County Council, the body which will actually adopt the Plan and Service Guidelines. City of Kirkland Councilmember Sternoff is a member of the RTC. The RTC is scheduled to propose legislation to adopt the plan at their June 15 meeting. All the materials associated with the plan process are available on the King County website.

Service Guidelines
Evaluating service

The Service Guidelines lay out a three step method, described in the following chart, for evaluating the appropriate level of transit service for a given corridor.

All-day and peak network assessment process

Step 1: SET SERVICE LEVELS	
Factor	Purpose
Land Use	Support areas of higher employment and household density
Social Equity and Geographic Value	Serve historically disadvantaged communities
	Provide appropriate service levels throughout King County

Step 2: ADJUST SERVICE LEVELS	
Factor	Purpose
Loads	Provide sufficient capacity for existing transit demand
Use	Improve effectiveness and financial stability of transit service
Service Span	Provide adequate levels of service throughout the day

Step 3: IDENTIFY PEAK OVERLAY	
Factor	Purpose
Travel Time	Ensure that peak service provides a travel time advantage compared to other service alternatives
Ridership	Ensure that peak service is highly used

OUTCOME: ALL-DAY AND PEAK NETWORK

The process is summarized below and described in more detail Pages 67 through 73 of Attachment 1.

Step 1 - Three primary factors form the basis of the evaluation in Step 1: productivity, social equity, and geographic value. These factors are defined in the Strategic Plan as follows:

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: 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.

The productivity factor is evaluated by measuring the number of households and jobs within ¼ mile of the transit stops in the corridor being evaluated. Social equity and geographic value are evaluated by measuring the percentage of boardings in low-income and minority census tracts and by evaluating the Centers[1] that are connected along the corridor. Scores are then developed by evaluating each factor and assigned points based on the extent to which a route meets the measure. (see page SG-7 of Attachment 1 for more details).

Step 2 - The second step is to adjust the levels determined in the first step for three additional factors: passenger loads that are too large, cost recovery and need for night service. Routes that would be overcrowded, that have a high cost recovery or that are a primary connection between regional growth centers warrant higher frequency service and/or night service.

Step 3 - Finally, a peak hour only service level is established using two factors: first, if travel time is faster than alternative all day service and second, if ridership is at least 90% of the alternative all day service.

The result of this three step process are estimates of appropriate bus service levels on corridors, for both all-day and peak only bus services, during peak, off peak, and night time periods.

Reducing service
The Service Guidelines also describe how service is to be reduced. This is of particular interest because Metro may be facing large service cuts in the near future due to budget issues. A description of the service reduction strategy begins on Page 83 of Attachment 1. The highest priority group for cuts are routes that are in the lowest 25% of productivity[2]. Within that group, duplicative all day routes are cut first followed by low productivity peak routes, routes on over-served corridors, and finally all day routes that are appropriately served. The second priority group consists of service restructures. The third level of reductions would involve cuts on services that have productivity greater than the lowest 25% identified in the first priority group.

Adding service
Given current revenue forecasts, it is unlikely that service will be added in the immediate future. However, the Service Guidelines (page 83, Attachment 1) describe four priorities that would be used in the event that service is added:

1. Passenger Loads
2. Schedule Reliability
3. All-Day and Peak Network
4. Productivity

As is described below, the service addition methodology will receive additional refinement before it is used.

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[1] Centers include activity nodes throughout King County; both Regional Centers as designated by PSRC and local transit activity centers as designated by Metro for this process. See page 69, Attachment 1.
[2] Two productivity thresholds are used, one for routes that serve the Seattle core, and a lower threshold for routes that do not serve the Seattle core.

Restructuring service
A discussion of restructuring begins on page 77 of Attachment 1. Restructuring is of interest to Kirkland because if service is reduced, restructuring often takes place. Service restructures also create new routes. The methods proposed in the Guidelines focus on increasing productivity and reducing costs. This often means that relatively less productive ends or "tails" of routes are cut away, and routes become shorter requiring more transfers. On the other hand, frequency can sometimes be improved on the remaining core routes.

Implications for Kirkland

This section of the Memo describes how application of the Service Guidelines affects Kirkland.

Using the three steps described above (*Evaluating service*), Metro has calculated the appropriate frequency for routes throughout the system, including Kirkland. Also, routes that are in the highest or lowest 25% of productivity were identified. Calculations were done for three time periods: peak, off-peak, and night. The results of the calculations are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Time periods where routes are over-served or under-served and where productivity is in the bottom or top 25% of productivity for routes serving Kirkland.

Route number/ Destinations	Frequency of service compared to the frequencies calculated in the three step service guidelines process		Productivity	
	over-served	*underserved*	*bottom 25%*	*top 25%*
230 /Kirkland Bellevue	peak, off peak			
234/ Downtown Kirkland Kenmore	off peak			
236/ Woodinville Downtown Kirkland	peak, off peak			
238/ UW Bothell Downtown Kirkland	peak, off peak, night			
245 /Downtown Kirkland Factoria	off peak			
248/ Downtown Kirkland Avondale	night			
252*/ Kingsgate to Seattle CBD	none			
255 /Totem Lake Seattle CBD	off peak	night	off peak	peak
256*/Overlake Seattle CBD via S Kirkland			peak	
257*/Kingsgate Seattle CBD			peak	
260*/Juanita Seattle CBD			peak	
265*/Redmond Seattle CBD			peak	
277*/Juanita U-District			peak	
930 /Totem Lake Redmond		off pk, night		
935 /Totem Lake Kenmore	peak			

*Peak only routes

As can be seen from the Table 1, Kirkland's peak hour only routes fall in the least productive 25% of routes. Also, there are more periods where routes are over-served than underserved according to the Guidelines.

In order to illustrate how the proposed service guidelines could be used to prioritize service cuts Metro prepared a sample network with a 600,000 annual service hour reduction. This cut is about 17% of Metro's total system and is similar to the size of cut Metro will be facing over the next two years if additional revenue is not identified. In this particular hypothetical exercise, Kirkland routes were affected as follows:

Table 2 Example changes to service for Routes serving Kirkland based on a system-wide 600,000 annual service hour reduction

Route number/ between	Change to service	Reason
230/ Kirkland Bellevue	None	
234/ Downtown Kirkland Kenmore	None	
236 /Woodinville Downtown Kirkland	Reduce to 1 hour frequency, peak, off peak, night. Operate between Woodinville and Totem Lake	Overserved all day corridor/restructure
238 /UW Bothell Downtown Kirkland	Reduce to 1 hour frequency, off peak, night. Operate between Woodinville and Totem Lake	Overserved all day corridor/restructure
239/ Totem Lake Overlake	NEW ROUTE	RESTRUCTURE
245/ Downtown Kirkland Factoria	Reduce weekend to hourly service	Reduce services above low productivity threshold
248/ Downtown Kirkland Avondale	Reduce peak and off peak to hourly service	Reduce services above low productivity threshold
252*/ Kingsgate to Seattle CBD	Route deleted	Restructured, service added to Rte 311 which serves Seattle via Totem Lake.
255/ Totem Lake Seattle CBD	None	
256*/Overlake Seattle CBD via South Kirkland	None	
257*/Kingsgate Seattle CBD	Route deleted	Restructured, service added to Rte 311 which serves Seattle via Totem Lake.
260*/Juanita Seattle CBD	Route deleted	Low productivity
265*/Redmond Seattle CBD	Route deleted	Low productivity

Route number/ between	Change to service	Reason
277*/Juanita UDistrict	Route deleted	Low productivity
930 /Totem Lake Redmond	None	
935 /Totem Lake Kenmore	Peak, 1 hour frequency, off peak 2 hour frequency	Peak hour –overserved corridor, appropriately served

*Peak only routes

As described above (*Reducing service*) and as illustrated in Table 2, the Service Guidelines first reduce under-producing routes and, in particular, peak hour only routes. Many of Kirkland's peak hour routes to the Seattle CBD have low productivity and were therefore shown as a deletion. As part of a restructure, additional service would be added to Metro route 311 on I-405 which serves the NE 128th Street stop and downtown Seattle. The difference is that the "tails" of the routes which currently go into Kirkland neighborhoods would be lost. Similarly, restructures of routes 236 and 238 would make them shorter and would require riders to transfer between downtown Kirkland and some other destinations. This is consistent with the restructuring guidelines discussed above. The frequency of other routes would be cut during part or most of the day. On the other hand, the relatively productive routes 230, 245, and 255 had little or no change in service.

Adding Service.
In order to understand the implications of the service growth methods in the Service Guidelines, Metro prepared a growth scenario of 100,000 hours. The only Kirkland route to receive additional service was Route 255 which received additional hours to bring the service frequency to every 30 minutes in the evening and night until midnight. This topic is discussed further in the Issues for considerations section of the memo.

Ordinance

Identified below are some key sections of the proposed ordinance (pages 1-13 Attachment 1) that adopts both the Strategic Plan and the Service Guidelines. In the language of the ordinance, most of the following items require the County Executive to transmit material to the County Council. Practically speaking, King County Metro Transit is responsible for preparing or having prepared the reports for approval by the Executive. Reports will then be reviewed by the Regional Transit Committee for a recommendation to the County Council.

1. Section 5, page 7. Annually, a report would be prepared using the Service Guidelines to evaluate appropriate service levels and determine over-served and under-served corridors, along with other technical information.
2. Section 6, page 8. Every two years, King County will review the Strategic Plan for changes that might be necessary due to factors such as unanticipated issues associated with implementing the Plan and Service Guidelines.
3. Section 7, page 9. By mid 2012, a report will be completed on alternative service delivery. The purpose of this report is to investigate methods for service delivery that could be more

effective than the current methods. This is of interest to Kirkland because alternative service may be a helpful tool to better serve some of the areas that are not efficiently served by traditional bus. Also in some of the more rural parts of King County, fixed bus routes or even traditional Dial-a-Ride service can be inefficient means of providing transit. In addition to making the system more efficient, providing service in an innovative manner to these areas could free up traditional service hours for deployment where traditional service is effective.

4. Section 8, page 9. This section addresses priorities for adding service. The scenario that added 100 hours (see above) resulted in only about 5% of the hours going to routes in the East subarea. Therefore, the existing priorities for adding service need to be revised. By April 30, 2013, changes to the Service Guidelines must be proposed which address the way in which service additions are prioritized. These changes are to be developed using a collaborative process that includes participation of local jurisdictions. One of the changes will include additional service priority assigned to Vision 2020 Centers (such as Totem Lake) and to other areas where transit supportive changes have been planned and implemented.

Issues for consideration

Evaluating Service

The Kirkland Transportation Commission looked at the technical methods when the methods were first prepared and felt generally comfortable with them. There is general agreement on the Regional Transportation Committee, including the Suburban Cities representatives that the guidelines are a reasonable starting point. Frequent reviews of the Service Guidelines are required and will allow corrections as issues arise. Changes could be made to the Guidelines that would make routes serving Kirkland score better. Such changes would also improve the rank of routes outside Kirkland and would therefore not necessarily benefit Kirkland.

Transit activity centers

One factor used to evaluate geographic value of routes is the route's connection to centers. Along with Regional Growth Centers like Totem Lake, a set of "Transit Activity Centers" has been developed. More details on the definition of transit activity centers is shown on page 69 of the Attachment 1. In Kirkland, transit activity centers include: Juanita (98th Ave NE/NE 116th St), Kirkland Transit Center, South Kirkland Park and Ride and Lake Washington Technical College. Criteria for adding transit activity centers is described on page 70 of Attachment 1. A route does not receive additional points for connecting more than one transit activity center. All of Kirkland's all day routes have already received the maximum available points for connecting transit activity centers. **Some discussion by the Council has taken place regarding identifying Rose Hill as an activity center – existing corridors serving Rose Hill received maximum points under the scoring system and would not rate higher with that identification.**

Reducing service

The 600,000 annual service hour reduction analyzed above is substantial and will affect all the communities Metro serves including Kirkland. For example, 87 routes would be deleted system-wide, five of them in Kirkland. System-wide 22% of the reductions would be in the East subarea, 23% in the South subarea, and 55% in the West subarea. These are approximately equal to the current distribution of total service hours.

Adding service
As mentioned above, while technically justifiable, the proposed methodology does not result in an equitable distribution of new service to the East subarea. Section 8 of the ordinance requires a thorough process to review and revise the methodology proposed in the Service Guidelines.

Regional Transit Committee Action on June 15
The Regional Transit Committee (RTC) will be reviewing and possibly acting on the ordinance on June 15, 2011. Staff will report any specific actions or changes to the ordinance and policies as a result of the RTC meeting at the June 21st Kirkland City Council meeting.

Staff will be available at the June 21st Council meeting if there are questions.

06/15/11

S2

[jr]

Sponsor: Councilmember Reagan Dunn

Proposed No.: 2011-0114

STRIKING AMENDMENT TO PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2011-0114, VERSION 1

On page 1, beginning on line 4, strike everything through page 6, line 105, and insert:

"BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. **Findings**:

A. A Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation ("Comprehensive Plan") was adopted by Resolution 6641 on October 21, 1993, by the council of the former municipality of metropolitan Seattle and ratified by the King County council by adoption of Ordinance 11032, Section 28.

B. On December 11, 1995, the council passed Ordinance 12060, amending the Comprehensive Plan and adopting a Six-Year Transit Development Plan, which guided implementation of service changes and improvements in a way consistent with the new Comprehensive Plan.

C. Following periodic updates to the Comprehensive Plan and The Six-Year Transit Development Plan, the council adopted Ordinance 15963 in November 2007, replacing the Six-Year Transit Development Plan with a ten-year strategic plan. That strategic plan included guidance about the priorities for improvements to the public

transportation system consistent with the Transit Now program as established via Ordinance 15962.

D. Beginning in 2008 and 2009, the global recession caused a significant downturn in sales tax revenues funding the current and future years of the Metro transit system. As a result of these changing conditions, the council engaged in a multi-year strategy to refocus, make more efficient and save as much transit service as possible. This strategy involved: a comprehensive audit of the transit division; reductions in staffing and services that support the delivery of transit service; deferral of non-Rapid Ride and Partnership Transit Now services; multiple fare increases; changing the way transit service is planned and delivered; and appointment of a broad stakeholder group as a regional transit task force with a charge to make recommendations regarding the policy framework for the Metro transit system.

E. Following seven months of intensive deliberations, the regional transit task force delivered its final recommendation report with the unanimous support of task force members. The recommendations in the task force report focused on the following areas:

1. Transparency and clarity: that the transit division provide more transparency and clarity to the public on the agency's decision-making process and develop a set of performance measures and clear and transparent guidelines to be used in service allocation decisions;

2. Cost control: that the transit division continue to control costs and build toward a more sustainable financial structure over time; and

3. Productivity, social equity and geographic value: that in making decisions about service reduction and service growth, the transit division emphasizes productivity, ensure social equity and provide geographic value;

F. In July 2010, the council adopted the first-ever countywide, King County Strategic Plan 2010-2014, establishing prioritized goals, objectives and strategies for the programs and services of King County government. This countywide plan was also intended to provide a framework for all agency-level strategic planning, including planning for the transit division.

G. The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021, including Metro Transit Service Guidelines, adopted by this ordinance, builds on the King County Strategic Plan 2010-2014 and the policy framework and recommendations of the regional transit task force and is also guided by the challenges King County Metro faces: regional growth; the evolving transportation system; climate change; diverse customer needs; and a structural funding deficit.

H. The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 modifies the Transit Now program service implementation phasing plan and revises the description of the Transit Now program that will occur within the 2011-2021 time frame. The King County council, as authorized by K.C.C. 4.29.020 and if passed by a supermajority of at least six affirmative votes of the council, may allow the proceeds from the Transit Now tax to fund service consistent with King County Code and King County Metro transit policies and goals.

