

# Metro Service Guidelines Task Force **Report and Recommendations**

October 2015



King County  
**METRO**



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# Metro Service Guidelines Task Force

October 2015

King County Executive Dow Constantine  
401 Fifth Ave., Ste 800  
Seattle, WA 98104

King County Councilmembers Rod Dembowski, Reagan Dunn, Larry Gossett, Jane Hague, Kathy Lambert,  
Joe McDermott, Larry Phillips, Dave Upthegrove, Pete von Reichbauer

King County Administration Building  
516 Third Ave., Ste 1200  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear County Executive Constantine and Councilmembers:

We, the members of the Metro Service Guidelines Task Force, are pleased to provide you with our recommendations in response to Ordinance 17941. This ordinance charged us with reviewing: (1) how King County Metro measures transit service performance as reflected in the Metro Service Guidelines; (2) how well the goals of geographic value and social equity are included in the Service Guidelines; (3) how well Metro's policies for purchase of additional services are working; and (4) how well Metro's guidelines for alternative services are working.

As a group, we represent communities across King County and diverse perspectives. We met eight times between March and October 2015 as a full task force. Most of us also participated in a technical workshop in August. At our meetings, we received briefings and materials from Metro, and held spirited discussions. The principles and recommendations in this report are the result of our discussions and represent our consensus agreement.


The task force will meet one last time in the first quarter of 2016 to hear from the staff about how they are putting our recommendations to use. We look forward to learning about this implementation.

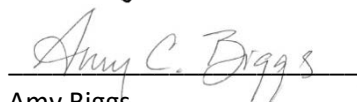
Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide advice on the Service Guidelines to ensure that Metro's services serve the varied needs of King County communities. We also want to express sincere thanks to Metro staff for their responsiveness to our questions and assistance throughout the process.

Sincerely yours,

Metro Service Guidelines Task Force Members

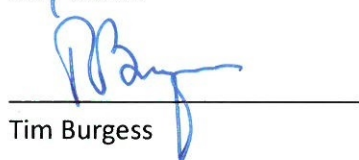
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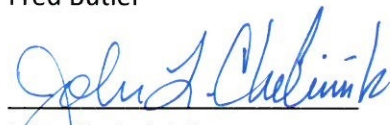
  
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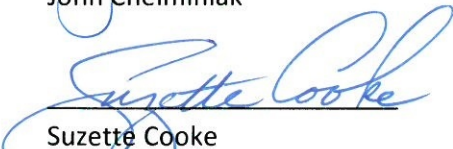
  
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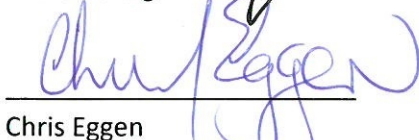
  
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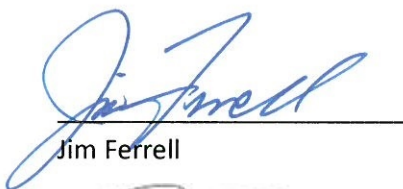
  
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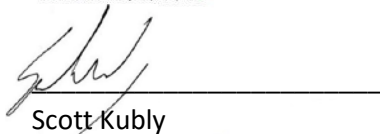
  
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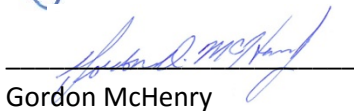
  
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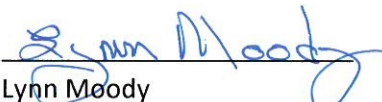
  
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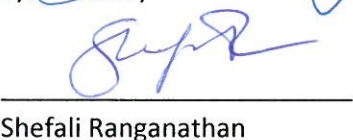
  
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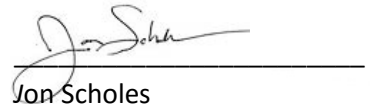
  
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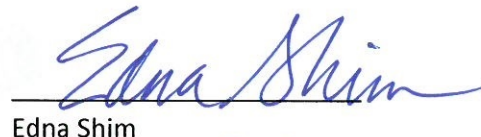
  
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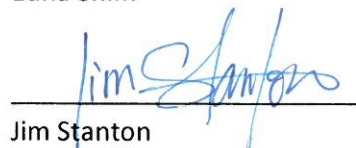
  
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Jim Stanton

*Ex Officio:*

  
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Kevin Desmond

  
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Mike Harbour

## Metro Service Guidelines Task Force Members

Name	Representation	Name	Representation
Nancy Backus	City of Auburn	Josh Kavanagh	University of Washington
Amy Biggs	Snoqualmie Valley Transportation	Matt Koltnow	Transit Advisory Commission
Vic Bishop	ETA	Scott Kubly	Seattle Department of Transportation
Josh Brown	Puget Sound Regional Council	Matt Larson	City of Snoqualmie
Tim Burgess	City of Seattle	John Marchione	City of Redmond
Fred Butler	City of Issaquah	Gordon McHenry	Solid Ground
John Chelminiak	City of Bellevue	Lynn Moody	Hopelink
Suzette Cooke	City of Kent	Shefali Ranganathan	Transportation Choices Coalition
Dorene Cornwell	Mobility advocate (replaced Jonathan Porter)	Tom Rasmussen	City of Seattle
Lauren Craig	Puget Sound Sage	Carla Saulter	Rider
Chris Eggen	City of Shoreline	Jon Scholes	Downtown Seattle Association
Mahnaz Eshetu	ReWA	Edna Shim	Children's Hospital
Jim Ferrell	City of Federal Way	Jim Stanton	Microsoft
Hilary Franz	Futurewise	<b>Ex Officio</b>	<b>Representation</b>
George Frasier	Green River College	Kevin Desmond	King County Metro
Patrick Green	Bellevue College	Mike Harbour	Sound Transit

*NOTE: Paul Bachtel and David Freiboth were appointed to the task force but resigned during the deliberations.*

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# Metro Service Guidelines Task Force

## Report and Recommendations

### Executive Summary

In 2010, the Regional Transit Task Force developed a groundbreaking set of policy recommendations for transit calling for transparent, performance-based guidelines for making service decisions and emphasizing productivity, social equity and geographic value. King County Metro developed the Metro Service Guidelines to help the agency make decisions about adding, reducing and changing transit service to deliver productive, high-quality service where it is needed most. The service guidelines were put through what could be considered a significant stress test in 2014 to guide a major service reduction. These reductions spurred questions as to whether the guidelines strike the right balance to serve the county's growing population.

In November 2014, the King County Council established the King County Metro Transit Service Guidelines Task Force to review and make recommendations on: (1) how Metro measures transit service performance; (2) how well the goals of geographic value and social equity are included; (3) how well policies for purchase of additional services are working; and (4) how well the guidelines for alternative services are working. County Executive Constantine and the County Council appointed the members of the Service Guidelines Task Force. The task force met eight times and held two technical workshops.

### Key Areas of Discussion

To carry out its charge, the Service Guidelines Task Force focused its review and discussion on the following key aspects of the guidelines and Metro's planning process:

- **Target service levels** for the All-Day and Peak Network of transit services and Metro's method for scoring corridors on productivity, social equity and geographic value. Target service levels factor into Metro's investment priorities for where to put service in times of growth.
- The **service types** that Metro uses to classify service to evaluate route performance.
- The **performance measures** Metro uses to assess the service each route is providing. Metro currently uses: (1) rides per platform hour; and (2) passenger miles per platform mile.
- **Peak-only transit service** that operates primarily between residential areas and employment centers in one direction during peak travel times.
- The importance of connections between the types of **centers**<sup>1</sup> across King County that form the basis for the countywide transit network and of connecting people to major destinations.
- Metro's **Alternative Services** Program, which brings transportation services to parts of King County that do not have the infrastructure, density or land use to support traditional fixed-route bus service, or where there are gaps in service coverage.
- Metro's process to develop a **Long-Range Public Transportation Plan** to consider what the transit system should look like in 2040.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers refers to PSRC-designated regional growth centers, PSRC-designated regional manufacturing/industrial centers, and Metro-identified transit activity centers. See the Glossary in Appendix 5 for further definition.

## Principles

The Service Guidelines Task Force developed the following principle statements to help guide Metro’s development of policy changes to the Metro Service Guidelines, and the Strategic Plan and other Metro planning efforts. (Below is a summary. See page 11 for the full principles.)

- Different parts of the county have different travel demands.
- Measure performance of routes against similar services.
- Right-size service and seed new markets.
- Create better connections between centers.
- Maintain and improve services that meet productivity objectives.
- Maintain and improve services that meet social equity objectives.
- Maintain and improve services that meet geographic value objectives.
- The demands for transit service far outweigh current available resources.
- Value all forms of partnerships, including direct financial support, improved transit speed and reliability, and with cities that make land use and infrastructure decisions that would support transit access and ridership.

## Recommendations

The Service Guidelines Task Force recommends the following changes and actions related to the Metro Service Guidelines, and other Metro service policies and programs. The task force understands that Metro plans to integrate many of these recommendations into updates to its Strategic Plan, Service Guidelines, and Long Range Plan. (Below is a summary. See page 12 for the full recommendations.)

- Make changes to the Service Guidelines:
  - Modify service types to create a peak policy emphasis; create a new service type category for Dial-a-Ride (DART) and Community Shuttle services; and change the names of the other categories to Urban and Suburban.<sup>2</sup>
  - Better reflect geographic value and social equity when reducing service and making service investments.<sup>3</sup>
    - Allow for a scaling of points for geographic value.
    - Allow for a scaling of points for social equity.
    - Add consideration for all park-and-rides.
    - Develop minimum service standards.
- Make changes to the planning process:
  - More thoroughly and explicitly address issues regarding origin and destination.
  - Develop a mobility metric to assess the time to travel to/from households and centers.
  - Better identify the needs of transit riders and potential riders, including traditionally isolated or disadvantaged communities.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3, slide titled “Service Type Option 5: Peak Policy Emphasis.”