I. The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 replaces the Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation, the Strategic Plan for Public

Transportation 2007-2016 and the separately adopted Transit Program Financial Policies, which are therefore repealed by this ordinance together with the ordinances approving and amending them.

J. The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 and Metro Transit Service Guidelines are meant to be living documents setting the policy for and guiding the implementation of the Metro transit service network while responding to the growth throughout the county, while also incorporating regular review of policies by the regional transit committee.

SECTION 2. The following are each hereby repealed:

A. Ordinance 12060, Section 1;

B. Ordinance 12060, Section 2;

C. Ordinance 12060, Section 3;

D. Ordinance 12060, Section 4;

E. Ordinance 12060, Section 5;

F. Exhibit A to Ordinance 12060, Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 1996 - 2001;

G. Exhibit B to Ordinance 12060, Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 1996 – 2001 Appendices;

H. Exhibit C to Ordinance 12060, Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 1996 – 2001 Public Involvement Report;

I. Exhibit D to Ordinance 12060, Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 1996 – 2001 Addendum to the Regional Transit System Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement;

J. Ordinance 14464, Section 1;

K. Ordinance 14464, Section 2;

L. Ordinance 14464, Section 3;

M. Ordinance 14464, Section 4;

N. Ordinance 14464, Section 5;

O. Ordinance 14464, Section 6;

P. Attachment A to Ordinance 14464, Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 2002 to 2007;

Q. Attachment B to Ordinance 14664, Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 2002 to 2007: Appendices RTC Recommended September 2002;

R. Attachment C to Ordinance 14464, Public Involvement Report Summary Proposed Initiatives for the Six-Year Transit Development Plan King County Metro Transit Fall 2001;

S. Attachment D to Ordinance 14464, Addendum to the Regional Transit System Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement, Six-Year Transit Development Plan for 2002-2007;

T. Ordinance 15047, Section 1;

U. Ordinance 15047, Section 2;

V. Attachment A to Ordinance 15047, Exhibit A – 2002 Six-Year Transit Development Plan Update;

W. Attachment B to Ordinance 15047, Exhibit B – 2002 Six-Year Transit Development Plan Update;

X. Attachment C to Ordinance 15047, Exhibit C – 2002 Six-Year Transit Development Plan Update;

Y. Attachment D to Ordinance 15047, Exhibit D – 2002 Six-Year Transit Development Plan Update;

Z. Ordinance 15962, Section 1;

AA. Ordinance 15962, Section 2;

BB. Attachment A to Ordinance 15962, Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation, dated November 5, 2007;

CC. Ordinance 15963, Section 1;

DD. Ordinance 15963, Section 2;

EE. Attachment A to Ordinance 15963, Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016, November, 2007;

FF. Ordinance 16708, Section 1;

GG. Ordinance 16708, Section 2;

HH. Ordinance 16708, Section 3;

II. Attachment A to Ordinance 16708, Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016, dated November 5, 2009; and

JJ. Attachment B to Ordinance 16708, 2010/2011 Transit Program Financial Policies, dated October 30, 2009.

SECTION 3. The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation for 2011-2021, which is Attachment A to this ordinance, is hereby adopted, superseding the Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation and the 2007-2016 Strategic Plan for Transportation.

SECTION 4. The Metro Transit Service Guidelines, which are Attachment B to this ordinance, are hereby adopted.

SECTION 5. Beginning with a baseline report in 2012 and then annually thereafter through the duration of the plan, the executive is directed to transmit to the council, for acceptance by motion, an annual service guidelines report of the Metro Transit System Network, complementary to the biennial report on meeting the goals, objectives and strategies identified in chapter three of the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, 2011-2021. This service guidelines report is shaped by the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, 2011-2021 and the Metro Transit Service Guidelines.

A. For the period of the report, the service guidelines report shall include:

1. The corridors analyzed to determine the Metro All-Day and Peak Network with a summary of resulting scores and assigned service levels as determined by the Metro Transit Service Guidelines;

2. The results of the analysis, including a list of over-served and under-served transit corridors and the estimated number of services hours, as either an increase or decrease, necessary to meet each underserved corridor's needs;

3. The performance of transit services by route and any changes in the Metro Transit Service Guidelines thresholds since the previous reporting period, using the performance measures identified in Chapter III of the Strategic Plan and in the guidelines;

4. A list of transit service changes made to routes and corridors of the network since the last reporting period;

5. Network and rider connectivity associated with transit services delivered by other providers; and

6. A list of potential changes, if any, to the strategic plan and guidelines to better meet their policy intent.

B. The report and motion shall be transmitted by March 31 of each year for consideration by the regional transit committee.

SECTION 6. By April 30, 2012, 2013 and 2015, and as necessary thereafter for the purpose of validating policy intent of the strategic plan, the executive shall transmit to the council an ordinance to update the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, 2011-2021 and the Metro Transit Service Guidelines. At a minimum, the legislation and update should include:

A. Changes necessary to account for separately adopted transit policy documents including updating the plan and guidelines, and repealing or rescinding, as necessary, appropriately accounted for policies;

B. Any proposed changes to address unanticipated issues associated with implementing the plan and guidelines, including the factors that implement the concepts of productivity including land use, social equity and geographic value;

C. Changes that may be necessary to achieve the five-year implementation plan required in Section 7 of this ordinance;

D. Changes necessary to address the results of the collaborative process required in Section 8 of this ordinance; and

E. Additional substantive changes that may also be proposed following regional transit committee discussion.

SECTION 7. By June 15, 2012, the executive shall transmit to the council, for acceptance by motion, a five-year implementation plan for alternatives to traditional transit service delivery consistent with the recommendations from the 2010 regional transit task force and guidance from the Metro Transit Service Guidelines. This plan should, at a minimum, include:

A. A review of alternative service delivery best practices in the transit industry;

B. Consideration of local service needs;

C. Stakeholder involvement;

D. Costs and benefits of all evaluated alternative service delivery options;

E. A summary of constraints to implementation and methods to reduce barriers for change;

F. Strategies to build ridership, such as through marketing, where resources are available to do so;

G. Recommendations for alternative service delivery; and

H. A timeline for implementation actions.

SECTION 8. By April 30, 2013, and as part of the 2013 transmittal required in Section 6 of this ordinance, the executive shall transmit to the council an ordinance to update the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, 2011-2021 and the Metro Transit Service Guidelines recognizing that the strategic plan and guidelines are based upon Metro's current network, which will require future changes to meet the 2010 regional transit task force recommendations. Additionally, by October 31, 2012 the executive shall transmit a preliminary results report produced through the collaborative process identified in Section 8.A. of this ordinance to the regional transit committee. At a

minimum, the legislation and update should include refinements to the guidelines' methodology to:

A. Incorporate input from local jurisdictions as generated through a collaborative process defined by the executive;

B. Address the factors, methodology and prioritization of service additions in existing and new corridors consistent with Strategy 6.1.1;

C. More closely align factors used to serve and connect centers in the development of the All Day and Peak Network and resulting service level designations, including consideration of existing public transit services, with jurisdictions' growth decisions, such as zoning, and transit-supportive design requirements, and actions, associated with but not limited to permitting, transit operating enhancements, parking controls and pedestrian facilities; and

D. Create a category of additional service priority, complementary to existing priorities for adding service contained within the Metro Transit Service Guidelines, so that priorities include service enhancements to and from, between and within Vision 2040 Regionally Designated Centers, and other centers where plans call for transit-supportive densities and jurisdictions have invested in capital facilities, made operational changes that improve the transit operating environment and access to transit and implemented programs that incentivize transit use.

SECTION 9. When submitting a proposal for reduction of total Metro transit system service hours greater than ten percent of the current service hours, the executive should include a proposed community outreach and awareness program to be implemented in support of developing and implementing the service hour reductions.

The program should be appropriate to the size and scale of the transit service reductions and incorporate a community feedback process. In light of the scope and schedule of the necessary outreach, the program should include consideration of the use of external professional resources to augment county staffing."

Delete Attachment A, King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021, and replace with Attachment A, King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 dated June 15, 2011

Delete Attachment B, King County Metro Service Guidelines, and replace with Attachment B, King County Metro Transit Service Guidelines dated June 15, 2011

EFFECT: Section 2 repeals the Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation, the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2007-2016 and the separately adopted Transit Program Financial Policies, and repeals the ordinances approving them.

Section 3and 4 adopts the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 and King County Metro Service Guidelines.

Section 5 requires annual reporting to the Regional Transit Committee to more closely align policies within the Strategic Plan with the results achieved through implementation of the Guidelines through regular review Regional Transit Committee.

Section 6 requires the Strategic Plan to come back to Regional Transit Committee in 2012, 2013 and 2015. The Strategic Plan and Guidelines are intended to be living documents with regular review and substantive deliberation as needed. As a result, the Regional Transit Committee and Metro plan to identify substantive issues, as

Regional Transit Committee Work Plan items, for deliberation prior to their being transmitted as updates to the Strategic Plan or Guidelines.

Section 7 requires that Metro develop an implementation plan for alternatives to traditional bus service delivery. This plan moves from conceptual policy language to a specific five-year plan of the costs and how Metro will implement a menu of alternatives to traditional bus services.

Section 8 requires an update to the Strategic Plan to be transmitted to the Regional Transit Committee in 2013 to better address adding service, especially in areas where transit supportive actions have been taken. It is intended to provide for a substantive and collaborative process with jurisdictions throughout the County with a goal of creating a new category of service priority (when adding service) that is focused on transit-supportive areas where growth is occurring and the provision of service and feeder service associated with those areas. Further, as part of the collaborative process, this section requires a review of the factors that result in the All Day and Peak Network, including consideration of all publicly provided transit services.

Section 9 requires an outreach plan to be transmitted if the Executive proposes greater than a ten percent reduction in the total system. This addition confirms the importance of community input into even the most significant changes to the Metro Transit System.

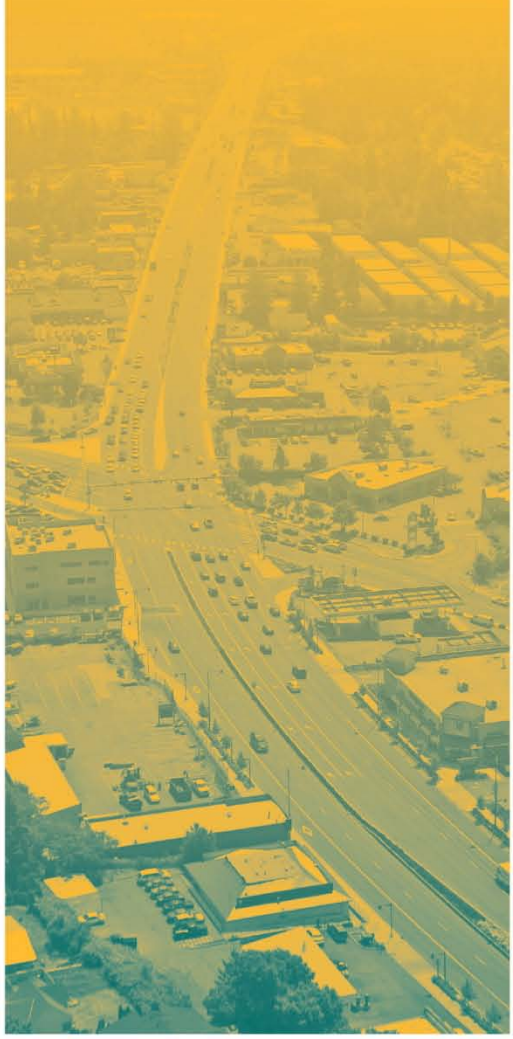
Lines 189-193 delete the transmitted Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 and the Metro Transit Service Guidelines, and replace them with the revised versions incorporating changes recommended by the Regional Transit Committee.

Within the attached Strategic Plan, edits to Strategy 6.1.1 are intended to link this strategy with the Regional Transit Task Force recommendation of establishing guidelines that are focused on Productivity while being balanced with Social Equity and Geographic Value. Additionally, the edits confirm that the Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines are policy documents that require Regional Transit Committee review prior to adoption of edits to either document.

S2 corrects minor typographical and grammatical errors identified in draft striking amendment S1 and its attachments, and through the Effects statement, reflects all of the changes to the original proposed legislation.

King County
METRO
We'll Get You There

King County Metro
Strategic Plan for Public Transportation
2011-2021



Letter from the General Manager

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present the *King County Metro Transit Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021*. This is the latest in a series of visionary plans Metro has used to imagine the future we want for public transportation, and then achieve it.

Metro's last major strategic planning effort resulted in the *2002-2007 Metro Six-Year Development Plan*, which had updates in 2004, 2007, and 2009. At the time this earlier plan was written, communities and employment centers were growing around the county, and traffic congestion had become one of the region's foremost problems. The 2002 plan set the stage for Metro to enhance mobility by serving more people throughout the King County and by connecting to more destinations.

The 2002 plan led to a number of successful initiatives. Metro extended service to new locations and restructured several local transit networks to boost productivity and better match service with the destinations people wanted to reach. We helped launch a regional fare payment system, ORCA, making it easier for people to travel by bus, train, light rail and ferries throughout the region. We worked to procure hybrid articulated buses so we could carry more passengers while reducing emissions. We attracted new riders by making buses and bus stops more accessible, developing park-and-ride facilities, and expanding employee commute programs. And we took Metro service to a higher level by launching RapidRide, a new generation of service designed to keep people moving throughout the day on heavily used corridors. Metro accomplished all this and more despite two financial downturns that constrained our ability to grow.

People responded positively to the changes we made. Metro set ridership records in three consecutive years, culminating with 118 million rides in 2008 and outpacing growth in jobs, population, and vehicle miles traveled in King County. As a result of our successes, public transportation has become a more robust and better-integrated part of the Puget Sound region's transportation system.

Now that we have reached this stage, what challenges does our new strategic plan address? Many of the old ones, like congestion, climate change, and regional growth, are still with us. The region's *Transportation 2040* action plan calls for an ambitious expansion of public transportation to accommodate the large population and job increases expected in King County. And we face the urgent need to craft a new funding structure for public transportation. Metro's current revenue sources cannot supply the funds we need to meet our region's expectations. I am proud of Metro's record of delivering promised services even when funding has fallen far short of expectations over the past decade, but we have exhausted many one-time solutions and cost-cutting measures that we have used to get by. A new funding structure is imperative if we are to fully realize our vision for public transportation.

As we crafted a plan to take on these and other challenges, two recent planning processes gave us invaluable guidance. The *King County Strategic Plan 2011-2014* was developed under the leadership of County Executive Dow Constantine in collaboration with King County Council members and other elected officials and input from thousands of residents and County employees. The County plan's eight goals are the framework for Metro's plan.

Second, the Regional Transit Task Force was formed in 2010 to consider a new policy framework for Metro as we face both growing demand for transit services and a worsening financial outlook. The task force members represented many areas of the county and points of view, but they came together on consensus proposals for Metro. While these recommendations are still under consideration, the themes that emerged in this group's discussions—emphasizing productivity, ensuring that bus services are available for those most dependent on transit, and providing value to the diverse cities and communities throughout the county—influenced our plan in many ways.

Thanks to all the groundbreaking work and forward-looking thinking that has contributed to this strategic plan, I am confident that Metro can continue our tradition of prioritizing the customer and creating the future envisioned for public transportation in King County. We will be reporting on our performance in publications and on our website; I invite you to follow our progress.

Sincerely,

Kevin Desmond, General Manager
King County Metro Transit

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Executive Summary

Public transportation in the Puget Sound region: today and tomorrow

Public transportation is vitally important to the Puget Sound region. It provides connections to jobs, schools, and other destinations, and enables those with limited mobility options to travel. Public transportation enhances regional economic vitality by freeing up roadway capacity and improving the mobility of people, goods, and services. It saves the region time and money. It helps accommodate regional growth by making better use of the region's existing infrastructure and it benefits the environment. Public transportation improves the quality of life for residents and visitors to the Puget Sound region.

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

This is Metro's vision:

Metro provides safe, efficient and reliable public transportation that people find easy to use. The agency offers a cost-effective mix of products and services, tailored to specific market needs. Its fixed-route bus system meets most public transportation needs, particularly in areas of concentrated economic activity or urban development and along the corridors that link them. Metro also offers alternative public transportation options for people who cannot use the fixed-route system. No matter what community they live in or whether they have special needs because of age, disability or income, 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 and use 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 has kept 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 its energy consumption.

The public is engaged with Metro—informed about its 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 its 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.

A pathway to the vision

To guide Metro towards its vision, this plan includes goals, objectives and strategies that build on the work of two major regional planning processes:

King County's strategic plan: In 2010, King County adopted its first countywide strategic plan, *King County Strategic Plan 2010–2014: Working Together for One King County*. The plan is a key tool in Executive Dow Constantine's work to reform county government by focusing on customer service, partnerships, and ways to bring down the cost of government. Metro's strategic plan will guide work on portions of the countywide strategic plan that involve public transportation.

Regional Transit Task Force: Metro used input from the Regional Transit Task Force in the creation of this plan. The task force was a groundbreaking countywide effort to recommend a new policy framework for transit in King County that took place in 2010. Metro drew on the task force's recommendations as a way to ensure that diverse points of view are well-represented in the strategic plan.

Navigating the road ahead

Metro faces complex—and often competing—challenges. The Puget Sound region is growing and evolving. Changes in land use and the region's population are having an impact on where public transportation should be located, how service is provided, and who uses that service. Major projects that change the footprint of the transportation system have an impact on public transportation and require regional collaboration during planning and construction and upon completion. Public transportation is called upon to help mitigate climate change and meet diverse customer needs. All the while, Metro's funding structure limits its ability to respond to these challenges.

Metro's strategic plan is intended to address these challenges and chart a path to the future. Metro has formulated eight goals with 17 associated objectives. Each objective has an associated outcome that is related to an aspect of Metro's vision. Metro also has established 36 strategies that are intended to move Metro closer to its objectives, and ultimately to its vision. table on pages iv-vii summarizes these elements of the plan.

Ensuring success

Metro will monitor its performance and measure its success in achieving the plan's strategies, objectives, goals, and vision. Metro will measure its objectives through outcomes and its strategies through associated measures. It will compare the performance of its system with that of peer transit agencies. Using this monitoring system, Metro will update and adjust this plan periodically as conditions warrant to ensure that it is moving along the right path.

Table 1: Summary table of Metro strategic plan elements

Objective	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 • 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 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.	• Population with ¼-mile walk access to a transit stop or 2-mile drive to a park-and-ride • % low income population within ¼ mile walk access to transit • % minority population within ¼-mile walk access to transit • Accessible bus stops • Transit mode share by market • Student and reduced-fare permits and usage • Access applicants who undertake fixed-route travel training • Access boardings • Access registrants • Requested Access trips compared to those provided • Number of trips provided by the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and Community Access Transportation (CAT) programs • Title VI compliance • % population at 15 dwelling units per acre within ¼ mile walk access of frequent service

Objective	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.	Through investments and partnerships with regional organizations, local jurisdictions and the private sector, provide alternatives to driving alone that connect people to jobs, education and other destinations essential to King County's economic vitality. Partner with employers to make public transportation products and services more affordable and convenient for employees.	• Transit rides per capita • Effectiveness of partnerships • Park-and-ride utilization • Peak mode share at Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) sites • Employer-sponsored passes and usage • % population at 15 dwelling units per acre within 1/4 mile walk access of frequent service • All public transportation ridership in King County (rail, bus, Paratransit, Rideshare) • Centers ridership • Bike rack use
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 to create an integrated and efficient regional transportation system. Work with transit partners, WSDOT and others to manage park-and-ride capacity needs.	
Support compact, healthy communities. Outcome: More people regularly use public transportation products and services along corridors with compact development.	Encourage land uses, policies, and development that lead to communities 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*.	

Objective	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.	• Per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) • Transit mode share • Public transportation energy use per passenger mile • Average miles per gallon of the Metro bus fleet • Energy use at Metro facilities
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.	• Conformance with King County policy on communications accessibility and translation to other languages • Customer satisfaction • Customer complaints • On-time performance by time of day • Load factor • Utilization of Metro web tools • One Regional Card for All (ORCA) usage
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.	
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.	• Boardings per platform hour • Passenger miles per platform hour • Boardings per revenue hour • Passenger miles per revenue mile • Access boardings • Commuter van boardings • Cost per boarding • Cost per hour • Service hours operated • Asset condition assessment • Base capacity level of service • Fare revenues • Farebox recovery • Fare parity with other providers in the region
Control costs. Outcome: Metro 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.	

Objective	Strategies	Measures
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.	• Fully allocated costs • Operational and Cost Efficiency Indicators • Service hours and service hour change per route • Ridership and ridership change per route
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 their role in Metro's planning process • Customer satisfaction regarding Metro communications and reporting
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 • Training opportunities provided • Trainings completed • Employee performance
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 sections: **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 vision, goals, objectives and strategies; and **Plan Performance Monitoring**, which describes the process Metro will use to 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 2009, Metro provided more than 110 million passenger trips and carried passengers approximately 496 million miles on its fixed-route system. Metro also meets public transportation needs through an array of other products and services (see sidebar).

Public transportation improves the quality of life in the region by providing mobility to those who need or choose to utilize it. It connects commuters to jobs—more than 30 percent of work trips to downtown Seattle are made on transit. It connects students to schools and residents to recreation. It offers travel options to those who cannot drive, and provides assurance to drivers that other mobility options exist should they need them.

Public transportation reduces transportation costs for individual users and families. In 2009, the Seattle area saved approximately $323 million in fuel and time costs because of the existence of public transportation. This is more than twice the savings of Portland, San Diego, Houston and Dallas[1].

Metro products and services

Metro Transit provides more than 100 million annual fixed-route transit rides—traditional transit service that operates on specific pathways and at specific times—to residents and visitors of King County.

Metro is more than buses. It provides other programs and services that augment the fixed-route transit system, including the largest publicly owned vanpool program in the country, paratransit services, dial-a-ride transit, and other specialized products.

The combination of fixed-route transit service, Metro programs, and other Metro services are referred to as "public transportation" or "Metro's products and services" in the Strategic Plan. These terms encompass all of the things that Metro does.

Transit enhances the region's economic vitality by freeing up roadway capacity, improving the movement of people and goods. On an average weekday, Metro provides service for more than 113,000[2] people on major state routes. It offers commute options that reduce the need for regional investment in parking infrastructure and roadways. On weekdays in the afternoon, Metro moves more than 21,000[3] people on freeways and major state routes, roughly the equivalent of seven lanes of traffic[4]. And public transportation projects stimulate the economy by creating jobs.

Public transportation will support growth by accommodating the travel needs of a bigger share of the region's projected population, and is an integral part of the regional growth strategy laid out in the Puget Sound Regional Council's *Vision 2040* and *Transportation 2040*.

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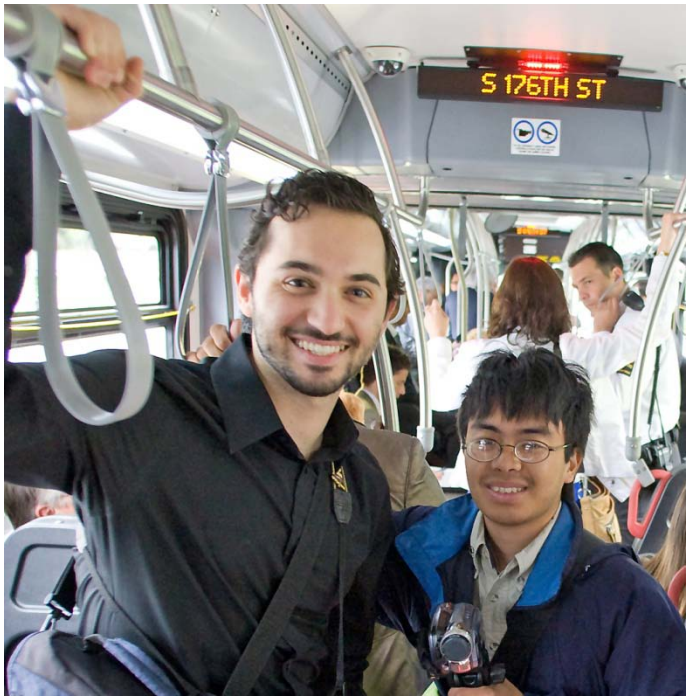
[1] Texas Transportation Institute, *Urban Mobility Report 2010* (Texas A&M University System: 2010), 30.
[2] Based on spring APC data for Metro service on major state routes, defined as I-405, I-5, I-90, SR-104, SR-164, SR-167, SR-169, SR-181, SR-202, SR-509, SR-513, SR-515, SR-516, SR-520, SR-522, SR-523, SR-526, SR-599, SR-900, SR-908, and SR-99.
[3] Based on spring APC data for Metro service for one hour during the PM peak period on I-405, I-5, I-90, SR-520, SR-522 and SR-99.
[4] Highway lane equivalent is calculated by taking the total transit riders on I-405, I-5, I-90, SR-520, SR-522 and SR-99 and dividing by average hourly person throughout on each highway, assuming that the average auto occupancy is 1.1.

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 is committed to improving the quality of public transportation and increasing ridership and use of its products and services, thereby enhancing the entire regional transportation system.

Metro's mandate

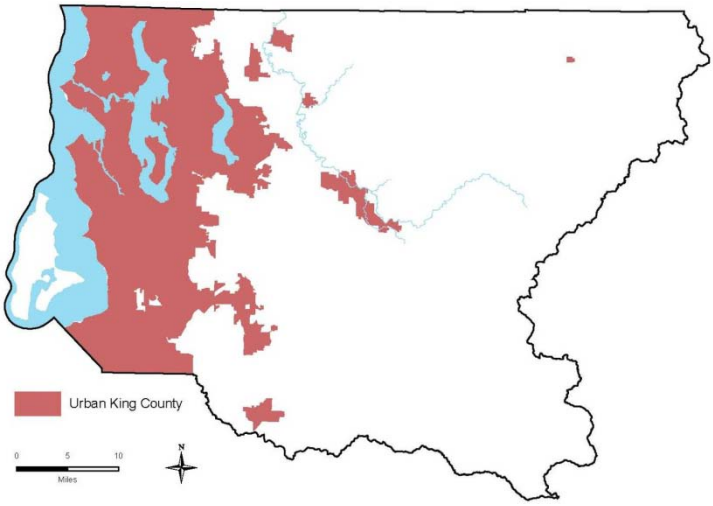


The King County Department of Transportation's Metro Transit Division is directed to perform the "metropolitan public transportation function" as authorized in the Revised Code of Washington 35.58, in alignment with other applicable codes and the financial policies adopted by the Metropolitan King County Council. Metro is required to plan and operate transit services consistent with county, regional, state and federal planning policies.

Countywide planning and policies: King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) are developed by a group of elected officials from King County and the cities and jurisdictions within the county. These policies are consistent with state law, state agency guidance, decisions of the Growth Management Policy Council (GMPC) 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* is consistent with the *Countywide Planning Policies*, the *King County Comprehensive Plan*, the *King County Strategic Plan*, and the *King County Energy Plan*.

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 establishes federal funding priorities for the region. Metro participates in the planning process and strives to meet the goals of the regional plans, *Vision 2040* and *Transportation 2040*.

Figure 1: Urban growth area, King County



Washington state planning and policies: In 1990, the Washington Legislature passed the Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA requires that the state's largest and fastest-growing counties conduct comprehensive land-use and transportation planning, to concentrate new growth in compact "urban growth areas," and protect natural resources and environmentally critical areas. King County's UGA 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 the County's compliance with the GMA by focusing public transportation services on urban growth areas.

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), 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 (ADA) 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.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Section 1.2

Strategic Planning

Why a strategic plan?

Strategic planning is a process by which an organization assesses how it is doing, figures out where it wants to go, and charts a path to get there. Strategic plans define important goals, set specific directions, and establish the policy framework for the future.

In 2010, King County adopted its first countywide strategic plan, *King County Strategic Plan 2010–2014: Working Together for One King County*. The plan is a key tool in Executive Constantine's work to reform county government by focusing on customer service, partnerships and ways to bring down the cost of government. Metro's strategic plan incorporates King County's guiding principles (see sidebar) and lays out steps for implementing portions of the countywide strategic plan that influence or are influenced by public transportation.

Metro has also used the input of the Regional Transit Task Force in the creation of this plan. The task force was a major regional effort to consider a new policy framework for transit in King County that took place in 2010; it is explained in more detail on pages 12-13. Metro used input from the task force's work a way to ensure that diverse points of view are well-represented in this strategic plan.

Metro has a particular need to create a strategic plan at this time. Metro's structural financing problems affect Metro's ability to deliver existing service and address increasing demand for public transportation into the future.

This strategic plan is a way for Metro to define its role in the delivery of King County's strategic plan, follow through on the recommendations of the Regional Transit Task Force, and navigate the significant challenges it faces, while setting a sustainable course for the future.

How will this plan be used?

Metro's strategic plan is intended for a variety of audiences. It is meant to do the following:

- Communicate Metro's vision and its intended direction and emphasis over the next 10 years.
- Describe the policy framework in which King County Metro's operational and budget decisions are made.
- Signify Metro's commitment to customer satisfaction and quality service.
- Serve as a baseline to show progress and allow the public to hold Metro accountable.
- Align Metro's employees, services and programs with King

Guiding principles from King County's Strategic Plan

The following are King County's guiding principles about the roles and responsibilities of county government:

Collaborative – We work together effectively within the organization and in collaboration with other governments, private entities and community partners.

Service-oriented – We listen and respond to our customers in a culturally responsive way and prioritize their satisfaction as we do our work.

Results-focused – We establish community driven goals, measure our performance, and report to the public on our success in meeting those goals.

Accountable – We are responsive and transparent to the public in our roles, functions and actions as individuals and as a government.

Innovative – We are creative, learn from experience and results, and seek out new and efficient ways to solve problems and serve the public.

Professional – We uphold the high standards, skills, competence, and integrity of our professions in doing the work of King County government.

Fair and Just – We serve all residents of King County by promoting fairness and opportunity and eliminating inequities.

County's goals

- Provide a structure to ensure oversight and management of Metro's programs and services.

What will this plan achieve?

This plan lays out a vision and mission for public transportation services in King County and describes the strategies that will move Metro towards that vision. It also defines desired outcomes and how progress will be measured.

Some elements of this plan—the mission, vision, goals and objectives—are expected to be realized over a long-term time frame. The other element of the plan—the strategies—are expected to be realized in a shorter time frame. This 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 will limit Metro's ability to implement every strategy in this 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.