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 4: Key Assumptions Behind Task Force Recommendations.



- Increase transparency by conducting regular outreach throughout the county.
- Better communicate the schedule or timeline for when Metro will be making changes.
- When making investments in the transit network, consider regional planning efforts, changes to the transportation network and productivity, geographic value and social equity impacts.
- Enhance the alternative services program:
  - Use alternative services to: (1) replace poorly performing services; (2) provide better connections between centers; (3) serve rural communities; and (4) serve emerging markets.
  - Use this approach when looking for efficiencies within the network and prior to or in connection with reducing service.
  - Use the alternative services community planning process to better identify the needs of transit riders and potential riders, including traditionally isolated or disadvantaged communities.
  - Significantly increase funding support to plan and deliver more alternative services.
  - Enhance the planning for alternative services by facilitating discussions between municipalities, employers and residents.
  - Create a new metric for measuring performance of alternative services.
  - Explore opportunities to further integrate private service providers.
  - Expand and enhance the van pool program, specifically the TripPool component.
- Make changes to partnerships and land-use initiatives:
  - Actively collaborate with private parties and communities to explore public - private partnerships.
  - Identify potential new community partnerships that would support transit options for low-income workers.
  - Develop and implement a strategy that utilizes Park and Ride resources more effectively and adds capacity.
  - Work with jurisdictions to create investments that improve service, attract transit riders, and achieve land use goals that support transit services.
  - Continue and expand engagement with private transportation operators.
- Support new funding, continued operational efficiencies, and a vision for the future of transit service in King County:
  - There is a need for new resources.
  - Identify a network of transit services through the Long Range Plan. This network will include new transit corridors and connections between centers.
  - Develop a policy proposal to integrate the values of the Service Guidelines into the long-range planning process and resulting plan.

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# Metro Service Guidelines Task Force

## Report and Recommendations

### I. Background

In 2010, the Regional Transit Task Force, a group of stakeholders appointed by the King County Executive, developed a groundbreaking set of policy recommendations for transit in the county. These recommendations helped to reshape how King County evaluates transit services and makes service decisions. The Regional Transit Task Force called for transparent, performance-based guidelines emphasizing productivity, social equity and geographic value.

#### A. Development and Use of Service Guidelines

Based on the Regional Transit Task Force’s recommendations, King County Metro developed the Metro Service Guidelines. Metro also recognized the importance of service guidelines in Strategy 6.1.1 of its *Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011 – 2021*, which calls for it to “Manage the transit system through service guidelines and performance measures.” Metro uses 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” (Service Guidelines Task Force Notebook, p. 4.1).

Since adopting the Service Guidelines, Metro has analyzed performance, documented the analysis in annual *Service Guidelines Report*, updated the guidelines and adjusted service. An annual *Service Guidelines Report* shows how Metro uses the guidelines to plan, assess and change service. Each report presents the results of the analysis of annual data, allowing Metro to compare service each year to identify trends and areas needing improvement. The annual analysis determines: (1) where and how much service should be provided (the results of the target service level analysis, which identifies the productivity, social equity and geographic value<sup>4</sup> of corridors throughout the county); (2) how service is performing (through route performance analysis on each route in the system); and (3) where investments should be made to maintain the quality of service (to address overcrowding and reliability).

In short, the service guidelines help Metro “make decisions about adding, reducing and changing transit service to deliver productive, high-quality service where it is needed most” (2014 *Service Guidelines Report*, p. 4.31).

In 2014, the service guidelines were put through what could be considered a significant stress test—guiding a major reduction in service. The service reductions spurred some questions as to whether the guidelines strike the right balance to serve the county’s growing population.

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<sup>4</sup> See the Glossary in Appendix 5 for definitions of terms.

## B. Creation of and Charge to the Task Force

In November 2014, the King County Council established the King County Metro Transit Service Guidelines Task Force, and charged it with “reviewing and making recommendations regarding:

- “1. How transit service performance is measured as specified in the Metro Service Guidelines to reflect the varied purposes of different types of transit service
- “2. Approaches to evaluating how the goal of geographic value is included in the Metro Service Guidelines, including minimum service standards
- “3. Approaches to evaluating how the goal of social equity is included in the Metro Service Guidelines
- “4. Financial policies for purchase of additional services within a municipality or among multiple municipalities
- “5. Outline guidelines for alternative services implementation” (Ordinance 17941, adopting the 2015/2016 King County Biennial Budget).

County Executive Constantine and the County Council appointed the members of the Service Guidelines Task Force to include representatives of communities across the county and of diverse perspectives. (See list of members following the cover letter of this report.) John Howell of Cedar River Group facilitated the task force.

## C. Task Force Meetings

The Service Guidelines Task Force met eight times between March 4 and October 7, 2015. Most of the members also attended a technical workshop in August (August 13, repeated on the 17<sup>th</sup>). The initial meetings included getting the task force’s agreement on a set of ground rules for its work together (Appendix 1), and briefings by Metro staff to give members a grounding in Metro’s service planning process, the Metro Service Guidelines, performance measurement, geographic value and social equity. The remaining meetings included robust discussion on these topics, which led to the development of a set of principles and recommendations. The flow of meeting topics was as follows:

Meeting #	Date	Topics Covered
1	March 4	Review of task force charge, agreement on ground rules, presentation on Metro overview and service guidelines
2	April 1	Presentations on performance measurement and geographic value
3	April 30	Presentation on social equity; discussion of transit system values
4	May 21	Review of social equity write-up; discussion of geographic value, service allocation and service types
5	June 3	Review of geographic value and service allocation write-up; interactive presentation on alternative services; discussion of service types
6	June 16	Discussion of preliminary draft principles and recommendations; interactive presentation on policies for purchasing service
--	Aug. 13 & 17	Technical workshop on target service level analysis and service types analysis
7	Sept. 17	Review of draft recommendations and report, follow up from Technical Workshops
8	Oct. 7	Review of final draft recommendations and report

## D. Key Areas of Task Force Discussion

To carry out its charge, the Service Guidelines Task Force focused its review and discussion on the following key aspects of the guidelines and Metro's planning process. (See also the slides in Appendix 3).

### Metro's Use of the Guidelines

As noted above, Metro uses the service guidelines to meet changing needs for transit service and to deliver efficient, high-quality service. The service guidelines provide direction in the following areas:

- Setting target service levels
- Evaluating system performance by service type
- Restructuring service
- Designing new service
- Making service investment and reduction decisions.

Most of the task force's discussion focused on the following areas of the guidelines.

**Target service levels.** Metro organizes its services in an All-Day and Peak Network. Metro uses three overall factors to set target service levels in this network: productivity, social equity and geographic value.

- **Corridor Productivity:** Metro views corridor productivity as the potential market for transit based on the land use characteristics of the corridor, as well as current transit use on a corridor. Metro assesses corridor productivity by looking at the numbers of:
  - Households
  - Jobs and students
  - Ridership.
- **Social equity:** Metro aims to serve areas that have many low-income and minority residents, and others who may depend on transit. Metro assesses social equity by looking at numbers of:
  - Riders boarding in low-income census tracts
  - Riders boarding in minority census tracts.
- **Geographic value:** Metro aims to respond to public transportation needs throughout the county. Metro assesses geographic value by looking at:
  - Connections to regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers
  - Connections to transit activity centers.

To quantify and balance these factors, Metro uses a point system. The proportions and possible scores are as follows:

- **50 percent for productivity.** A corridor can have a score of between 0 and 20 for productivity (10 points for the number of households, and 10 points for the number of jobs and the student enrollment).
- **25 percent for social equity.** A corridor can have a score of between 0 and 10 total for social equity (5 points for low-income and 5 points for minority). A corridor scores 0 if it has fewer people boarding transit than the average boarding the system in all low-income or minority

census tracts combined, or scores 5 if it has more boardings than the system average in those areas.

- **25 percent for geographic value.** A corridor can have a score of between 0 and 10 for geographic value. Corridors receive 5 points if they are the primary connection between transit activity centers, as designated in the Strategic Plan, and receive up to 10 points if they are the primary connection between regional growth or manufacturing/industrial centers.

**Service types.** Service types classify service into categories based on chosen criteria. Metro analyzes productivity in **Peak, Off-Peak, and Night** periods based on the market the route serves, using the following two service types:

- **Seattle Core routes** serve the greater downtown Seattle area (including downtown, First Hill, Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, and Uptown) and/or the University District, and connect these areas with any area in King County.
- **Non-Seattle Core routes** serve and operate wholly within other areas of Seattle and King County.

**Route measures of performance and productivity:** Metro uses two measures to assess the actual route usage and service performance of each route:

- **Rides per platform hour**—Total number of riders divided by the total hours a bus travels, from the time it leaves its base until it returns
- **Passenger miles per platform mile**—Total miles traveled by all passengers, divided by the total miles the bus operates from the time it leaves its base until it returns.

**Peak-only service.** Peak-only service operates only during peak travel periods (5:00–9:00 a.m. and 3:00–7:00 p.m. weekdays), primarily in one direction. Peak-only service typically brings riders from residential areas to job centers. All-day routes also offer service during peak periods, but this is not included in the definition of peak-only service.

**Investments, reductions and restructures.** When Metro needs to make decisions to invest, reduce or restructure service, Metro analyzes route productivity for each service type (based on riders per platform hour and passenger miles per platform miles, as described above), overcrowding, reliability, and target service levels.

When resources are available to make **investments** in service, Metro follows the order of its investment priorities. Metro bases investment need on two factors that demonstrate service quality (overcrowding and reliability) and on an analysis of unmet need, called target service levels. When resources are available, Metro uses the following priorities to make investment decisions:

- **Priority 1:** Reduce passenger overcrowding.
- **Priority 2:** Improve schedule reliability.
- **Priority 3:** Achieve target service levels.
- **Priority 4:** Become more productive.

The factors of productivity, social equity and geographic value come into play if or when the investment reaches Priority 3.

When making decisions to **reduce** service, Metro analyzes poor performing routes and considers target service levels, following the reduction priorities in the service guidelines.

When planning for service **restructures**, Metro considers route performance but also takes into account other factors, such as large-scale service and capital infrastructure enhancements. In general, restructures are made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire transit network, in accordance with the service restructure guidelines found in the Metro service guidelines.

### Centers in King County

Centers are activity nodes throughout King County that form the basis for the countywide transit network. There are three types of centers: regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, and transit activity center. (See Appendix 2. Centers in King County.) The PSRC has identified regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers as part of the *VISION 2040* plan. Centers are defined by the PSRC as:

- **Manufacturing/Industrial Center** – an area of intensive manufacturing and/or industrial activity.
- **Regional Growth Center** – a defined focal area within a city or community that has a mix of housing, employment, retail and entertainment uses. It is pedestrian-oriented, which allows people to walk to different destinations or attractions.

Transit activity centers are designated by Metro as areas of activity that include major destinations and transit attractions, such as large employment sites, significant healthcare institutions and major social service agencies. These centers support geographic value in the distribution of the network. Each transit activity center identified by Metro meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Is located in an area of mixed-use development that includes concentrated housing, employment, and commercial activity
- Includes a major regional hospital, medical center or institution of higher education located outside of designated regional growth centers
- Is located outside other designated regional growth centers at a transit hub served by three or more all-day routes.

Local jurisdictions may nominate additions to the list of transit activity centers. These nominations 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-one of the Target Service Level analysis process must result in an assignment of 30-minute service frequency or better.

### **Alternative Services**

Metro's Alternative Services Program brings service to parts of King County that do not have the infrastructure, density or land use to support traditional fixed-route bus service, or where there are gaps in the coverage of fixed-route service. In such areas, alternative transportation services may be a better match for community transportation needs. Alternative services may also be more cost-effective. For such areas of the county, Metro works with the community and other partners to develop alternative services to serve community transportation needs. In developing these services, Metro seeks to:

- Collaborate with stakeholders to design a service that meets their needs
- Partner with communities to deliver and market these services
- Develop services that can be sustained over time.

Metro's existing alternative services are: VanPool, VanShare, Community Access Transportation (CAT), Dial-a-Ride Transit (DART), Community Shuttles, Community Hub and Flexible Rideshare. Community partnerships are especially important in developing the latter three. Examples of these services are: The Valley Shuttle (Snoqualmie Valley), Route 628 Issaquah Highlands to North Bend, the Burien Community Shuttle, the Mercer Island Community Shuttle, and the Redmond Flexible Rideshare. Projects are in planning in Duvall, Vashon Island and Southeast King County.

### **Long-Range Plan**

Metro is currently in the process of developing a Long-Range Public Transportation Plan to consider what the transit system should look like in 2040. The process includes discussion with and multiple forms of input from community members, jurisdictions, stakeholders and the public. Many issues raised in the Service Guidelines Task Force are part of the Long-Range Plan process, including how the transit network will connect centers in the county, where future service investments should be made, how new markets should be seeded, and what funding and partnerships are needed to develop a robust transit network. Participation in the Long-Range Plan by stakeholders around the county will be key in determining the future of transit in King County. The Long Range Plan is expected to be submitted to the King County Council for review and adoption in mid-2016.



## II. Principles and Recommendations

The task force members discussed and agreed on a set of broad principles and a set of specific recommendations.

### A. Principles

The Service Guidelines Task Force developed the following principle statements to help guide Metro's development of policy changes to the Service Guidelines, and the Strategic Plan and other Metro planning efforts.

- **Different parts of the county have different travel demands.** The Service Guidelines Task Force recognizes that transit mobility needs to take different forms throughout King County and acknowledges that a different structure of services types may help align transit service solutions with these needs. This will require a more refined recognition of the different land use patterns in the county and the purposes of that transit service.
- **Measure performance of routes against similar services.** The current guidelines have two service types, and all services within those two service types are evaluated equally against each other. However, the cost and demand characteristics of different types of service are inherently dissimilar.
- **Right-size service and seed new markets.** Consider the range of service types to enhance services to lower density communities and seed new markets. Some greater emphasis in alternative services should be placed on supporting new markets where land use patterns, job and population growth, and infrastructure investments suggest opportunities for an emerging transit corridor.
- **Create better connections between centers.** Transit services should help support mobility between non-Seattle centers and to connect people to jobs, particularly for low-wage job centers throughout King County. To accomplish this goal there needs to be a better understanding about the origins and destinations of both current and potential riders.
- **Maintain and improve services that meet productivity objectives.** Making adjustments to the Service Guidelines will create some tradeoffs in the level of service provided throughout the system. Changes to the Guidelines must continue to focus on making each of the different service types more productive. Productivity will result in higher ridership and fare revenues, and lower cost per rider.
- **Maintain and improve services that meet social equity objectives.** Social equity should be a key consideration in maintaining, improving, and allocating service. Access to transit is a crucial determinant in social and economic opportunity, health outcomes, and affordable housing choices. King County Metro should find opportunities to better serve traditionally underserved, transit-dependent and isolated communities, such as those with limited English proficiency, low-income and no-income populations, people of color, people with disabilities, seniors, and those

with limited transportation options (within the context of applicable federal laws, such as Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] and others).

- **Maintain and improve services that meet geographic value objectives.** Each part of the county should feel value for the transit services it receives. Those services will not always be in the form of fixed-route scheduled service. Metro may deploy a variety of service types to create value throughout the county. When reducing service, Metro should consider the relative impacts to all areas of the county and work to minimize or mitigate significant negative impacts in any one area.
- **The demands for transit service far outweigh current available resources.** There are considerable unmet needs across the transit system – both as defined by the Service Guidelines in the near term and as identified by the PSRC and addressed in the King County Metro Long Range Plan now under development.
- **Value all forms of partnerships, including direct financial support, improved transit speed and reliability, and with cities that make land use and infrastructure decisions that would support transit access and ridership.** Land use and traffic operations are critical to transit success, and jurisdictions control both. Jurisdictions should incorporate transit-supportive land use and transit operating priorities in planning and development. Metro/King County should emphasize partnership opportunities and consider funding to incentivize those opportunities.

## B. Recommendations

The Service Guidelines Task Force recommends the following changes and actions related to the Metro Service Guidelines, and other Metro service policies and programs. The task force understands that Metro plans to integrate many of these recommendations into updates to its Strategic Plan, Service Guidelines, and Long Range Plan.

- Make changes to the Service Guidelines:
  - Modify service types to create a peak policy emphasis creating greater protection in future reduction scenarios for peak-only service; create a new service type category for Dial-a-Ride (DART) and Community Shuttle services; and change the names of the other categories of service to Urban and Suburban.<sup>5</sup>
  - Better reflect geographic value and social equity when reducing service and making service investments per the service guidelines.<sup>6</sup>
    - Revise the point system to allow for a scaling of points for geographic value to place more value on centers.<sup>7</sup>
    - Revise the point system to allow for a scaling of points for social equity. Maintain the value of social equity corridors to the system.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 3, slide titled “Service Type Option 5: Peak Policy Emphasis.”

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 4: Key Assumptions Behind Task Force Recommendations.

<sup>7</sup> Centers refers to PSRC-designated regional growth centers, PSRC-designated regional manufacturing/industrial centers, and Metro-identified transit activity centers. See the Glossary in Appendix 5 for further definition.

- Add consideration for all park-and-rides into the analysis.
  - Develop minimum service standards for each service type.
- Make changes to the planning process:
  - Use the service planning and community engagement process to more thoroughly and explicitly address issues regarding origin and destination, including frequency of service. Discussions about origins and destinations should be part of ongoing community outreach (see recommendation below), not just when service reductions or additions are being planned.
  - Develop and implement a mobility metric to assess how well connected centers are to the jobs and households across King County, and the time it takes to travel to/from households and centers. Use this metric to enhance the connectivity of the transit network over time.
  - Use the planning process to better identify the needs of transit riders and potential riders, including traditionally isolated or disadvantaged communities, such as those with limited English proficiency, low-income and homeless populations, people of color, people with disabilities and Access users, youth, elderly people, and those who are currently unserved or underserved by transit.
  - Increase transparency of Metro’s process and help jurisdictions plan for the future by conducting regular outreach throughout the county and integrating the Service Guidelines with Metro’s Long Range Plan.
  - Better communicate the schedule or timeline for when Metro will be making changes in different areas of the county, well in advance of those anticipated changes. This schedule could be established as part of the implementation of an approved Long Range Plan.
  - When making investments in the transit network, Metro will consider regional planning efforts, changes to the transportation network and productivity, geographic value and social equity impacts.
- Enhance the alternative services program:
  - Since Metro has a broad suite of products and services, is an industry-leader in its alternative services program, and has demonstrated that alternative services cost less to provide than fixed route services, the alternative services program should be expanded to better meet mobility needs of King County. The recent budget action adding new resources for alternative services for 2015/16 was a good start. Alternative services may be used to address several system needs not being met by current transit services: (1) replace poorly performing, fixed-route services under certain circumstances; (2) provide better connections between centers; (3) serve rural communities; and (4) serve emerging markets to “seed” potential new routes.
  - Metro will consider redesigning and reallocating services and/or using alternative services to preserve mobility in individual communities. This approach should be used when looking for efficiencies within the network and prior to or in connection with

reducing service. By using this approach, Metro will attempt to mitigate the loss of service to communities.