Section 1.3

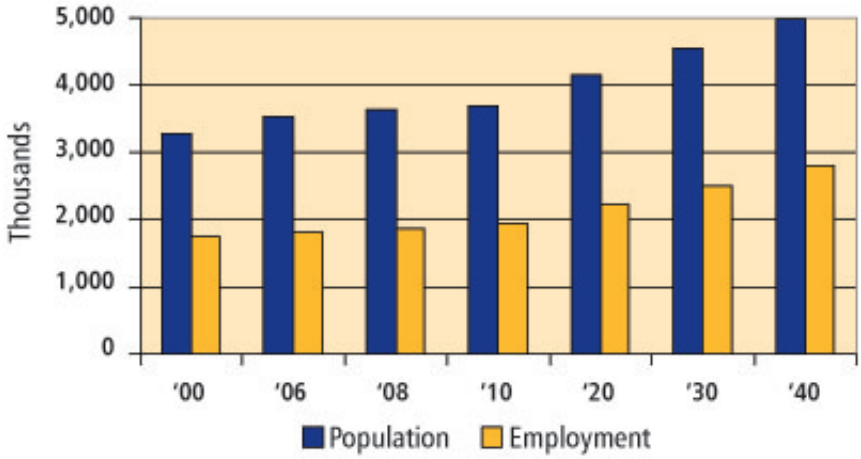
Challenges

Metro based this strategic plan in part on an assessment of its current environment and the challenges it faces both within and outside the organization; these are described below. The goals, objectives and strategies articulated 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 14th most populous county in the nation. It has a variety of geographic characteristics and diverse communities; land uses, densities and population vary greatly.

Figure 2: Puget Sound region projected population and employment growth



In the densest parts of the county, where most people live and work, there is little room to expand existing transportation infrastructure, making the possibility of building new highways, roads, and other infrastructure both costly and technically challenging. Because of this, the regional growth plans call for more intensive use of existing infrastructure, increasing the number of people using transit services and the proportion of overall regional trips made on transit.

Regional population and economic growth: In the past 10 years, King County's population has grown by 11 percent. Cities throughout the county have seen population growth and have annexed large areas that previously were unincorporated. Most cities in the County have increased in population since 2000. Demand for public transportation has increased along with population growth.

More growth is expected throughout the region. The Puget Sound Regional Council estimates there will be an additional 1.5 million people in the region by 2040—a 42 percent increase. Growth in the number of jobs is also expected. An estimated 1.2 million new jobs will come to the region by 2040—a 57 percent increase since 2000. More people and jobs (shown in Figure 2) mean that Metro will have an opportunity to serve more riders and major employment centers.

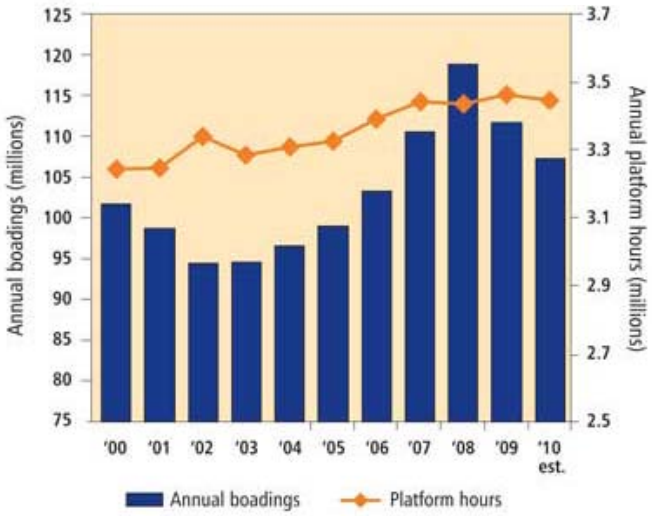
This growth will be focused in King County's centers (see sidebar). The centers referred to in Metro's strategic plan are shown in Figure 4.

Public transportation ridership tends to fluctuate with changes in fuel prices, population and employment levels, and other changes. As shown in Figure 3, Metro's ridership grew each year between 2002 and 2008, culminating in 2008 with its highest annual ridership of more than 118 million boardings. At that time, Metro's ridership growth per service hour was outpacing that of the 10 largest transit agencies in the nation. Ridership has decreased since then, in part because of high unemployment. As the economy recovers and employment levels return to normal, Metro's ridership is expected to increase again.

Ridership changes: Changing demographics, such as income, age, and ethnicity, as well as access to transit and household density, also have an impact on King County's transit system. For example, King County's population is aging; people 65 and older now account for 10 percent of the people who live here. An aging population may rely more on public transportation for its travel needs than a younger population would.

King County is also becoming more diverse in its ethnic, cultural and language makeup, and that diversity is increasingly spreading to more areas of King County. Metro's public transportation services will be called upon to address gaps in mobility by serving people who have limited transportation options, including seniors, youth, students, people with disabilities, people of color, those with limited English proficiency and economically disadvantaged communities.

Figure 3: Metro Ridership 2000-2010



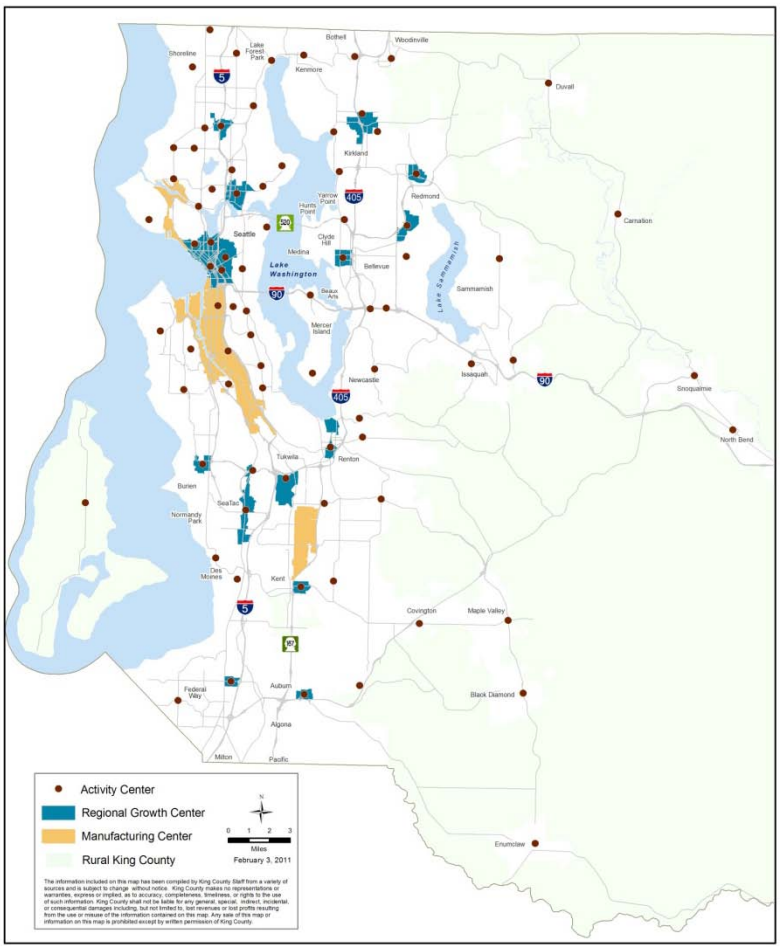
Centers

Centers are the hallmark of PSRC's *Vision 2040* and its regional growth strategy. Designated regional growth centers have been identified for housing and employment growth as well as for regional funding. Regional manufacturing/industrial centers are locations for increased employment.

In addition to PSRC's designated centers, Metro has identified "transit activity centers." Transit Activity centers are areas of King County that are important for Metro to serve and that are typically associated with higher levels of transit use. Transit Activity centers are further explained in Metro's Service Guidelines.

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

Figure 4: Regional Growth, Manufacturing/Industrial and Transit Activity Centers



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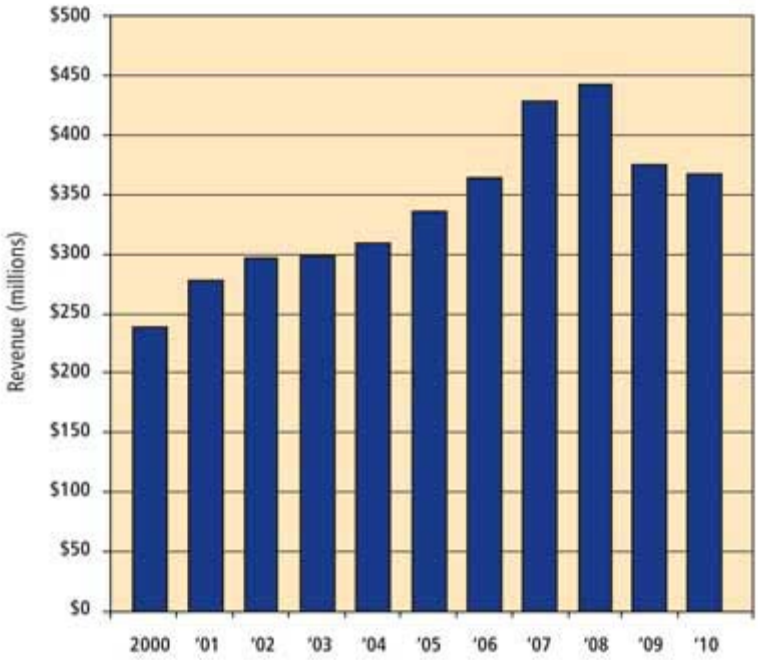
Funding shortfall

Increased ridership: In 2006, voters approved a ballot measure known as Transit Now to increase public transportation services in King County. This measure included funding for five RapidRide lines, additional service for high-ridership routes and rapidly developing areas, service partnerships with cities and businesses, and expanded Access and ridesharing services. Between 2007 and 2009, Metro was on schedule for implementing these improvements.

Figure 5: Annual sales tax revenues 2000-2010



Transit Now investments in public transportation were timely. In 2007 and 2008, Metro experienced unprecedented growth in ridership, largely because people changed their travel habits in response to higher gas prices. At that time, Metro was growing, with ridership increasing more than seven percent each year. Buses were full—people accustomed to getting a seat on the bus found themselves standing, and people used to standing on the bus found themselves passed by. Metro simply could not keep up with the increasing demand for service.

Financial Challenges: Even though the economy was booming and ridership was setting all-time records, Metro struggled financially. The same factors that boosted public transportation ridership also increased Metro's operating costs. High fuel costs, together with increasing wages and benefits, impacted Metro's ability to respond to increasing demands for public transportation.

Revenue from sales tax (shown in Figure 5), which makes up nearly 60 percent of Metro's operating funds, is vulnerable to the fluctuations in the economy. Metro experienced a sharp revenue drop of more than $130 million for the 2008-2009 biennium, which further exacerbated the challenges Metro was facing with higher costs and increased ridership. Metro was able to delay reductions in transit service by increasing fares, reducing operating expenses and scaling back capital projects. These efforts enabled Metro to maintain service levels and sustain modest service growth.

2009 Performance Audit of Transit

In 2009, the King County Auditor's Office released a report with 34 recommendations for ways that Metro could be more efficient and save money. Metro is actively implementing these recommendations, finding efficiencies in the way it schedules buses and operators, performs maintenance, monitors performance, provides Paratransit services, and many other aspects of public transportation. In 2010, over $10 million in ongoing costs have been reduced as a result.

Sales tax revenues continued to fall in the wake of the recession, creating an even larger gap in the 2010-2011 biennium budget. Metro avoided large reductions in transit service by deferring expansion of bus service—including proposed Transit Now investments, making non-service related cuts, increasing transit funding through a King County property tax, increasing fares, using fleet replacement reserves, and implementing findings of a transit performance audit (see sidebar). These actions, along with some temporary, one-time use of reserves and capital

fund reductions, were collectively known as the nine-point plan and allowed Metro to balance its budget for the 2010/2011 biennium.

Although the economy appeared to be recovering in early 2011, sales tax revenues are not expected to be greater than what was collected in 2008 until 2014. Recent forecasts predict that sales tax revenues will continue to be well below previous projections. Based on the County's updated revenue forecast through 2015, Metro may have to make significant transit service reductions as soon as 2012 to balance its budget.

Structural deficit: From 2009 to 2015, Metro's cumulative loss from lower-than-expected sales tax revenues is projected to be more than $1 billion. Despite all of the budget actions Metro has taken, it would have to fill a multi-year gap of nearly $315 million from 2012-2015 just to maintain current service levels and complete service expansions promised to voters in the 2006 Transit Now initiative.

Without additional resources, Metro is facing potential ongoing cuts of approximately 600,000 annual service hours—about 20 percent of the current system. By 2015, countywide bus services would be dramatically reduced, resulting in a system that is 20 percent smaller than in 2009.

These potential service reductions would have a dramatic impact on riders and public transportation use in King County. Difficult decisions would have to be made about where and when services would be reduced.

The environment

Transportation accounts for nearly half of all greenhouse-gas emissions in Washington. To reduce emissions, significant changes in how we live and travel are necessary. Metro can play a major role by providing transportation options that encourage public transportation ridership and help reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled. In order for the shift from single-occupant vehicles to public transportation to occur in a way that will have an impact on climate change, more areas of the county must adopt compact, dense land uses and encourage development that is more easily served by transit.

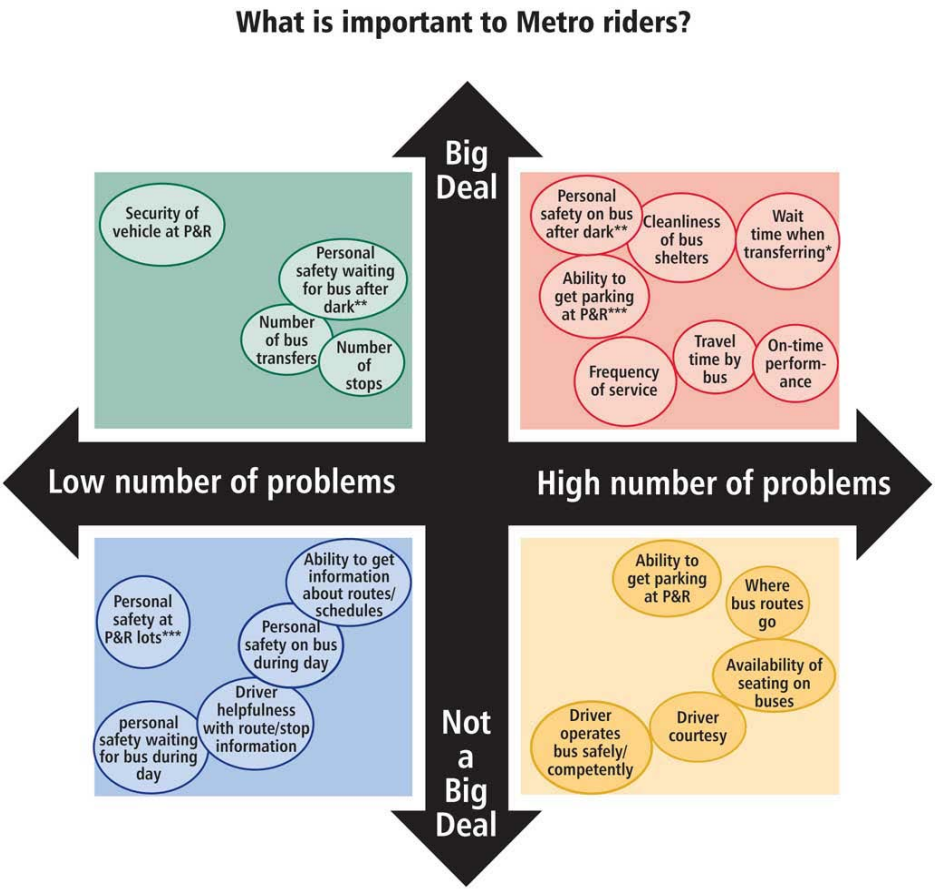
Metro also supports King County energy policies that seek to minimize the environmental and carbon footprint of its own operations. Metro does this by operating fuel-efficient vehicles, applying sustainable practices at Metro facilities, and reducing energy consumption. Reducing energy consumption will also help Metro financially. The dynamics of fuel supply, as demonstrated by the 2008 spike in gas prices, are likely to continue affecting transportation costs.