- Use the alternative services community planning process to better identify the needs of transit riders and potential riders, including traditionally isolated or disadvantaged communities, such as those with limited English proficiency, low-income and homeless populations, people of color, people with disabilities and Access users, youth, elderly people, and those who are currently unserved or underserved by transit (within the context of applicable federal laws, such as Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] and others).
  - Significantly increase funding support to plan and deliver more alternative services where fixed-route service is not cost effective. The range of alternative services could include Dial-a-Ride (DART), community shuttle, van pool, TripPool, car pool, ride share, bikeshare, and partnerships with private transportation providers. The funding support should not come at the expense of existing efficient, productive services.
  - Enhance the planning for alternative services by facilitating discussions between municipalities, employers and residents to identify unmet needs and opportunities for alternative services and partnerships.
  - Create a new metric for measuring performance of alternative services and differentiate the types of alternative service in evaluating their performance.
  - Explore opportunities to further integrate private service providers as a way to augment the Metro-provided alternative services.
  - Expand and enhance the van pool program as part of the Alternative Services program, specifically the TripPool component of Alternative Services. Consider modifications to increase the subsidy for TripPool services that extend transit services. Metro should explore whether a lower fare could increase the demand for TripPools. Increase promotional efforts including short-term fare incentives to expand TripPool program.
- Make changes to partnerships and land-use initiatives:
    - Metro will actively collaborate with private parties and communities to explore public - private partnerships that: (1) are mutually beneficial to the agency and customers; (2) extend service in complementary ways to current fixed route service; (3) extend mobility benefits to communities that have corridors below their target service level; and (4) enable more service hours, or extend service efficiencies. Examples could include (but are not limited to) integrated planning for private employer shuttle services, incentives for ORCA distribution to disadvantaged populations, and lease agreements for private service access to public Park and Rides.
    - Identify potential new community partnerships that would support transit options for low-income workers. Work with employers to identify service options.
    - Develop and implement a strategy that utilizes Park and Ride resources more effectively and adds capacity. Increase management of Park and Rides, including better utilization of current facilities through parking permit programs, increasing enforcement, as well as making modest near-term investments (e.g., re-striping and/or evaluating effectiveness of current leased parking lots/spaces and considering additional spaces). In addition,

- develop plans for future investments in new or expanded park and ride capacity (exploring both ownership and leased options) in concert with other partners (FTA, WSDOT, Sound Transit, local jurisdictions, or private companies).
- Work with jurisdictions to create investments that improve service, attract transit riders, and achieve land use goals that support transit services.
  - Continue and expand engagement with private transportation operators (employee and residential shuttles, transportation network companies, taxis, and other commercial transportation entities) to enable complementary use of Metro services and facilities with those operators.
- Support new funding, continued operational efficiencies, and a vision for the future of transit service in King County:
    - There is a need for new resources (e.g., consideration of taxes, fees and fare revenues) to support the growth of transit services valued by all parts of the county. To achieve this goal Metro must continue its work focused on transparency, efficiency and accountability.
    - Identify a network of transit services through the Long Range Plan that can be supported by stakeholders throughout King County. This network will include new transit corridors and connections between centers. The network will include both fixed-route service as well as a variety of alternative services, products and ADA Paratransit, depending on the diverse travel needs of the local community. This network will be a reflection of local jurisdictions' planning efforts.
    - Develop a policy proposal to integrate the values of the Service Guidelines into the long-range planning process and resulting plan. The Long Range Plan should reflect productivity, social equity, and geographic value principles identified by the Strategic Plan and the task force. It should also describe how Service Guidelines investment priorities interact with the expansion of the transit network, as identified in the Long Range Plan. As a result, Metro will be able to better prioritize investments in the near and long-term.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Task Force Ground Rules

*As adopted by the Service Guidelines Task Force at its March 4, 2015, meeting*

1. All meetings will be open to the public.
2. Meetings will start and end on time.
3. The task force is comprised of people with a variety of perspectives and interests. Differences of opinion are to be expected and will be respected by the task force and its members. Task force discussions will be characterized by careful deliberation and civility.
4. The task force is encouraged to think creatively about potential solutions for the issues the group has been asked to address. Task force members will agree to keep an open mind to possible new ideas that meet the interests of all parties. Task force members will work to understand the different points of view and perspectives of other members. Questions to better understand each member's interests are encouraged.
5. The task force will operate by consensus. The goal will be to reach unanimous consensus in which all members can support, or live with the task force recommendations. If unanimous consensus cannot be reached differences of opinion will be noted and included as part of the task force final recommendations.
6. The task force is advisory to the County Council and County Executive. It is not a decisionmaking body.
7. The task force does not plan to take formal public testimony. However, the task force will accept questions or comments from the public at the conclusion of meetings.
8. Task force members are strongly encouraged to participate in every meeting to achieve continuity in discussions from one meeting to the next. If members cannot attend a meeting it is his/her responsibility to be informed about the topics discussed by the next meeting. An absent member may ask someone to attend a meeting on their behalf to listen to the discussion, but that person will not be able to participate in discussions or votes.
9. If a task force member cannot attend a meeting and wishes to make a statement regarding an issue that is on the agenda for that meeting, he or she may provide the facilitator or the project manager with a written statement, which will be read to the full group when the issue is being considered by those present at the meeting.
10. Meeting materials will be sent via email to task force members in advance whenever possible. Any handouts at meetings will be emailed to members who were not present.
11. Meeting summaries will be prepared and distributed via email to all task force members in a timely manner. The summaries will also be posted on the project web site.

12. Any member may speak to the media or other groups or audiences regarding issues before the task force, provided s/he speaks only for her or himself. Inquiries from the media regarding the progress of the group as a whole should be directed to the facilitator or project manager. Members will let the process reach its conclusion before describing potential strategies or ideas as task force recommendations. Members agree to bring issues or concerns to the task force before raising them with others in a public fashion.

13. It is understood that task force members cannot unilaterally make commitments on behalf of their respective organizations. However, each member will work hard to understand any issue or concern raised by their organization and will communicate those issues in a timely fashion to the full task force.

14. The facilitator will communicate with task force members between meetings to understand issues and search for consensus on solutions.

15. Metro staff will be responsive to the information requests from the task force. However, it may not be possible to meet all information requests. Any information requests outside of the task force meetings should be made through the Metro project manager or the facilitator



## Appendix 2: Centers in King County

### Regional Growth Centers

Auburn  
Bellevue Downtown  
Burien  
Federal Way  
First Hill/Capitol Hill  
Issaquah (to be  
added in the 2015  
Service Guidelines  
Update)  
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

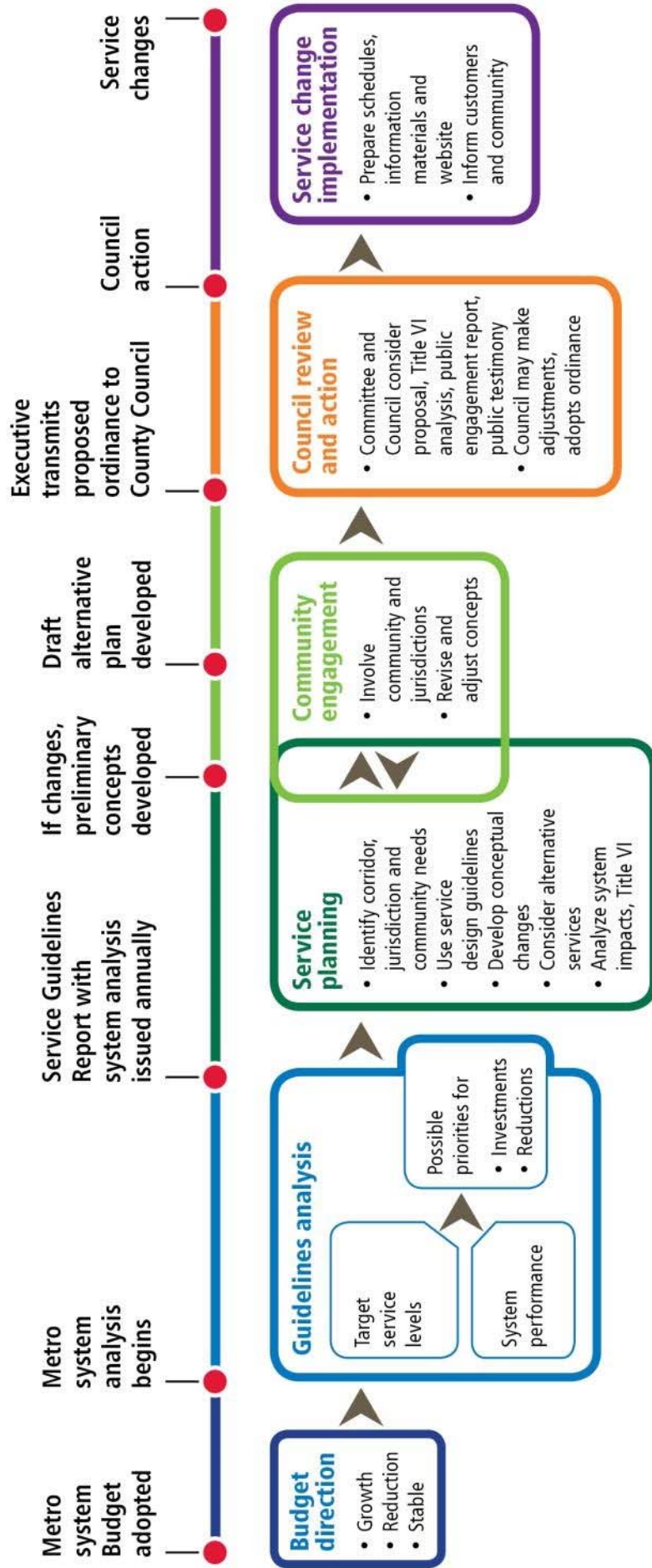
Alaska Junction  
Aurora Village Transit Center  
Ballard (Ballard Ave NW/NW Market St)  
Beacon Hill Station  
Black Diamond  
Bothell (UW Bothell/Cascadia Community College)  
Carnation  
Central District (23rd Ave E/E Jefferson St)  
Children's Hospital  
Columbia City Station  
Covington (172nd Ave 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 3: Key Slides from Task Force Meetings**

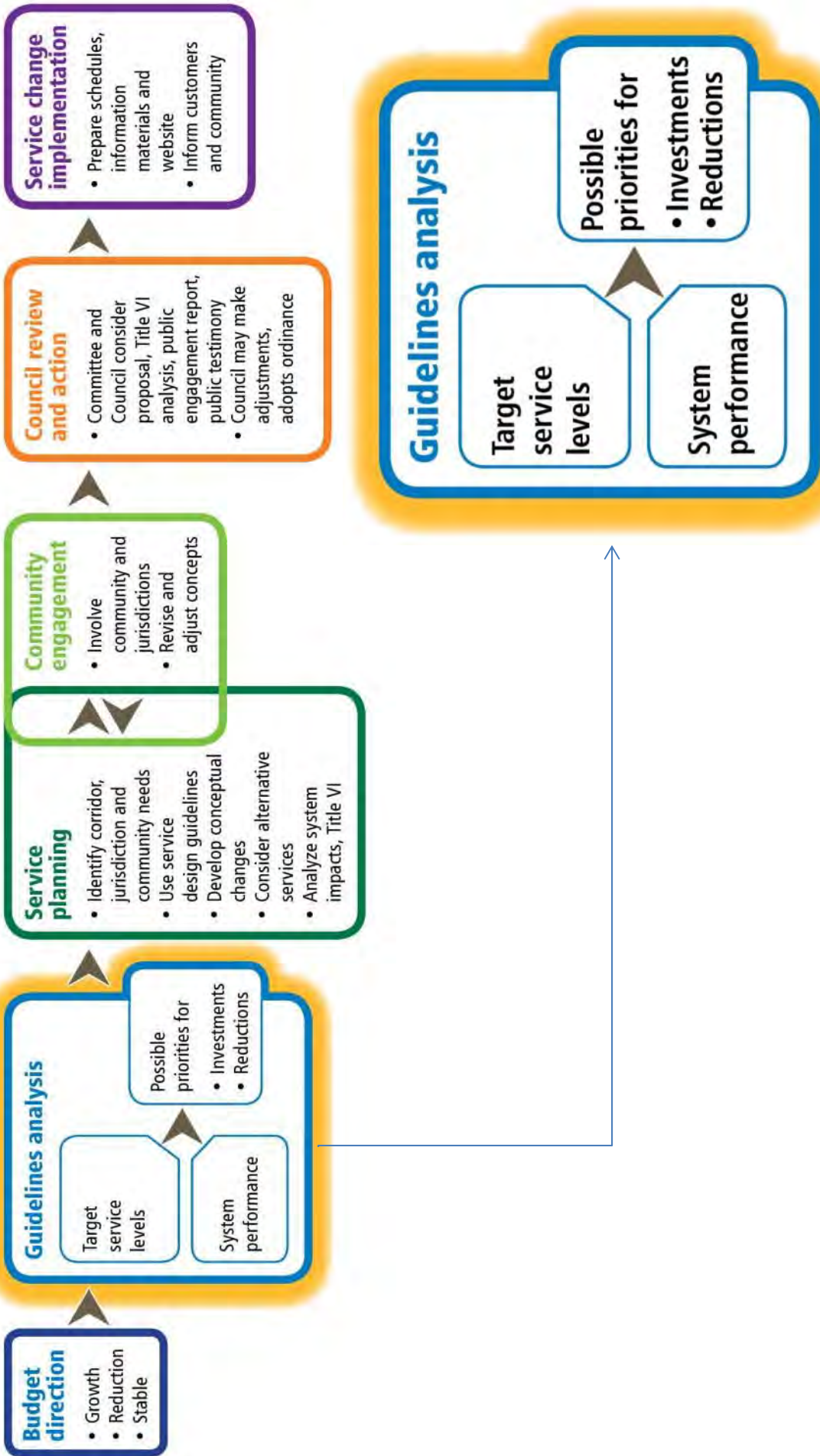
The following presentation slides from task force meetings on March 4, April 30, June 3, August 13 and 17 workshops, and September 17 introduce many of the policies and processes that were important in the Service Guidelines Task Force's discussion.

# How does Metro's planning process work?



Budget direction and guidelines analysis occurs annually. Service planning and community engagement occur when Metro makes service reductions, investments or restructures. The steps described are iterative, and the time to implement the steps will vary.

# Metro's service guidelines



# Possible priorities for

## Investments

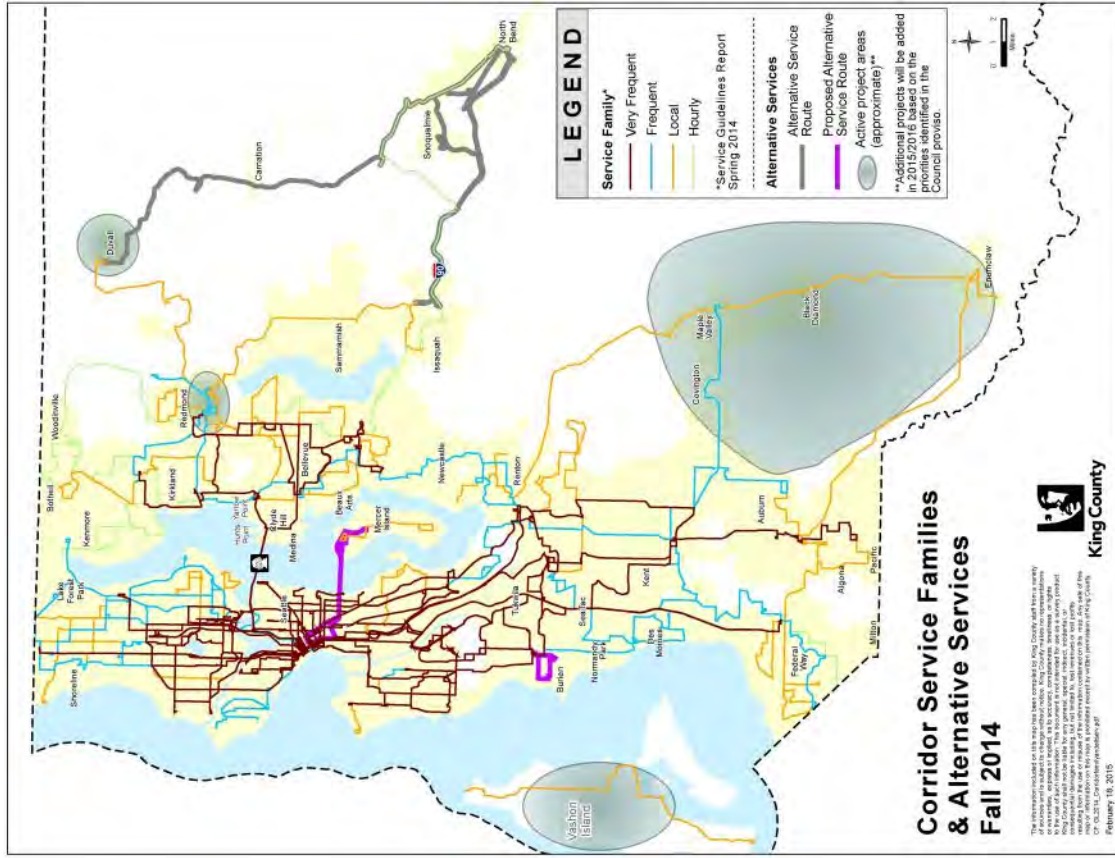
1. Reduce overcrowding
2. Improve reliability
3. Achieve target service levels
4. Become more productive

## Reductions

1. Routes in bottom 25 percent
2. Restructures
3. Routes between 25 and 50 percent
4. Routes in bottom 25% that warrant higher service level

# Set target corridor service levels

- Analyze 112 corridors connecting 85 centers throughout King County
- Target service levels determined by frequency a corridor *should* have based on:
  - Productivity
  - Social Equity
  - Geographic Value



# Data that contribute to a target service level

## Productivity

- Households within 1/4 mile of stops per corridor mile
- Jobs and student enrollment within 1/4 mile of stops per corridor mile
- Estimated cost recovery by time of day
- Estimated load factor by time of day
- Connection at night

## Social Equity

- Percent of boardings in low-income tracts
- Percent of boardings in minority census tracts

## Geographic Value

- Primary connection between regional growth, manufacturing/ industrial centers
- Primary connection between transit activity centers

# System performance

- Determine performance based on measures
- Identify routes with passenger crowding
- Identify routes with reliability issues

## **Rides per platform hour:**

Total ridership divided by the total hours from the time the bus leaves its base until it returns