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 ensure that a customer's public transportation experience is positive at every stage of a trip. Metro reaches out to customers for input into service and product design and to obtain feedback about how well its services are meeting customer needs and expectations. Public meetings, correspondence, direct interactions and an annual telephone survey of riders help Metro gather planning input and measure how well it is doing in the eyes of its customers.

Figure 6 illustrates the issues that have the most impact on customer satisfaction. Vertically, the chart shows which issues are most important to riders. Horizontally, the chart shows the frequency at which customers raise these concerns. Issues in the top right corner, such as long travel times on the bus and poor on-time performance, are most important to riders and are cited frequently. Metro is working towards improving the factors identified in this chart.

Improving quality is important to increasing customer satisfaction, but budget constraints make it difficult for the agency to do so. Metro must ensure that during times of significant change in the public transportation system, the decision-making process is clear, transparent and based on criteria and objectives that are easy for customers to understand. Whether Metro is expanding or reducing the public transportation system, a transparent decision-making process will help build trust and acceptance of the decisions made. Responding to customers, including the public in the decision-making process, and maintaining quality service are crucial ways for Metro to increase ridership and improve customer service and satisfaction.



* Affects only those riders who transfer (46% of all riders)
** Affects only those riders who ride in weekday evenings after 7:00 p.m. (21% of all riders)
*** Affects only those riders who use park-and-ride lots (29% of all riders)

Evolving transportation system

The Puget Sound region's transportation system is constantly changing and adapting to the mobility needs of its residents. The many plans and proposals for improving and expanding the transportation system will present opportunities and challenges for Metro.

Metro works closely with other regional transit and transportation agencies to plan and provide efficient, integrated travel options that enhance public transportation services in King County. Metro coordinates most closely with Sound Transit, Pierce Transit, Community Transit, Washington State Ferries and the King County Ferry District. Metro also works with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), PSRC, various local and regional jurisdictions, and businesses such as Microsoft that provide direct transit service to their employees.

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 the following:

- Sound Transit's Link light rail: In 2009, Sound Transit opened the Central Link light rail line connecting Seattle-Tacoma International Airport with downtown Seattle. Metro undertook an extensive public engagement effort as part of this project and redesigned transit service to better connect to light rail.

  Link will be extended throughout the region over the next 10 years, reaching the University District in 2016 and Northgate by 2021, and connecting Overlake and downtown Seattle beginning in 2021. Sound Transit also plans to extend Link south along the Pacific Highway South/SR-99 corridor. The growth of the light rail system offers opportunities for Metro to provide better connections for riders to and from this high-capacity transit service, improving the overall efficiency of the region's transportation system.

- 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. Public transportation will play a major role in the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project and the SR 520 Bridge Replacement project, as well as other transportation infrastructure projects in the next 10 years.

As the region's public transportation system evolves, Metro will continue to actively engage with regional, local and state entities as well as businesses and communities to build an effective system.

Section 1.4

Strategic Plan Development

This strategic plan builds on past planning efforts and policies. In early 2010, the King County Council and Executive formed the Regional Transit Task Force, made up of 31 members (28 voting and three non-voting) who represented a broad diversity of interests and perspectives from across the county. Metro's strategic plan is based in part on the policy framework and recommendations that came out of the task force process.

Regional Transit Task Force charge

The primary charge to the task force was to recommend a policy framework that reflects the prioritization of key system design factors (see sidebar) and to make recommendations about public transportation system design and function. The overall framework was to include:

- Concurrence with, or proposed changes to, the vision and mission of Metro
- Criteria for systematically growing the public transportation system to achieve the vision
- Criteria for systematically reducing the public transportation system should revenues not be available to sustain it
- State and federal legislative agenda issues to achieve the vision
- Strategies for increasing the efficiency of Metro.

Process and public involvement

The Regional Transit Task Force conducted its work over a seven-month period, with 12 full-group meetings and eight subgroup meetings. Task force meetings were open to public comment, and a webpage posted on the County's website included an online comment form. The task force set aside time at each meeting to hear the thoughts, ideas, and opinions of anyone who wished to speak, and these comments were included in meeting summaries.

Transit system design factors

The Council asked the task force to consider six design factors; the task force added one more. The following summarizes the Regional Transit Task Force 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.

Task Force recommendations

The task force was unanimous in approving seven recommendations. The major themes are described below. For the full version of the recommendations, visit www.kingcounty.gov/transittaskforce.

- Transparency and clarity: The task force recommendations suggest that Metro provide more transparency and clarity to the public on decision-making processes. To this end, the task force suggested that Metro create and adopt a new set of performance measures and clear and transparent guidelines to be used in service allocation decisions.
- Cost control: The task force recommendations suggest that Metro control costs and establish a sustainable financial structure that will work over time.
- Sustainable funding: The task force recommendations suggest that legislation be pursued to ensure that Metro has a more sustainable financial base and can grow in the future.
- Productivity, social equity, and geographic value: The task force recommendations suggest that Metro emphasize productivity, ensure social equity, and provide geographic value in service reduction and growth decisions.
- Mission and vision: The task force recommendations suggest that Metro revise its mission statement and create a vision statement in its strategic plan.

Chapter II

A Pathway to the Future

Metro's vision for public transportation—and goals, objectives and strategies for achieving it

The transportation system in the Puget Sound region affects not only our ability to get around but also our economy, our environment, and our quality of life. Faced with growing transportation needs and limited space to expand roadway capacity, the region must use the existing transportation system more efficiently and effectively. Public transportation will play a vital role as we move toward a well-functioning, sustainable transportation system that helps our region grow and thrive.

Section 2.1

Metro's vision: What public transportation will be like in the future

This is Metro's vision statement:

Metro provides safe, efficient and reliable public transportation that people find easy to use. The agency offers a cost-effective mix of products and services, tailored to specific market needs. Its fixed-route bus system meets most public transportation needs, particularly in areas of concentrated economic activity or urban development and along the corridors that link them. Metro also offers alternative public transportation options for people who cannot use the fixed-route system. No matter what community they live in or whether they have special needs because of age, disability or income, 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 and use 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 public transportation has kept 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 its energy consumption.

The public is engaged with Metro—informed about its 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 its 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.

Section 2.2

Elements of the plan

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

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

Goals: Metro's strategic plan has eight goals that mirror the goals in King County's strategic plan. They include "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 10-year life of this plan.

Objectives: Objectives describe what Metro must do to achieve its goals. An objective may serve multiple goals, but each objective is listed with a specific goal to which it is most closely tied. Each of the 17 objectives has an associated outcome. Section III, Plan Performance Monitoring, describes how Metro will measure progress toward the desired outcomes.

Strategies: This plan contains 36 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. Section III, Plan Performance Monitoring, describes how Metro will measure its success in carrying out these strategies.

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:

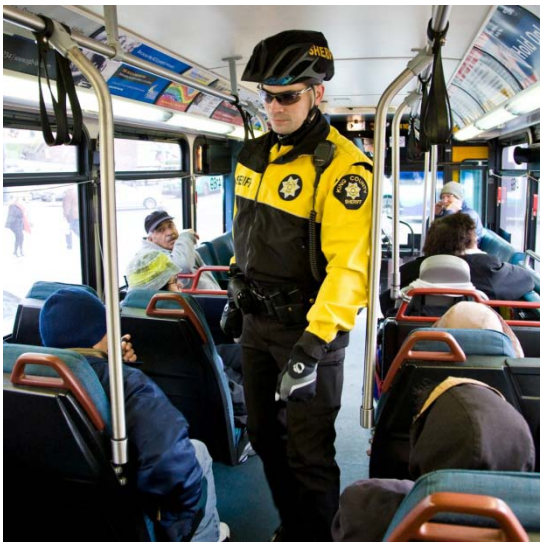
- Service excellence: Establish a culture of customer service and deliver services that are responsive to community needs.
- Financial stewardship: Exercise sound financial management and build Metro's long-term sustainability.
- Public engagement: Promote robust public engagement that informs, involves, and empowers people and communities.
- Quality workforce: Develop and empower Metro's most valuable asset, its employees.

Section 2.3

Metro's Goals

Goal 1: Safety. Support safe communities.

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



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 it 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.

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.

Goal 2: 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. The range of Metro's services is described in the sidebar.

  Within the fixed-route system, Metro provides several families of service: very frequent, frequent, local, hourly and peak. Each provides a different frequency of service that can be matched to the community served. Metro has developed a companion piece to the Strategic Plan, Metro's Service Guidelines,) that consider land use, productivity, social equity and geographic value; these help identify

Metro's public transportation products and services

Fixed-route: Traditional transit service that operates on specific pathways and at specific times.

Ridesharing: Shared ride to school or work; can be a carpool, vanpool, or vanshare.

Paratransit: Shared rides on Access transportation within ¾-mile on either side of a non-commuter fixed-route bus service.

Dial-a-Ride Transit (DART): Offers variable routing for some transit trips in King County.

Other specialized products: Includes other products and services such as the Taxi Scrip Program and Community Access Transportation (CAT).

which family of service will be appropriate in specific areas of 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 currently planned, 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 find alternative service delivery options such as community vans, taxis, or flexible routings to provide mobility and value.

- Strategy 2.1.2: Provide travel opportunities 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 range of public transportation services. All buses on the fixed-route system are accessible for people using mobility devices, and complementary paratransit services are available for eligible individuals with disabilities, 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 to ensure 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 recovery 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.

Goal 3: 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: Through investments and partnerships with regional organizations, local jurisdictions and the private sector, provide alternatives to driving alone that connect people to jobs, education and other destinations essential to King County's economic vitality.

  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, business and other 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, as well as community programs such as In Motion, and car-sharing, promote alternative travel options.

  Metro augments its own investments by developing partnerships with local jurisdictions, other agencies, employers, and institutions to increase public transportation services and improve service effectiveness. Metro enters into agreements with public and private entities to fund new or improved public transportation services, where the partner contribution may be in the form of direct funding or investment that results in transit speed or reliability improvements. 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 WSDOT and local cities to provide services that help mitigate the impacts of major construction projects.

- 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.

By working with employers, Metro can increase the use of its products and services as well as those of transit partners. 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.

King County is expected to add more than 185,000 new jobs and more than 180,000 new residents between 2010 and 2020[5]. As the region grows and as the economy recovers, the demand for travel will 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. *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 to create an integrated and efficient regional transportation system.

  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.

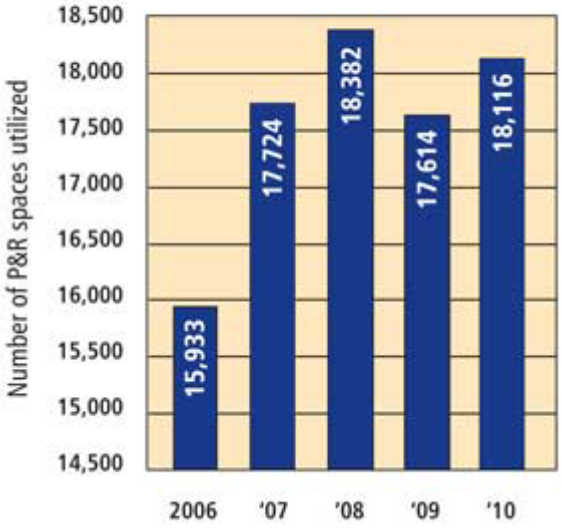
  Metro also coordinates with other regional and local public transportation entities on funding, design, construction and maintenance of capital projects. Metro and other agencies have collaborated on the development of facilities such as transit hubs, park-and-rides and stations.

[5] Puget Sound Regional Council. "Populations, Households, and Employment Forecast," last updated 2006, www.psrc.org/data/forecasts/saf.

- **Strategy 3.2.3: Work with transit partners, WSDOT and others to manage park-and-ride capacity needs.**
  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 an addition to the capacity of the state and interstate highway system. The use of park-and-rides has increased in recent years, and many lots are at or over capacity every day. Figure 6 shows park-and-ride utilization over the past five years.

  Metro will work with Sound Transit, WSDOT and others to explore affordable opportunities to increase park-and-ride capacity. Tactics for responding to demand include management of existing lots, education and marketing.

Figure 6: Fourth Quarter Park-and-Ride Utilization 2006-2010



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 development that lead to communities that transit can serve efficiently and effectively.**
  Metro encourages the development of transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly communities by consulting with jurisdictions and serving transit-oriented developments. Metro recommends strategies for jurisdictions and agencies to make communities more transit-friendly. Metro also partners with jurisdictions and the private sector to spur transit-oriented development through redevelopment opportunities at, or adjacent to, park-and-rides.

- **Strategy 3.3.2: Support bicycle and pedestrian access to jobs, services, and the transit system.**
  Metro develops programs and facilities to improve bicyclists' 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's impact on King County's transportation infrastructure

- More than 113,000 transit passengers avoid driving alone on major state routes each weekday.
- More than 21,000 transit passengers avoid driving alone on major state routes during the evening peak hours.
- If each transit passenger drove to downtown Seattle instead of taking the bus, parking infrastructure to accommodate these drivers would cost approximately $2.6 billion[6].

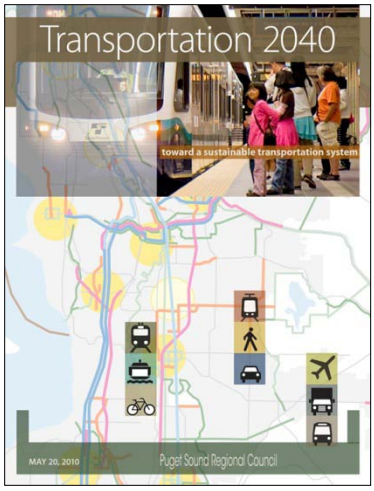
Objective 3.4: Support economic development by using existing transportation infrastructure efficiently and effectively.

Use of transit can increase the efficiency of King County's transportation infrastructure (see sidebar[6]). 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 7, 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

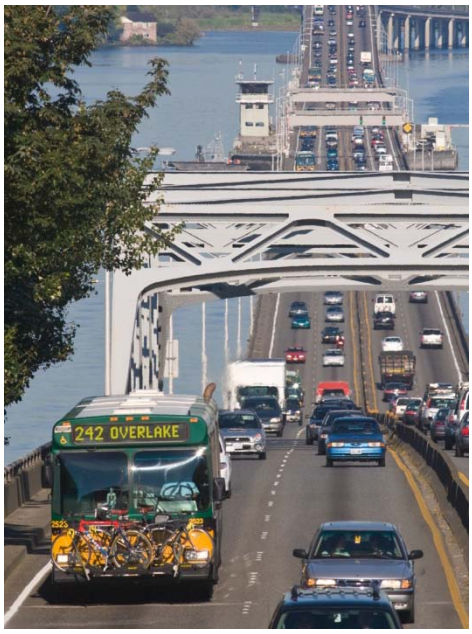
Transportation 2040 is an action plan for transportation in the central Puget Sound region for the next 30 years, developed and adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

By the year 2040, the region is expected to grow by roughly 1.5 million people and support more than 1.2 million new jobs, which is expected to boost demand for travel within and through the region by about 40 percent.

Transportation 2040 outlines a long-term vision for how this 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.

[6] $2.6 billion in parking infrastructure was calculated as follows: Assumption 1: Approximately 65,000 people commute on transit to downtown Seattle (using a 36% mode share); Assumption 2: A parking stall in downtown Seattle costs $40,000; Calculation: 65,000 x $40,000 = $2.6 billion.