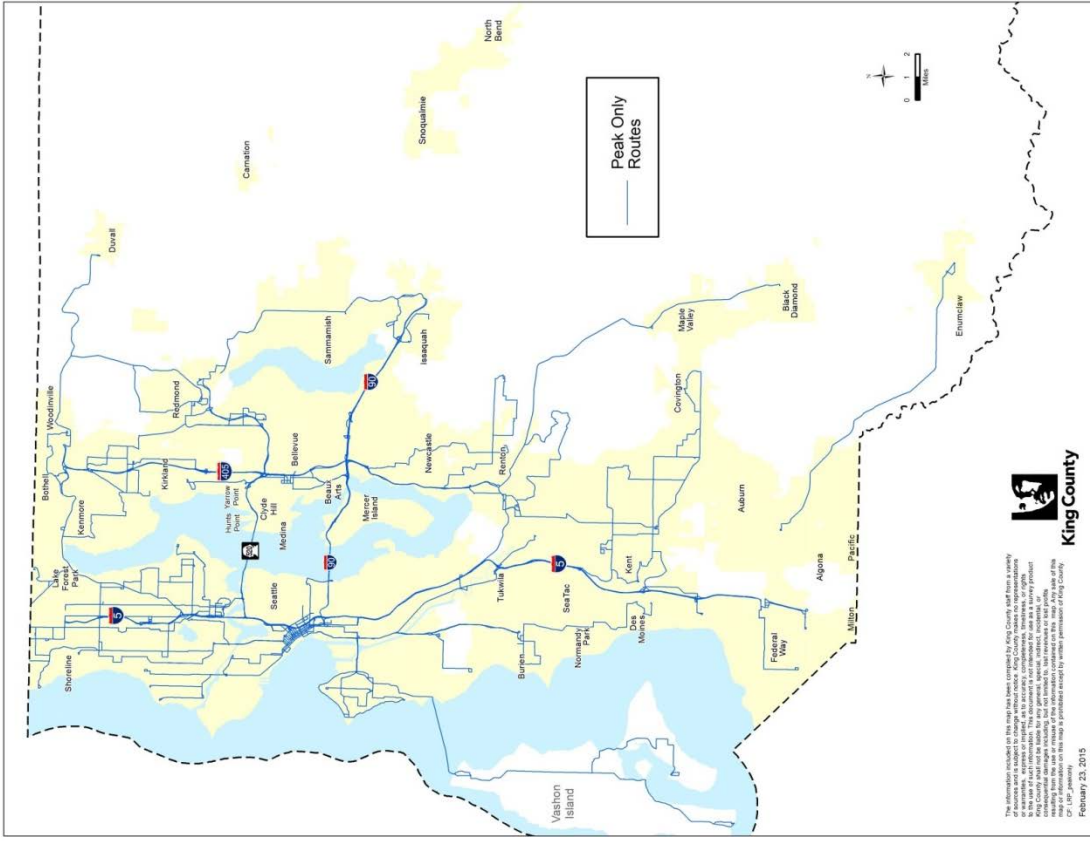
## **Passenger miles per platform mile:**

Total miles traveled by all passengers divided by the total miles the bus operates from its base until it returns



# Additional Peak-Only evaluation

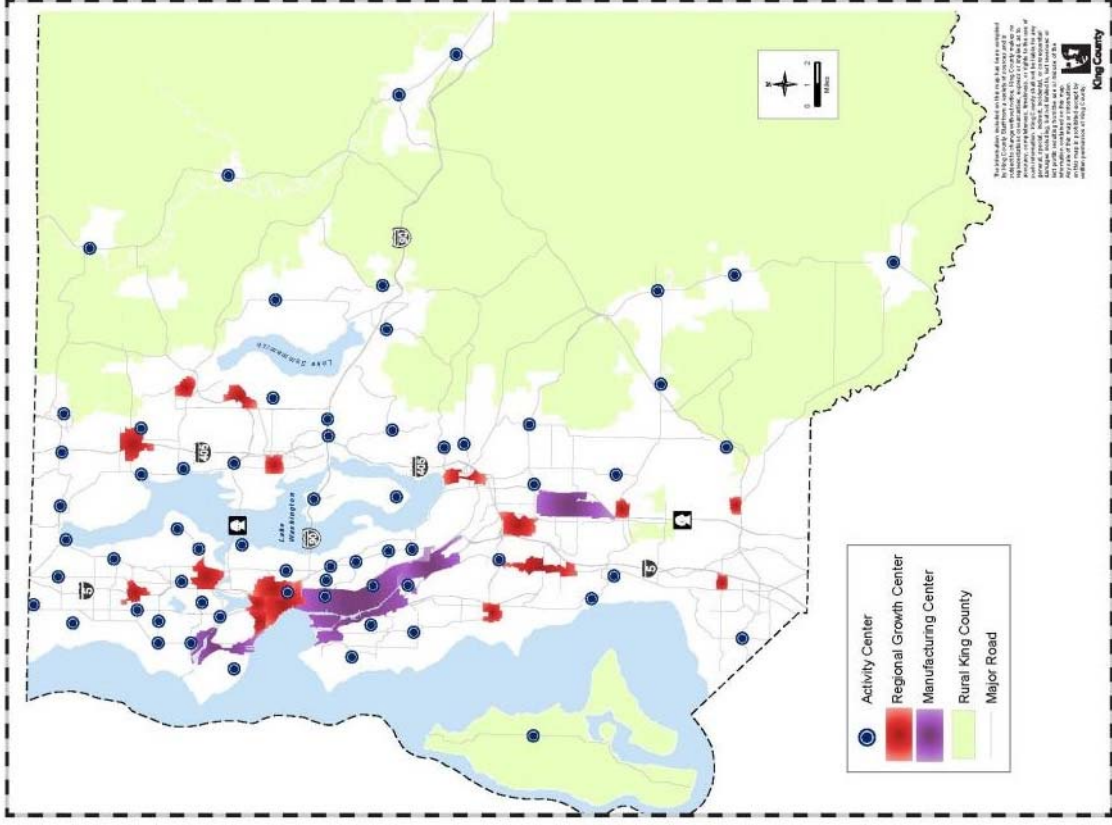
- Same route performance metrics:
  - Rides per platform hour
  - Passenger miles per platform mile
- Additional evaluation:
  - Travel time: 20% faster than local route
  - Ridership: Carry at least 90% of the local route riders per trip



Follow Up Item 1.16

# Corridors and centers provide connections throughout the transit network

- 85 centers geographically distributed throughout King County
- Analyze 112 corridors that connect all 85 centers
- Target service levels determined: frequency a corridor *should* have based on:
  - Productivity
  - Social Equity
  - **Geographic Value**



## Follow-up Items from Service Guidelines Task Force Meeting #4 – May 21, 2015

### 1. Breakdown of service hours by subregion and service type before and after service reductions and after service investments

Below are tables\* with Spring 2014 and Spring 2015 service hours by historical planning area and service type. Spring 2014 service hours account for service levels prior to the September 2014 service reductions. Spring 2015 service hours account for all service reductions that occurred as included in Metro's budget.

Hours and Percent of Service Hours by Historical Planning Subarea*						
Planning Subarea	Spring 2014 Annualized Hours	Percent of Spring 2014 Hours	Spring 2015 Annualized Hours	Percent of Spring 2015 Hours	Spring 2016 Annualized Hours	Percent of Spring 2016 Hours
East	580,000	16%	510,000	15%	520,000	14%
South	760,000	22%	730,000	22%	770,000	21%
West	2,180,000	62%	2,130,000	63%	2,420,000	65%
Total	3,520,000	100%	3,370,000	100%	3,710,000	100%

Hours and Percent of Service Hours by Service Type*						
Service Type	Spring 2014 Annualized Hours	Percent of Spring 2014 Hours	Spring 2015 Annualized Hours	Percent of Spring 2015 Hours	Spring 2016 Annualized Hours	Percent of Spring 2016 Hours
Non-Seattle Core	1,040,000	29%	970,000	29%	990,000	27%
Seattle Core	2,490,000	71%	2,400,000	71%	2,720,000	73%
Total	3,530,000	100%	3,370,000	100%	3,710,000	100%

Spring 2016 hours are planning level estimates for the number of service hours after the planned service investments (Service Quality Improvements, Seattle Community Mobility Contract, and University Link Restructures). These are all estimates based on the best available data; final hours are not available because of the following reasons:

- The September 2015 and March 2016 service changes have not been scheduled; once service is scheduled, routes may move between bases, which will impact the final hours by route.
- No approved University Link restructure plan, which includes service on new routes that have not been scheduled. Hours used for these calculations are the most current estimates.

\* The data in these tables are from May 2015 and represent planning-level estimates during this time. Projected annualized hours for 2016 were rough estimates made prior to the development of the service change ordinance. The hours and percentages will not be identical to what is adopted by the King County Council for the March 2016 service change.

# Alternative Services have evolved over time



## Alternative Services



### Existing Alternative Services

Build on these successful services.

- VanShare
- VanPool
- Rideshare
- CAT
- DART



### Community Shuttle

A route with flexible service areas provided through a community partnership.

- fixed and flexible service area
- community partner provides resources and marketing



### Community Hub

Local transportation center, access to community vans, bikes and information resources.

- partner provides location, transportation info and scheduling
- regularly scheduled and one-time trips



### Flexible Rideshare

Variable ridesharing via promotion of mobile and web-based app.