Goal 4: 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 goal of reducing greenhouse-gas emissions by 80 percent between 2007 and 2050. The transportation sector is the source of more than half the emissions in the region, so reducing vehicle-miles traveled and emissions are critical parts of achieving this goal. 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.

The *King County Energy Plan* provides a roadmap for improving energy efficiency and expanding the use of greenhouse-gas-neutral energy sources in King County, with new targets adopted by the King County Council. The County has set a goal of reducing energy use in County buildings by 10 percent by 2012 and vehicles by 2015. In support of this plan, Metro is committed to being a leader in green operating and maintenance practices and minimizing its energy use. 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

Electric vehicle charging program

King County will receive $1 million from the United States Department of Energy to expand on an earlier program and install electric vehicle charging stations at various locations over the next few years to promote the use of electric vehicles.

King County is negotiating with vendors to purchase electric vehicles for Metro's vanpool and vanshare programs and for the County's fleet of vehicles used by employees in County operations.

emissions by developing and using clean-fuel bus technologies, such as hybrid diesel-electric coaches, in its fleet. Metro is committed to being a leader in the adoption of new energy-efficient and low-emission technologies (see sidebar on previous page).

- 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.

Goal 5: 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. 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 its on-time performance 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 (see sidebar). 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.

Metro Online

Metro's website was updated to improve the organization of news and alerts, making it easier to use and understand.

Specific improvements include:

Transit alerts
A subscription service that sends alerts via e-mail or text message for a specific route or for general information.

Adverse weather alerts
A color-coded snow, ice and flood map that indicates Metro service re-routes during emergency events. Customers can look up specific routes to see detailed information.

Eye on your Metro commute
A blog that offers service information during rush hours
(6-9 a.m./ 3-6 p.m.).

Third-party applications
Programs written by individuals or companies outside of Metro using Metro data. A popular example is One Bus Away, found at: http://onebusaway.org.

Goal 6: 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. Guidelines will clearly state the balanced prioritization of emphasizing productivity, ensuring social equity and providing geographic value used for identifying the Metro Transit Service Network and changes to the network. Metro will apply the Regional Transit Committee-recommended and County Council-adopted objective service guidelines as it makes decisions about service allocation, managing service quality, the frequency of service, route spacing, the directness of service, and stop spacing. Through the establishment of route, system and peer-comparison performance measures, Metro will also be able to better understand how public transportation is performing on multiple levels.

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 implementing the findings of the 2009 King County auditor's performance audit of Metro. This audit identified areas where Metro could achieve cost efficiencies, such as in the way it schedules fixed-route service. Metro has incorporated most of these recommendations into the 2010-2011 biennial budget and will continue striving to maximize cost-efficiency.

- 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. Land uses that support walking as a mode choice encourage the use of fixed-route transit services. 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 public transportation products such as ridesharing, community vans, Dial-a-Ride Transit, and Community Access Transportation in these areas. Metro will continue to augment its 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.

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. 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 prioritizes funding sources that enable sustained operations over time and one-time revenue sources that allow implementation of a particular project or program. 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 One Regional Card for All (ORCA), the regional fare payment method that enables customers to use one card to pay their fare on multiple systems throughout the Central 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.

Goal 7: 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 Initiative. 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, and people with limited English proficiency, consistent with King County's Equity and Social Justice Initiative 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 and media channels, 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.

Goal 8: 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 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.

Chapter III

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 the strategic plan

Reporting for this strategic plan will focus primarily on Metro's progress towards its 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 provide a more detailed description of these measurement levels and potential associated measures. Metro will report on strategic plan measures on a biennial basis, 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 ten percent of the system hours during the next two-year period, Metro shall report on strategic plan measures, if a report has not been delivered within the last twelve 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 http://metro.kingcounty.gov/am/reports/monthly-measures.

Measuring objectives

Each objective in the plan is measured by an 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 suggested 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.
	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.
	Support compact, healthy communities.	More people regularly use public transportation products and services along corridors with compact development.
	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.
	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.
	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.
	Control costs.	Metro costs grow at or below the rate of inflation.
	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.
	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.
	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 measured using discrete, quantifiable metrics to determine if they are being successfully implemented and are having the intended impact. Strategies could be measured in a variety of ways and measurement techniques may change over time. The 36 strategies and potential related measures in this strategic plan 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: Strategies and related measures

Goal	Obje-ctive	Strategies	Measures
1	1.1	1.1.1 Promote safety and security in public transportation operations and facilities. 1.1.2 Plan for and execute regional emergency response and homeland security efforts.	• Preventable accidents • Operator and passenger incidents and assaults • Customer satisfaction regarding safety and security • Effectiveness of emergency responses
2	2.1	2.1.1 Design and offer a variety of public transportation products and services appropriate to different markets and mobility needs. 2.1.2 Provide travel opportunities for historically disadvantaged populations, such as low-income people, students, youth, seniors, people of color, people with disabilities, and others with limited transportation options. 2.1.3 Provide products and services that are designed to provide geographic value in all parts of King County.	• Population with ¼ mile walk access to a transit stop or 2 mile drive to a park-and-ride • % low income population within ¼ mile walk access to transit • % minority population within ¼ mile walk access to transit • Accessible bus stops • Transit mode share by market • Student and reduced fare permits and usage • Access applicants who undertake fixed-route travel training • Access boardings • Access registrants • Requested Access trips compared to those provided • Number of trips provided by the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and Community Access Transportation (CAT) programs • Title VI compliance • % population at 15 dwelling units per acre within ¼-mile walk access of frequent service

Goal	Obje-ctive	Strategies	Measures
3	3.1	3.1.1 Through investments and partnerships with regional organizations, local jurisdictions and the private sector, provide alternatives to driving alone that connect people to jobs, education and other destinations essential to King County's economic vitality. 3.1.2 Work with employers to make public transportation products and services more affordable and convenient for employees.	• Transit rides per capita • Effectiveness of partnerships • Park-and-ride utilization • Peak mode share at Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) sites • Employer sponsored passes and usage • % population at 15 dwelling units per acre within 1/4 mile walk access of frequent service • All public transportation ridership in King County (rail, bus, paratransit, rideshare) • Centers ridership • Bike rack use
	3.2	3.2.1 Expand services to accommodate the region's growing population and serve new transit markets. 3.2.2 Coordinate and develop services and facilities with other providers to create an integrated and efficient regional transportation system. 3.2.3 Work with transit partners, WSDOT and others to manage park-and-ride capacity needs. .	
	3.3	3.3.1 Encourage land uses, policies, and development that lead to communities that transit can serve efficiently and effectively. 3.3.2 Support bicycle and pedestrian access to jobs, services and the transit system.	
	3.4	3.4.1 Serve centers and other areas of concentrated activity, consistent with *Transportation 2040*.	
4	4.1	4.1.1 Increase the proportion of travel in King County that is provided by public transportation products and services.	• Per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) • Transit mode share • Public transportation energy use per passenger mile • Average miles per gallon (MPG) of the Metro bus fleet • Energy use at Metro facilities
	4.2	4.2.1 Operate vehicles and adopt technology that has the least impact on the environment and maximizes long-term sustainability. 4.2.2 Incorporate sustainable design, construction, operating and maintenance practices.	

Goal	Obje-ctive	Strategies	Measures
5	5.1	5.1.1 Provide service that is easy to understand and use. 5.1.2 Emphasize customer service in transit operations and workforce training. 5.1.3 Improve transit speed and reliability.	• Conformance with King County policy on communications accessibility and translation to other languages • Customer satisfaction • Customer complaints • On-time performance by time of day • Load factor • Utilization of Metro web tools • One Regional Card for All (ORCA) usage
	5.2	5.2.1 Use available tools and new technologies to improve communication with customers. 5.2.2 Promote Metro's products and services to existing and potential customers.	
6	**6.1**	6.1.1 Manage the transit system through service guidelines and performance measures.	• Boardings per platform hour • Passenger miles per platform hour • Boardings per revenue hour • Passenger miles per revenue mile • Access boardings • Commuter van boardings • Cost per boarding • Cost per hour • Service hours operated • Asset condition assessment • Base capacity level of service • Fare revenues • Farebox recovery • Fare parity with other providers in the region • Fully allocated costs • Operational and Cost Efficiency Indicators • Service hours and service hour change per route • Ridership and ridership change per route
	6.2	6.2.1 Continually explore and implement cost efficiencies, including operational and administrative efficiencies. 6.2.2 Provide and maintain capital assets to support efficient and effective service delivery. 6.2.3 Develop and implement alternative public transportation services and delivery strategies.	
	6.3	6.3.1 Secure long-term stable funding. 6.3.2 Establish fare structures and fare levels that are simple to understand, aligned with other service providers, and that meet revenue targets established by Metro's fund management policies. 6.3.3 Establish fund management policies that ensure stability through a variety of economic conditions.	

Goal	Obje-ctive	Strategies	Measures
7	7.1	7.1.1 Engage the public in the planning process and improve customer outreach.	• Public participation rates • Customer satisfaction regarding their role in Metro's planning process • Customer satisfaction regarding Metro communications and reporting
	7.2	7.2.1 Communicate service change concepts, the decision-making process, and public transportation information in language that is accessible and easy to understand. 7.2.2 Explore innovative ways to report to and inform the public.	
8	8.1	8.1.1 Market Metro as an employer of choice and cultivate a diverse and highly skilled applicant pool. 8.1.2 Promote equity, social justice and transparency in hiring and recruiting activities.	• Demographics of Metro employees • Employee job satisfaction • Promotion rate • Probationary pass rate • Training opportunities provided • Trainings completed • Employee performance
	8.2	8.2.1 Build leadership and promote professional skills. 8.2.2 Recognize employees for outstanding performance, excellent customer service, innovation and strategic thinking. 8.2.3 Provide training opportunities that enable employees to reach their full potential.	

Peer comparison

Comparisons with peer transit agencies provide an additional benchmark for measuring Metro's performance. Metro currently compares its annual performance with other large bus agencies in the U.S. in three key areas: effectiveness (productivity), efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

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.

Peer comparison reporting: Strategic plan reporting will compare Metro with transit agency peers 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, as follows:

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		

Section 3.2

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, identify areas where investment is needed, and identify areas where resources are not being used efficiently and effectively. Both productivity and service quality are measured.

Adjustments are made to routes to improve the performance of the individual route as well as the performance of the entire Metro fixed-route system. Metro makes service revisions three times a year. Significant changes to routes generally have a large public outreach process (see sidebar) and are subject to approval by the King County Council. Minor changes, as defined by the King County Code, may be made administratively.

Public outreach process for Link light rail integration

In 2009, Sound Transit began service on the new Link Light Rail line, connecting Sea-Tac Airport to Downtown Seattle. Because of this new transit service, Metro restructured many of its bus routes to facilitate connections to Link and reduce duplication of services.

Metro and Sound Transit conducted months of extensive public outreach to help figure out the best ways to integrate the new services. This outreach included two sounding boards—groups of citizens convened to provide a recommendation to Metro on how to proceed.

King County Metro
Service Guidelines

Introduction

Metro has developed service guidelines that it will use to design and modify transit services in an ever-changing environment. The guidelines will help Metro make sure that its decision-making is objective, transparent, and aligned with the regional goals for the public transportation system. These guidelines enable Metro to fulfill Strategy 6.1.1 in its Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, which calls for Metro to "Manage the transit system through service guidelines and performance measures."

Metro will use the guidelines to make decisions about expanding, reducing and managing service, to evaluate service productivity, and to determine if service revisions are needed because of changes in rider demand or route performance. Guidelines are also intended to help Metro respond to changing financial conditions and to integrate its services with the regional transportation system.

The guidelines are designed to address productivity, social equity and geographic value. These factors are applied within the guidelines in a multi-step process to identify the level of and type of service, along with additional guidelines to measure service quality, define service design objectives and to compare the performance of individual routes within the Metro service network to guide modifications to service following identified priorities. The guidelines work as a system to emphasize productivity, ensure social equity and provide geographic value in a balanced manner through the identification of measurable indicators associated with each factor and the definition of performance thresholds that vary by market served, service frequency and locations served. They are also intended to help Metro respond to changing financial conditions and to integrate its services with the regional transportation system.

A central piece of the Service Guidelines is the All-Day and Peak Network, which establishes target service levels for transit corridors throughout King County. Productivity, social equity and geographic value are prioritized in this three-step process:

- **Step one** establishes initial service levels for corridors based on how well they meet measurable indicators reflecting productivity, social equity, and geographic value. Indicators of high productivity (using measureable Land Use indicators closely correlated with transit productivity) make up 50% of the total score, while geographic value and social equity indicators each comprise 25% of the total score in this step.
    - **Productivity** indicators demonstrate market potential of corridors using Land Use factors of housing and employment density.
    - **Social Equity** indicators provide an evaluation of how well corridors serve concentrations of minority and low income populations by comparing boardings in these areas along each corridor against the systemwide average of all corridor boardings within minority and low income census tracts. Minority and low income populations may serve as surrogates for other historically disadvantaged groups including students, seniors, people with disabilities, and those with limited transportation options.

- **Geographic Value** indicators establish how well corridors preserve connections and service throughout King County.

The cumulative score from this step indicates the initial appropriate frequency for service in the corridor.

- **Step two** makes adjustments to the assigned step one service family based on current ridership, productivity, and night network completeness. Adjustments are only made to assign corridors to a higher service level; service frequencies are not adjusted downward in this step.

- **Step three** defines the peak overlay for the All-Day and Peak Network. This step evaluates whether or not peak service provides a significant ridership or travel time advantage over the local service.

The All-Day and Peak Network will be analyzed annually concurrent with Metro's reports on the application of the Service Guidelines. Using this network as a baseline and as resources allow, Metro will work to adjust service levels to better meet the public transportation needs of King County.

Other guidelines are grouped into the following categories:

- Performance management
  These guidelines establish standards for productivity, passenger loads, and schedule reliability. Metro will use these guidelines to evaluate individual routes and recommend changes to achieve efficient and effective delivery of transit service as part of on-going system management and in planning for growth or reduction.

- Service restructures
  These guidelines define the circumstances that will prompt Metro to restructure multiple routes along a corridor or within an area.

- Service Design
  These are qualitative and quantitative guidelines for designing specific transit routes and the overall transit network.

- Use and implementation
  This section describes how Metro will use all guidelines, how they will be prioritized to make recommendations about adding, reducing or adjusting service, and how the performance of individual bus routes and the Metro system as a whole will be reported.

The Service Guidelines provide Metro with tools to ensure that decisions about Metro's service network are transparent, consistent, and clear. These guidelines will be reported on and reviewed annually to ensure that they are consistent with Metro's Strategic Plan and other policy goals.

All-day and peak network

Metro strives to provide high-quality transit service to a wide variety of travel markets and a diverse group of riders. Metro designs its services to meet a number of objectives:

- Support regional growth plans
- Respond to existing ridership demand
- Provide productive and efficient service
- Ensure social equity
- Provide geographic value through a network of connections and services throughout King County.

Metro is building a network of services to accomplish these objectives. The foundation of the All-Day and Peak Network is a set of two-way routes that operate all day and connect designated regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, and other areas of concentrated activity. All-day service is designed to meet a variety of travel needs and trip purposes throughout the day. Whether riders are traveling to work, appointments, shopping, or recreational activities, the availability of service throughout the day gives them the ability to travel when they need to. The All-Day and Peak Network also includes peak service that provides faster travel times, accommodates very high demand for travel to and from major employment centers, and serves park-and-ride lots in areas of lower population density.