- responds to unique commuter needs
- may include set pick-up points and driver incentives

# Metro has increased focus on alternative services as a way of providing mobility options

- ## Expanding program:
- \$12 million / 2-years
    - Mitigate impacts of service cuts
    - Complete 2012 Plan
    - Complementary areas
  - Focus on community partnerships
  - Demonstration projects



# There are over 20 current or planned alternative services throughout King County

## DART

- Flexible service area
- 14 routes in King County

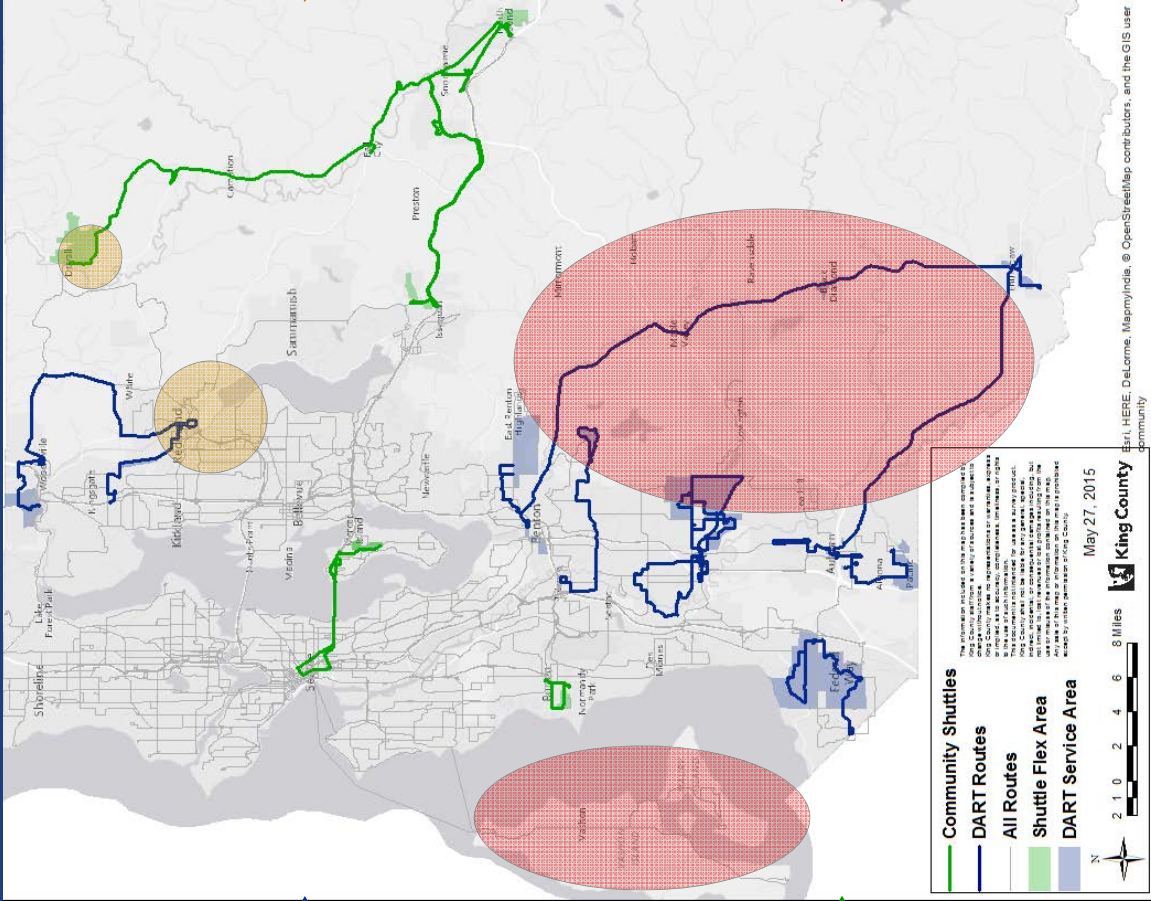
## Community Shuttle

- Flexible service area
- Community partnerships

## Flexible Rideshare & Community Hubs

## Planned Services

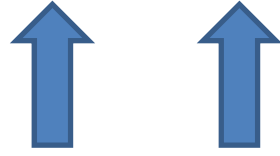
- Southeast King County
- Vashon Island



# Recommendations to enhance investments – Social equity and geographic value

## DRAFT Task Force Recommendations

- Revise the point system to allow for a scaling of points for social equity
- Address the needs of youth, elderly, and persons with disabilities



- Added gradation to low-income and minority scores
- Included a larger population using a revised definition of low-income, consistent with ORCA LIFT program

## DRAFT Changes Target Service Level Analysis

### Social Equity Changes

### Geographic Value Changes

- Revise the point system to allow for a scaling of points for geographic value
- Develop minimum service standards for each service type
- Develop strategy utilizing Park & Rides more efficiently



- Added gradation to corridor scoring
- Ensured minimum service levels on corridors
- Included all Park & Rides in corridor scoring

# Recommendations to enhance investments – Alternative services

## DRAFT Task Force Recommendations

- Further expand alternative services program
- Enhance planning for alternative services
- Create new metric for measuring performance



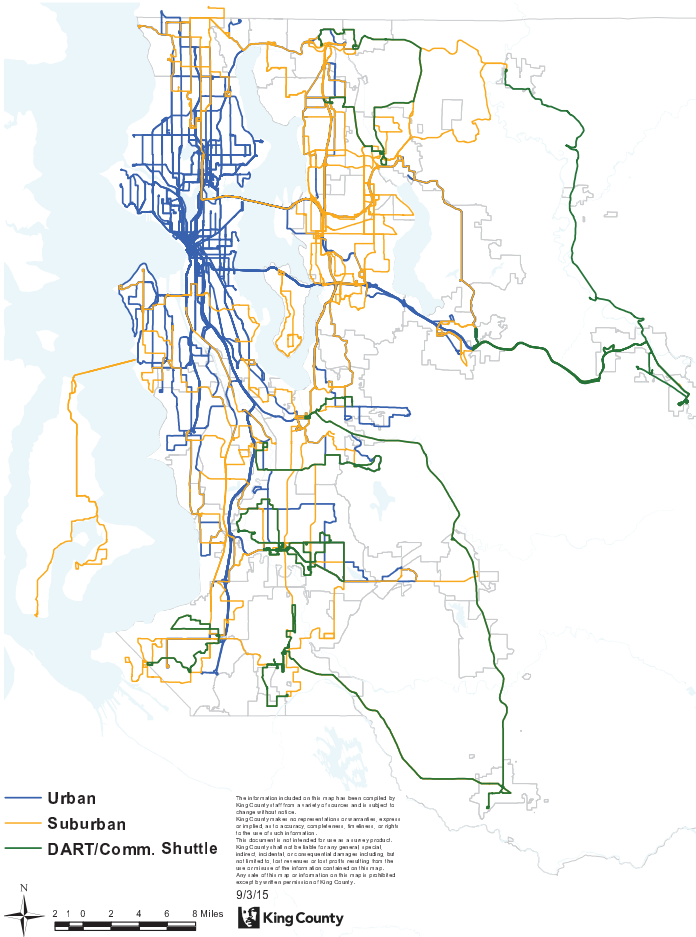
## DRAFT Alternative services program changes

- Focus on right-sizing mobility and complementing fixed-route bus service
- Seeding new markets
- Define which communities should get alternative services and how to initiate a program
- Describe how to convert alternative services to fixed-route service
- Define ways for communities to get involved and partner with Metro on alternative services
- Establish new metrics to determine how well the program is working



# Service Type Option 5: Peak Policy Emphasis

## including changes to the target service level analysis



### Description

Classifies routes based on connections to the county’s densest urban centers, and includes policy protection for peak-only routes.

**Urban Routes:** Routes serving riders in the densest parts of the county, including downtown Seattle, First Hill, Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, University District, or Uptown; this includes routes serving suburban or rural areas that provide connections to the densest parts of the county.

**Suburban Routes:** Routes primarily serving and connecting suburban and rural areas throughout King County.

**DART/Community Shuttles:**

- Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART) routes
- Alternative Services Community Shuttles

**Peak-only protection:** Bottom 25% peak-only routes (in either measure) that have a travel time or ridership advantage over a local alternative would be protected from the first reduction priority

Service Type (Spring 2015)	Number of Routes	Percent of Hours	Percent of Riders
Urban	119	71%	80%
Suburban	53	27%	19%
Demand Response	15	2%	1%
<b>Peak-Only Protection</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>

### Summary

- Establishes a new category for demand response routes
- Policy protection for peak-only routes result in fewer of those routes identified for reduction in a potential reduction
- Defines service types based on the markets served

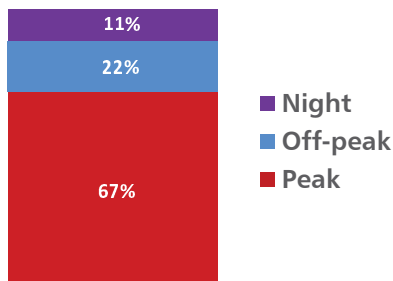
## Reduction Scenario: 100,000 hours

### Impacts

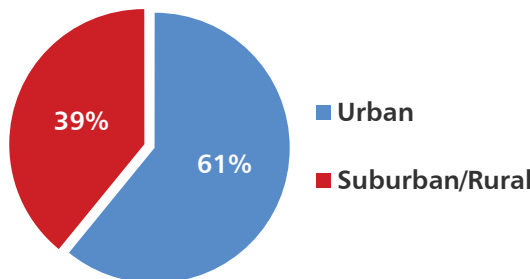
- Fewer peak-only routes would be identified for reduction than in service type options 1, 2, 3, and 4
- More all-day routes would be identified for reduction in the Off-Peak
- Reductions would be spread more evenly throughout the county than in other service type options

Historical Subarea	Hours Reduced	% of Hours
East	34,000	33%
South	31,000	30%
West	38,000	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>103,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

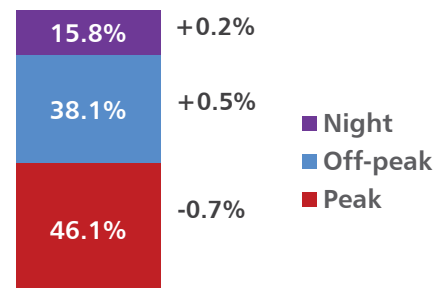
Percent of 100K Hour Reduction by Time Period



Percent of 100K Hour Reduction by Service Type



Total System Service Hours After Reduction Scenario



## ALTERNATIVE SERVICES PROGRAM: POTENTIAL CHANGES BASED ON TASK FORCE GUIDANCE

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### 1) Program Priorities: What's the focus?