A key step in developing the All-Day and Peak Network is to determine the service levels that meet the needs of King County's diverse communities. Metro determines these service levels through a three-step process:

First, service levels are set by scoring all corridors using six measures addressing land use, social equity, and geographic value. Corridors with higher scores are assigned higher levels of service. Second, service levels are adjusted based on existing ridership. Corridor service levels are increased when the service level suggested in Step 1 would not be adequate to accommodate existing riders, would be inconsistent with service levels set for RapidRide services, or would leave primary connections without night service. Third, peak service that enhances the all-day network is determined using travel time and ridership information.

These steps provide broad guidance for establishing a balance of all-day service levels and peak services and may change as conditions do. The target service levels may also be revised as areas of King County grow and change. Metro does not have sufficient resources to fully achieve the All-Day and Peak Network today. The service-level guidelines, used in combination with the guidelines established for managing the system, will help Metro make progress toward the All-Day and Peak Network.

Service levels are defined by corridor rather than by route to reflect the fact that there may be multiple ways to design routes to serve a given corridor, including serving a single corridor with more than one route. The desired service levels can be achieved through service by a single route or by multiple routes.

Metro evaluated 113 corridors where it provides all-day service today and 94 peak services provided today. The services in these corridors include those linking regional growth centers,

manufacturing/industrial centers, and transit activity centers; services to park-and-rides and major transit facilities; and services that are geographically distributed throughout King County. The same evaluation process could be used to set service levels for corridors that Metro does not currently serve.

All-day and peak network assessment process

STEP 1: SET SERVICE LEVELS	
Factor	Purpose
Land Use	Support areas of higher employment and household density
Social Equity and Geographic Value	Serve historically disadvantaged communities
	Provide appropriate service levels throughout King County

STEP 2: ADJUST SERVICE LEVELS	
Factor	Purpose
Loads	Provide sufficient capacity for existing transit demand
Use	Improve effectiveness and financial stability of transit service
Service Span	Provide adequate levels of service throughout the day

STEP 3: IDENTIFY PEAK OVERLAY	
Factor	Purpose
Travel Time	Ensure that peak service provides a travel time advantage compared to other service alternatives
Ridership	Ensure that peak service is highly used

OUTCOME: ALL-DAY AND PEAK NETWORK

Step 1: Set service levels

Service levels are determined by the number of households and jobs in areas with access to a corridor, by the proportion of historically disadvantaged populations near the corridor, and by the geographic distribution of regional growth, manufacturing/industrial, and transit activity centers in King County. These factors give Metro a way to take into account the elements that make transit successful as well as the populations and areas that must be served to support social equity and deliver geographic value. Each corridor is scored on six factors, and the total score is used to set service levels in a corridor. Each corridor is intended to have the identified frequency during some or all of the time period listed.

Land use factors

The success of a transit service is directly related to how many people have access to the service and choose to use it. Areas where many people live and work close to bus stops have higher potential transit use than areas where few people live and work close by. Areas that

have interconnected streets have a higher potential for transit use than areas that have fewer streets or have barriers to movement, such as hills or lakes. The land-use factors Metro uses to determine service levels are the number of households and jobs located within a quarter-mile walking access of stops. The quarter-mile calculation considers street connectivity; 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. The use of land-use factors is consistent with Metro's *Strategic Plan for Public* Transportation because it addresses the need for transit to serve a growing population (Strategy 3.2.1) and encourages land uses that transit can serve efficiently and effectively (Strategy 3.3.1)

Social equity and geographic value factors
As it strives to develop an effective transit network that ensures social equity and provides geographic value, Metro considers how the network will serve historically disadvantaged populations, transit activity centers, regional growth centers, and manufacturing/industrial centers. As a way to achieve social equity, Metro identifies areas where low-income and minority populations are concentrated as warranting higher levels of service. Metro also identifies primary connections between centers as warranting a higher level of service, to achieve both social equity and geographic value. Primary connections are defined as the predominant transit connection between centers, based on a combination of ridership and travel time.

Centers represent activity nodes throughout King County that form the basis for a countywide transit network. The term "centers," as defined in the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, refers collectively to regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, and transit activity centers. Regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers are designated in the region's *Vision 2040* plan. Metro identified transit activity centers beyond the PSRC-designated centers to support geographic value in the distribution of its transit network throughout King County. Transit activity centers include major destinations and transit attractions such as large employment sites, significant healthcare institutions and major social service agencies. Transit activity centers represent activity nodes throughout King County that form the basis for an interconnected transit network throughout the urban growth area of King County.

The transit activity centers, identified in Appendix I, 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 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.

The use of factors related to social equity and geographic value is consistent with the *Strategic Plan for Public Transportation.* The use of social equity factors guides transit service to provide 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. Regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, and transit activity centers are listed in Appendix 1.

Revisions to Appendix 1 Centers in King County

The list of centers associated with the All-Day and Peak Network is adopted by the King County Council as part of Metro's service guidelines. However, the region's growth and travel needs are anticipated to change in the future. The following defines centers and guides additions to this list.

Regional Growth 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 (PSRC) and defined in *Vision 2040*, or subsequent regional plans.

Transit Activity Centers

Additional transit activity centers may be designated in future updates of the Service Guidelines. Additions to the list of transit activity centers will be nominated by the local jurisdictions and must meet one or more of the above criteria, plus the following additional criteria:

- Pathways through the transit activity center 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 Network or as an expansion to the network to address an area of projected all-day transit demand. An expansion to the network indicates the existence of a new corridor for analysis.
- Analysis of a new corridor using Step 1 of the All-Day and Peak Network assessment process must result in an assignment of 30 minute service frequency or better.

Thresholds and points used to set service levels

Factor	Measure	Thresholds	Points
Land Use	Households within ¼ mile of stops per corridor mile	75% of highest score	10
		50% of highest score	7
		25% of highest score	4
		<25% of highest score	0
	Jobs within ¼ mile of stops per corridor mile	50% of highest score	10
		33% of highest score	7
		16% of highest score	4
		<16% of highest score	0
Social Equity and Geographic Value	Percent of boardings in low-income census tracts[1]	Above system average	5
		Below system average	0
	Percent of boardings in minority census tracts[2]	Above system average	5
		Below system average	0
	Primary connection between regional growth, manufacturing/industrial centers	Yes	5
		No	0
	Primary connection between transit activity centers	Yes	5
		No	0

Frequency based on total score

Scoring Range	Peak Service Frequency (minutes)	Off-Peak Service Frequency (minutes)	Night Service Frequency (minutes)
25-40	15	15	30
19-24	15	30	30
10-18	30	30	--
0-9	60 or worse (≥60)	60 or worse	--

Step 2: Adjust service levels

After setting service levels on the basis of the six factors in Step 1, Metro adjusts the levels to ensure that the All-Day and Peak Network accommodates current ridership levels. Corridor service levels are increased if providing service at the levels established under Step 1 would not

[1] Low-income tracts are those where a greater percentage of the population than the countywide average has low incomes, based on current American Community Survey data.

[2] 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.

accommodate existing riders, would be inconsistent with policy-based service levels set for RapidRide services or would result in an incomplete network of night service[3].

Thresholds used to adjust service levels

Factor	Measure	Threshold	Adjustment to warranted frequency		
			Service level adjustment	**Step 1 frequency** (minutes)	**Adjusted frequency** (minutes)
Cost recovery	Estimated cost recovery by time of day - *if existing riders were served by Step 1 service levels*	>100% in any time period	Adjust two levels	15 or 30	<15
				≥60	15
		Peak >50% Off-peak >50% Night >33%	Adjust one level	15	<15
				30	15
				≥60	30
		Night >16%	Add night service	--	30
		Night >8%		--	≥60
Load	Estimated load factor[4] by time of day - *if existing riders were served by Step 1 service levels*	>1.5	Adjust two levels	15 or 30	<15
				≥60	15
		>0.8	Adjust one level	15	<15
				30	15
				≥60	30
Service span	Connection at night	Primary connection between regional growth centers	Add night service	--	≥60
		Frequent peak service	Add night service	--	30

Metro also adjusts service levels on existing and planned RapidRide corridors to ensure that identified service frequencies are consistent with policy-based service frequencies for the RapidRide program: better than 15 minutes during peak periods, 15 minutes during off-peak periods, and 15 minutes at night. Where policy-based service frequencies are better than service frequencies established in Step 2, frequencies are improved to the minimum specified by policy.

The combined outcome of Steps 1 and 2 is a set of corridors with all-day service levels that reflect factors concerning land use, social equity, geographic value, and ridership. These corridors are divided into families based on the frequency of service, as described in the Service

[3] 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.
[4] Load factor is calculated by dividing the maximum load along a route by the total number of seats on a bus, to get a ratio of riders to seats.

Families section below. Corridors with the highest frequency would have the longest span of service.

Step 3: Identify peak overlay
Peak service adds value to the network of all-day service by providing faster travel times and accommodating very high demand for travel to and from major employment centers. Peak service thresholds ensure that peak service is well-used and provides benefits above the network of all-day service. Service levels on peak routes are established separately from the all-day network because they have a specialized function within the transit network.

Thresholds for peak services

Factor	Measure	Threshold
Travel Time	Travel time relative to alternative service	Travel time should be at least 20% faster than the alternative service
Ridership	Rides per Trip	Rides per trip should be 90% or greater compared to alternative service

Metro considers travel time and ridership to determine where peak service is appropriate. Peak service in a corridor that also has all-day service should have higher ridership and faster travel times than the other service to justify its higher cost. If peak service does not meet the load and travel-time thresholds but serves an area that has no other service, Metro would 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 Strategy 6.2.3.

Peak service generally has a minimum of eight trips per day on weekdays only. Peak service is provided for a limited span compared to all-day service. The exact span and number of trips are determined by demand on an individual route basis.

Evaluating new service
Metro has defined the current All-Day and Peak Network on the basis of appropriate levels of service for all-day and peak services within King County today. However, the service assessment processes described in the Guidelines should also be used when Metro is considering and evaluating potential or proposed new services, including new service corridors. They should also be applied over time to determine appropriate levels of service, including the need for new services and service corridors as areas of King County change.

Service families
All-Day and Peak Network services are broken down by level of service into five families. Service families are primarily defined by the frequency and span of service they provide. The table below shows the typical characteristics of each family. Some services may fall outside the typical frequencies, depending on specific conditions.

Summary of typical service levels by family

Service Family	Frequency[5] (minutes)			Days of service	Hours of service[6]
	Peak[7]	Off-peak	Night		
Very frequent	15 or better	15 or better	30 or better	7 days	16-20 hours
Frequent	15 or better	30	30	7 days	16-20 hours
Local	30	30 - 60	--*	5-7 days	12-16 hours
Hourly	60 or worse	60 or worse	--	5 days	8-12 hours
Peak	8 trips/day minimum	--	--	5 days	Peak

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

- **Very frequen***t* services provide the highest levels of all-day service. Very frequent corridors serve very large employment and transit activity centers and high-density residential areas.
- **Frequent** services provide high levels of all-day service. Frequent corridors generally serve major employment and transit activity centers and high-density residential areas.
- **Local** services provide a moderate level of all-day service. Local corridors generally serve regional growth centers and low- to medium-density residential areas.
- **Hourly** services provide all-day service no more frequently than every hour. Corridors generally connect low-density residential areas to regional growth centers.
- **Peak** 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.

While the service families are based on frequency, Metro also classifies individual routes by their major destinations when comparing productivity. These classifications are based on the primary market served. Regional growth centers in the core of Seattle and the University District are significantly different from markets served in other areas of King County. Services are evaluated based on these two primary market types to ensure that comparisons reflect the service potential of each type of market.

- **Seattle core** routes are those that serve downtown Seattle, First Hill, Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, the University District, or Uptown. These routes serve regional growth centers with very high employment and residential density.
- **Non-Seattle core** routes are those that operate only in other areas of Seattle and King County. These routes provide all-day connections between regional growth or transit activity centers outside of Seattle or provide service in lower-density areas.

[5] Frequency is the number of minutes between consecutive trips in the same direction. A trip with four evenly spaced trips per hour would have an average headway of 15 minutes and a frequency of four trips per hour.
[6] Hours of service, or span, is defined as the time between first trip and last trip leaving the terminal in the predominant direction of travel.
[7] Time period definitions: Peak 5-9 a.m. and 3-7 p.m. weekdays; Off-peak 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays; 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekends; Night 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. all days.

Performance management

Metro uses performance management to improve the efficiency and effectiveness 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.

Productivity

Productivity measures identify routes where performance is strong or weak as candidates for addition, reduction, or restructuring. High and low performance thresholds differ for routes that serve the Seattle core areas[8] and those that do not. Routes serving the Seattle core are expected to perform at a higher level because the potential market is much greater than for routes serving other areas of King County.

The measures for evaluating routes are rides per platform hour[9] and passenger miles per platform mile[10]. Two measures are used to reflect the fact that services provide different values to the system. Routes with high ridership relative to the amount of investment perform well on the rides-per-platform-hour-measure. 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 having productivity that ranks in the bottom 25 percent of routes within a category and time period. High performance is defined as having productivity levels in the top 25 percent of routes within a category and time period. Routes that perform poorly on both measures are identified as the first candidates for potential reduction.

Thresholds for the top 25 percent and the bottom 25 percent are identified for the following time periods and destinations for each of two performance measures – rides/platform hour and passenger miles/platform mile.

Time period	Route destination
Peak	Seattle core
	Not Seattle core
Off-peak	Seattle core
	Not Seattle core
Night	Seattle core
	Not Seattle core

[8] Seattle core areas include the regional growth centers in downtown Seattle, First Hill/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, Uptown, and the University District.

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

[10] 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).

Passenger loads

Passenger loads are measured to identify crowded 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 get off at stops.

Passenger loads are averaged using observations from a complete period between service changes. Trips must have average loads higher than thresholds for an entire service change period to be identified as candidates for investment. Load factor is calculated by dividing the maximum load along a route by the total number of seats on a bus, to get a ratio of riders to seats.

- When a route operates every 10 minutes or better, an individual trip should not exceed a load factor of 1.5.
- When a route operates less than every 10 minutes, an individual trip should not exceed a load factor of 1.25.
- No trip on a route should have a standing load for 20 minutes or longer.

Other considerations: Vehicle availability
Action alternatives:

- Assign a larger vehicle
- Add or adjust the spacing of trips within a 20-minute period

Schedule reliability

Metro measures schedule reliability to identify routes that are candidates for remedial action due to poor service quality.

Schedule adherence is measured for all Metro services. Service should adhere to published schedules, within reasonable variance based on time of day and travel conditions. When measuring schedule adherence, Metro focuses on routes that are regularly running late. On-time is defined as a departure that is five minutes late or better at a scheduled time point.

Time period	**Lateness threshold** (Excludes early trips)
Weekday average	> 20%
Weekday PM peak average	> 35%
Weekend average	> 20%

Investment can include route design, schedule, or traffic operations improvements. Routes that operate with a headway less frequent than every 10 minutes that do not meet performance thresholds will be prioritized 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 prioritized for traffic operations (speed and reliability) investments. It may not be possible to improve through-routed routes 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
- Adjust routing
- Invest in speed and reliability improvements.

Service restructures

Service restructures are changes to multiple routes along a corridor or within an area, including serving new corridors, in a manner consistent with Service Design Criteria found in this Service Guidelines document. Restructures may be prompted for a variety of reasons and in general are made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of transit service or to reduce net operating costs when Metro's operating revenue is significantly reduced from historic levels.

- Under all circumstances, whether adding, reducing or maintaining service hours invested, service restructures shall have a goal to focus service frequency on the highest ridership and productivity segments of restructured services, to create convenient opportunities for transfer connections between services and to match service capacity to ridership demand to improve productivity and cost-effectiveness of service.
- In managing the transit system, service restructures shall have a goal of increasing ridership.
- Under service reduction conditions, service restructures shall have an added goal of resulting in an overall net reduction of service hours invested.
- Under service addition conditions, service restructures shall have added goals of increasing service levels and ridership.

When one or more key reasons 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; and
- 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 projected loads at no more than 80% of established loading guidelines.
- When transfers are required as a result of restructures, the resulting service will be designed for convenient transfers and 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 for exceeding this goal may be given where the walking environment is pedestrian-supportive.

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

Following the implementation of restructures, Metro will regularly evaluate the resulting transit services and respond to on-time performance and passenger loads that exceed the Performance Management Guidelines as part of the regular on-going management of the Metro Transit System Network.

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 All-Day and Peak Network frequency

- 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 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; or the closure of facilities like the South Park Bridge.

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.

Service design

Metro uses service design guidelines to develop transit routes and the overall transit network. Guidelines reflect industry best practices for designing service. The use of service design guidelines can enhance transit operations and improve the rider experience. Some guidelines are qualitative considerations that service development should take into account. Other guidelines have 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. Metro strives to make transfers easy as it develops a network of services. Network design should consider locations where transfer opportunities could be provided, and where provision of convenient transfers could 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 sizeable 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 should provide frequency and span appropriate to the market served. Routes should serve connection points where riders can connect 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 one-quarter mile on average to access transit, so in general routes should be no closer than one-half 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 one-half 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, are 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[11] 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 lower density 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 should be considered in relation to the percent of riders boarding and exiting on that segment.

$$\frac{\text{Percent of time spent serving neighborhood segment}}{\text{Percent of riders boarding/exiting on neighborhood segment}} \leq 1.2^{12}$$

8. Operating paths and appropriate vehicles

Buses are large, heavy vehicles and cannot operate safely on all streets. Buses should be routed primarily on arterial streets and freeways, except where routing on local or collector streets is necessary to reach layover areas. 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. Services should operate with vehicles that are an appropriate size to permit safe operation while accommodating demand.

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 fixed routes in order to provide a predictable and reliable service for a wide range of potential riders. However, in lower-density areas where demand is

[11] "Through-routing" means continuous routing of vehicles from one route to another such that a rider would not have to transfer from one route to reach a destination on the other.

[12] 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 one-to-one ratio was determined to be too strict, thus this ratio was adjusted to 1.2.

dispersed, demand-responsive service may be used to provide more effective service over a larger area than could be provided with fixed-route service. 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. Bus shelters

Bus shelters should be installed based on ridership, in order to benefit the largest number of riders. Special consideration may be given to areas where high numbers of transfers are expected, where waiting times for riders may be longer, or where stops are close to facilities such as schools, medical centers, or senior centers. Other considerations include the physical constraints of bus stop sites, preferences of adjacent property owners, and construction costs.

RapidRide Routes

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

Other Routes

Location	Boardings
City of Seattle	50
Outside Seattle	25

Use and implementation

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
Productivity	Rides per platform hour
	Passenger miles per platform mile
Passenger loads	Load factor
Schedule reliability	On-time performance
	Headway adherence
	Lateness
All-Day and Peak Network	Current service relative to All-Day and Peak Network

Adding Service

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

1. Passenger Loads
2. Schedule Reliability
3. All-Day and Peak Network
4. Productivity

Passenger Loads and Schedule Reliability

Metro first uses the passenger load and schedule reliability guidelines to assess service quality. Routes that do not meet the standards are considered to have low quality service, which 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 Network

Metro next uses the All-Day and Peak Network guidelines to determine if corridors are under-served, meaning a corridor in which the All-day Service Family assignment (see SG-9) is a higher level of service than the corridor currently has. Investments in under-served corridors are prioritized primarily using the geographic value score. Investments are ordered for implementation on the basis of geographic value score, followed by the land use score, then the social equity score. Other constraints or considerations such as fleet availability or restructuring processes could be used to suggest order of implementation.

Metro is open to forming partnerships with cities and private companies that would fully or partially fund transit service, and will make exceptions to the established priorities to make use of partner funding. Metro's partners are expected to contribute at least one-third of the cost of operating service. Partnerships will be considered according to the following priorities:

1. Service funded fully by Metro's partners would be given top priority over other service investments.
2. On corridors identified as under-served in the All-Day and Peak Network, service that is between one-third and fully funded by Metro's partners would be given top priority among the set of investments identified in under-served corridors. However, this service would not be automatically prioritized above investments to address service quality problems.

Productivity

The final guideline Metro uses to determine if additional service is needed is productivity. Routes with high productivity perform well in relation to other routes; investment in these services would improve service where it is most efficient.

Reducing service

Metro identifies service to be reduced by using the guidelines for productivity and the All-Day and Peak Network. Metro also considers restructures when making large reductions, to identify areas where restructuring can lead to more efficient service. Reduction of service can range from reduction of a single trip to elimination of an entire route. While no route or area is

exempt from change during large-scale system reductions, Metro will seek to maintain service at All-Day and Peak Network levels, and to avoid reducing service on corridors already identified as under-served.

Service restructuring allows Metro to improve efficiency while consolidating and focusing service in corridors such as those in the All-Day and Peak Network. Restructuring allows Metro to make reductions while minimizing impacts on areas identified as under-served in the All-Day and Peak Network. Metro strives to eliminate duplication of service and match service to ridership during large-scale reductions.

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 productivity.

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 low-productivity services (below 25 percent of the performance threshold) in the following order:
    - All-day routes that duplicate or overlap with other routes on corridors on the All-Day and Peak Network.
    - Peak routes failing one or both of the criteria.
    - All-day routes that operate on over-served corridors, meaning corridors in which the All-day Service Family assignment (see SG-9) is a lower level of service than the corridor currently has.
    - All-day routes that operate on corridors in which the All-day Service Family assignment is the same as the level of service that the corridor currently has. This worsens the deficiency between existing service and the All-Day and Peak Network service levels.
2. Restructure service to improve efficiency of service.
3. Reduce lower-productivity services (predominantly between 25 and 50 percent of the performance threshold):
    - All-day routes that duplicate or overlap with routes on the All-Day and Peak Network.
    - Peak routes that meet both peak criteria or are above the 25 percent threshold.
    - All-day routes on over-served corridors.
    - All-day routes on corridors in which the All-day Service Family assignment is the same as the level of service that the corridor currently has. This worsens the deficiency between existing service and the All-Day and Peak Network service levels.

4. Reduce low-productivity services in areas identified as under-served. This worsens the deficiency between existing service and the All-Day and Peak Network service levels.

In many areas of the county, and especially in urbanized areas adjacent to or surrounded by rural land, Metro may provide service in different ways in the future, including with alternatives to fixed-route transit service (Strategy 6.2.3). These services could include fixed-route with deviations or other Dial-a-Ride Transit, or other alternative services that offer mobility similar to the fixed-route service provided. Services such as Community Access Transportation also provide alternatives to fixed-route service by allowing Metro to partner with local agencies or jurisdictions to provide service in a way that meets the needs of the community and is more efficient and cost-effective than fixed-route transit. This approach is consistent with the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation because it considers a variety of products and services appropriate to the market (Strategy 2.1.1).

Implementation

Metro revises service three times each year—in spring, summer, and fall. The summer service change coordinates with the summer schedule for the University of Washington, because service is adjusted each summer on routes serving the UW. In cases of emergency or time-critical construction projects, Metro may make changes at times other than the three regularly scheduled service changes. However, these situations are rare and are kept to a minimum because of the high level of disruption and difficulty they create. Metro will identify and discuss service changes that address performance-related issues in its annual route performance report.

Any proposed changes to routes 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 one-half mile.
- Any changes in route numbers.

Public outreach

Metro conducts outreach to gather input from the public when considering major changes. Outreach ranges from relatively limited activities, such as posting rider alerts at bus stops, to more extensive outreach including mailed informational pieces and questionnaires, websites, media notices and public open houses.

For service changes that affect multiple routes or large areas, Metro may convene a community-based sounding board. 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 considers sounding board recommendations as it develops recommendations.

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

Future guidelines

As the transit system changes over time, Metro may need to change some guidelines as well. Updates to the guidelines will be considered along with updates to Metro's Strategic Plan for Public Transportation.

As part of the required 2013 review and re-adoption of the Strategic Plan and Guidelines, the results of a collaborative process that addresses the factors, methodology and prioritization of adding service consistent with Strategy 6.1.1 will be included. Key goals include:

A. More closely align factors used to serve and connect centers in the development of the All Day and Peak Network and resulting service level designations, including consideration of existing public transit services, with jurisdictions' growth decisions, such as zoning, and transit-supportive design requirements, and actions, associated with but not limited to permitting, transit operating enhancements, parking controls and pedestrian facilities; and
B. Create a category of additional service priority, complementary to existing priorities for adding service contained within the Metro Transit Service Guidelines, so that priorities include service enhancements to and from, between and within Vision 2040 Regionally Designated Centers, and other centers where plans call for transit-supportive densities and jurisdictions have invested in capital facilities, made operational changes that improve the transit operating environment and access to transit and implemented programs that incentivize transit use.

Appendix 1: Centers in King County

Regional Growth Centers
Auburn
Bellevue Downtown
Burien
Federal Way
First Hill/Capitol Hill
Kent
Northgate
Overlake
Redmond
Renton
SeaTac
Seattle CBD
South Lake Union
Totem Lake
Tukwila
University District
Uptown

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers
Ballard/Interbay
Duwamish
Kent
North Tukwila

Transit Activity Centers
Alaska Junction
Aurora Village Transit Center
Ballard (Ballard Ave NW/NW Market St)
Beacon Hill Station
Black Diamond
Bothell (UW Bothell/Cascadia Community College)
Carnation
Central District (23rd Ave E/E Jefferson St)
Children's Hospital
Columbia City Station
Covington (172nd Ave SE/SE 272nd St)
Crossroads (156th Ave NE/NE 8th St)
Crown Hill (15th Ave NW/NW 85th St)
Des Moines (Marine View Dr/S 223rd St)

Duvall
Eastgate (Bellevue College)
Enumclaw
Factoria (Factoria Blvd SE/SE Eastgate Wy)
Fairwood (140th Ave SE/SE Petrovitsky Rd)
Maple Valley (Four Corners, SR-169/Kent-Kangley Rd)
Fremont (Fremont Ave N/N 34th St)
Georgetown (13th Ave S/S Bailey St)
Green River Community College
Greenwood (Greenwood Ave N/N 85th St)
Harborview Medical Center
Highline Community 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 Technical College
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 Community 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

Connections		
Between	**And**	**Via**
Admiral District	Southcenter	California Ave SW, Military Rd, TIBS
Alki	Seattle CBD	Admiral Way
Auburn	Pacific	Algona
Auburn	Burien	Kent, SeaTac
Auburn/GRCC	Federal Way	15th St SW, Lea Hill Rd
Aurora Village	Seattle CBD	Aurora Ave N
Aurora Village	Northgate	Meridian Av N
Avondale	Kirkland	NE 85th St, NE Redmond Wy, Avondale Wy NE
Ballard	Seattle CBD	15th Ave W
Ballard	University District	Green Lake, Greenwood
Ballard	Lake City	Holman Road, Northgate
Ballard	Seattle CBD	W Nickerson, Westlake Av N, 9th Ave
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, Airport Wy
Burien	Seattle CBD	Delridge, Ambaum
Burien	Seattle CBD	Des Moines Mem Dr, 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
Cowen Park	Seattle CBD	University Way, I-5
Discovery Park	Seattle CBD	Gilman Ave W, 22nd Ave W, Thorndyke Av W
Eastgate	Bellevue	Newport Wy , S. Bellevue, Beaux Arts
Eastgate	Overlake	Phantom Lake
Eastgate	Bellevue	Somerset, Factoria, Woodridge
Enumclaw	Auburn	Auburn Wy S, SR 164
Fairwood	Renton	S Puget Dr, Royal Hills
Federal Way	Kent	Military Road
Federal Way	SeaTac	SR-99
Fremont	Broadview	8th Av NW, 3rd Av 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	North Bend	Fall City, Snoqualmie
Issaquah	Eastgate	Newport Way
Issaquah	Overlake	Sammamish, Bear Creek
Kenmore	Totem Lake	Finn Hill, Juanita
Kenmore	Kirkland	Juanita
Kenmore	Shoreline	Lake Forest Park, Aurora Village TC
Kenmore	University District	Lake Forest Park, Lake City

Connections		
Between	**And**	**Via**
Kennydale	Renton	Edmonds Av NE
Kent	Renton	84th Av S, Lind Av SW
Kent	Renton	Kent East Hill
Kent	Burien	Kent-DM Rd, S. 240th St, 1st Av S
Kent	Maple Valley	Kent-Kangley Road
Kent	Seattle CBD	Tukwila
Kirkland	Factoria	Overlake, Crossroads, Eastgate
Kirkland	Bellevue	South Kirkland
Lake City	University District	35th Ave NE
Lake City	University District	Lake City, Sand Point
Lake City	Seattle CBD	NE 125th St, Northgate, I-5
Laurelhurst	University District	NE 45th 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 Av S, S Jackson St
Mountlake Terrace	Northgate	15th Ave NE, 5th Ave NE
Mt Baker	University District	23rd Ave E
Northeast Tacoma	Federal Way	SW 356th St, 9th Ave S
Northgate	Seattle CBD	Green Lake, Wallingford
Northgate	University District	Roosevelt
Northgate	University District	Roosevelt Way NE, NE 75th St
Othello Station	Columbia City	Seward Park
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	Seattle Center	Martin Luther King Jr Wy, E John St, Denny Way
Rainier Beach	Seattle CBD	Rainier Ave
Rainier Beach	Capitol Hill	Rainier Ave
Redmond	Eastgate	148th Ave, Crossroads, Bellevue College
Redmond	Fall City	Duvall, Carnation
Redmond	Totem Lake	Willows Road
Renton	Enumclaw	Maple Valley, Black Diamond
Renton	Seattle CBD	Martin Luther King Jr Wy, I-5
Renton	Renton Highlands	NE 4th St, Union Ave NE
Renton	Burien	S 154th St
Renton	Seattle CBD	Skyway, S. Beacon Hill
Renton	Rainier Beach	West Hill, Rainier View
Renton Highlands	Renton	NE 7th St, Edmonds Av NE
Richmond Beach	Northgate	Richmond Bch Rd, 15th Ave NE
Sand Point	University District	NE 55th St
Shoreline	University District	Jackson Park, 15th Av NE
Shoreline CC	Greenwood	Greenwood Av N
Shoreline CC	Northgate	N 130th St, Meridian Av N
Shoreline CC	Lake City	N 155th St, Jackson Park
Totem Lake	Seattle CBD	Kirkland, SR-520

Connections		
Between	**And**	**Via**
Tukwila	Des Moines	McMicken Heights, Sea-Tac
Tukwila	Seattle CBD	Pacific Hwy S, 4th Ave S
Tukwila	Fairwood	S 180th St, Carr Road
Twin Lakes	Federal Way	S 320th St
Twin Lakes	Federal Way	SW Campus Dr, 1st Ave S
University District	Seattle CBD	Broadway
University District	Seattle CBD	Eastlake, Fairview
University District	Seattle CBD	Lakeview
University District	Bellevue	SR-520
UW Bothell	Redmond	Woodinville, Cottage Lake
UW Bothell/CCC	Kirkland	132nd Ave NE, Lake Washington Tech
Vashon	Tahlequah	Valley Center
Wedgwood	Cowen Park	View Ridge, NE 65th St
West Seattle	Seattle CBD	Fauntleroy, Alaska Junction
White Center	Seattle CBD	16th Ave SW, SSCC
White Center	Seattle CBD	Highland Park, 4th Ave S
Woodinville	Kirkland	Kingsgate