- a) **Right-size** mobility service to the specific needs and characteristics of the community. This may include restructuring underperforming fixed-route bus services and mitigating the impact of lost or reduced fixed-route service.
- b) **Complement** fixed-route or Dial-a-Ride (DART) service. Complementary alternative services may address:
  - i) Filling gaps in time of day service or geographic coverage of fixed-route services, such as concentrations of shift jobs, industrial locations, or areas of potential transit activity that are geographically isolated.
  - ii) Serving rural communities and emerging markets.

### 2) Allocation Criteria: Which communities will get Alternative Services?

- a) Alternative Services projects may be appropriate in communities that meet the following criteria:
  - i) Poorly performing fixed-route service (rides/platform hour, passenger miles/platform miles),
  - ii) Time of day service gap,
  - iii) Geographic coverage service gap,
  - iv) Rural communities or emerging markets (as identified through land use targets, designated growth areas, demonstration of local transportation needs, and Metro's Long Range Public Transportation Plan),
  - v) Market potential considering jobs and household density, and proximity to: Activity Centers, Regional Transit Network, and Major Institutions,
  - vi) Concentrations of low income or minority populations (low income or minority census tracts, as designated in by the Service Guidelines analysis),
  - vii) Demonstrated partner interest (see Section 3).
- b) Alternative service projects may be initiated by:
  - i) Metro identification of communities that meet the Allocation Criteria.
  - ii) A competitive process involving a Letter of Interest by local jurisdictions or community organization, evaluated against the Allocation Criteria (Section 2.1).

### 3) Partnerships: How can my community get involved?

- a) Local community partnerships are an important component in the development and delivery of alternative services. Partnerships may include sharing the cost of community engagement, planning, equipment, contracted services, promotions or other project costs. Partnerships may include cash or in-kind contributions.
- b) Local governments may also demonstrate commitment to partnership by enacting transit-supportive land use policy or by making infrastructure investments that support transit, including but not limited to:
  - i) Transit signal and lane priority measures.
  - ii) Zoning measures that support increased density and mixed-uses within Urban Growth Areas.

- iii) Investments in cycling and pedestrian facilities that significantly enhance access to transit service.
- iv) Developing urban design guidelines that support transit and active transportation.
- v) Prioritizing in-fill over greenfield development.
- vi) Improving street network connectivity.
- vii) Other land use measures that contribute to higher concentrations of potential transit riders.

**4) Performance Measurement: How will we know if it's working?**

- a) King County Metro will monitor and evaluate performance of all alternative service projects to ensure that service quality, customer satisfaction, and cost effectiveness objectives are met. Performance measures may include usage/ridership rates and cost per boarding/ride. Performance of alternative services will be made against similar services.
- b) Alternative services should be evaluated using the needs of the community, the goals of each project, and with the transit market potential of the area served in mind. Market characteristics of each community may be considered when determining the market potential for the alternative service.
- c) Different performance measures may be used to evaluate different types of services.

**5) Converting an Alternative Service to a Fixed-Route Service: How do you transition to regular service?**

- a) Communities with successful Alternative Services partnerships may be eligible to transition to fixed-route bus service under the following circumstances:
  - i) The alternative service is overcapacity for a prolonged period of time,
  - ii) The cost per boarding of providing the fixed-route service is equivalent or less than the cost per boarding of providing an alternative service,
  - iii) Population and employment density warrant a greater level of transportation investment,
  - iv) Funding is available,
  - v) The partner jurisdiction is prepared to support the creation of required transit facilities.

## Appendix 4: Key Assumptions Behind Task Force Recommendations

The Service Guidelines Task Force’s recommendations include suggested changes to the target service level analysis related to social equity and geographic value, service types, park-and-rides, and minimum service standards. The descriptions below reflect the details discussed in the task force meetings. The task force understands that Metro will continue to review and refine the recommended changes as it finalizes the updates to the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation and the King County Metro Service Guidelines. Any changes to these assumptions will be discussed with the task force in the final meeting during the first quarter of 2016, prior to adoption of new guidelines by the County Council.

### **Redefine Low Income for Social Equity**

The task force recommended that in considering the points awarded to corridors for social equity, Metro should redefine low-income residents as those with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level, rather than its current definition of 100 percent of the federal poverty level. This change supports the task force recommendation to better serve the needs of youth, elderly, people with disabilities, people of color and low-income. It also makes the definition of low-income consistent with that used in the ORCA LIFT program.

### **Revisions to Point System for Social Equity and Geographic Value Scoring**

As noted in I.D. “Key Areas of Task Force Discussion” above, Metro uses a point system to quantify and balance the factors of corridor productivity, social equity and geographic value in each corridor. The task force recommendations include revising the point system for geographic value and social equity to enable scaling of points. The recommended point system would work as follows:

- **50 percent for productivity.** (The task force did not suggest changes in the point system for productivity.) A corridor can have a score of between 0 and 20 for productivity (10 points for the number of households per corridor mile, and 10 points for the number of jobs and the student enrollment per corridor mile).
- **25 percent for social equity.** A corridor can have a score of between 0 and 10 total for social equity (5 points for low-income and 5 points for minority). The task force recommends that a corridor score 0 points if it has fewer people boarding transit than the average number of boardings in all low-income census tracts combined. The same would be true for minority census tracts. However, a corridor would score 3 if it has one-half standard deviation below the average number of boardings in low-income or minority census tracts. It would score 5 if it has average or above average number of boardings in these census tracts.
- **25 percent for geographic value.** A corridor can have a score of between 0 and 10 for geographic value. The task force recommends that a corridor could receive 2, 5, 7 or 10 points, depending on its connections to centers. A corridor would receive 2 points if it provides a connection to a transit activity, regional growth, or manufacturing/ industrial center. If a corridor is the primary connection between transit activity centers, it would receive 5 points. If a corridor is the primary connection between a transit activity center and a regional growth or manufacturing/industrial center, it would receive 7 points. If a corridor is a primary connection

between two regional growth or manufacturing/industrial centers, then it would receive 10 points.

### **Incorporating Park-and-Rides**

One of the task force's recommendations is to consider park-and-rides as part of the analysis for setting target service levels. The method of doing so would be to include all park-and-rides along a corridor, regardless of size and ownership, into the scoring for that corridor. To account for regional carpool rates, each stall at a park-and-ride would be multiplied by the average occupancy (in 2015, the average occupancy is 1.1). This recommendation was included to better reflect the potential demand in that corridor.

### **Developing Minimum Service Standards**

One of the task force's recommendations is to develop minimum service standards for the corridors served by Metro. The task force suggested a minimum service standard of every 60 minutes or more frequent for all corridors and/or the consideration for an alternative services project.

### **Modify Service Types**

One of the task force's recommendations is to modify Metro's service types to Urban, Suburban, and DART & Community Shuttles. The task force also recommends creating a peak policy emphasis which would provide greater protection for peak-only routes in a future reduction scenario.

This new policy would provide Peak-Only protection for routes that have faster travel times or carry more passengers than the local alternative. This policy better demonstrates the value that peak-only services provide to the network.

## Appendix 5: Glossary

**ACCESS service.** See *Paratransit (ACCESS) service*.

**Alternative services:** Transportation services tailored to community needs that Metro plans and provides with community partners throughout King County. Often, these communities lack the infrastructure, density or land use to support traditional, fixed-route bus service. Metro’s alternative services include VanPool, VanShare, Community Access Transportation (CAT), Dial-a-Ride Transit (DART), Community Shuttles, Community Hub and Flexible Rideshare. (See definitions of these services below.)

**Base:** A site where Metro buses are fueled, stored, and maintained. Bases include parking, fuel storage, cleaning, and maintenance and operation facilities. Metro has seven bases located throughout King County.

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

**Community Access Transportation (CAT):** A program that complements paratransit (ACCESS) service by filling service gaps in partnership with nonprofit agencies, such as those serving seniors or people with disabilities. One of Metro’s alternative services.

**Community Hub:** A local transportation center that Metro provides with a community partner, and that gives people access to various transportation resources according to community need. Examples of these resources are community vans, bikes and information. One of Metro’s alternative services.

**Community Shuttle:** A route that Metro provides through a community partnership; these shuttles can have flexible service areas if it meets the community needs. One of Metro’s alternative services.

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

**Dial-a-ride (DART) transit service:** Scheduled transit routes in which individual trips may deviate from the fixed route to pick up or drop off a passenger closer to their origin or destination. DART routes may only deviate into pre-specified “DART areas.” All current DART routes include a fixed route portion in which passengers can access service from regular bus stops. Note that Dial-a-Ride Transit is now referred to as Demand Area Response Transit.

**Fixed route service:** Scheduled transit routes in which trips are required to follow the same routing on every trip.

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

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

**Manufacturing/industrial center:** Per PSRC's *VISION 2040*, an area of intensive manufacturing and/or industrial activity. PSRC expects these centers to accommodate a significant share of the region's manufacturing industrial employment growth.

**Paratransit (ACCESS) service:** Van-operated service that has no fixed route or schedule, and that provides trips to customers who have difficulty using Metro's fixed-route or DART service. Passengers must apply and be found eligible to use ACCESS service in advance of making a trip.

**Park and Ride:** A facility where transit passengers may park their automobile and catch a bus, vanpool or carpool to reach their final destination. Park-and-ride lots are built, owned and maintained by a number of different agencies; some are leased by Metro. Metro provides service to 140 park-and-ride lots throughout King County.

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

**Passenger overcrowding:** A transit trip that on average has 25 to 50 percent more riders than seats (depending on service frequency) or has people standing for longer than 20 minutes. When service is chronically very crowded, it is poor quality and has a negative impact on riders. The passenger load thresholds are set to accept standing passengers on many Metro services. Metro takes action when crowding is at an unacceptable level or occurs regularly.

**Peak-only service.** Transit service that operates only during peak travel periods (5:00–9:00 a.m. and 3:00–7:00 p.m. weekdays), primarily in one direction. Peak-only service typically brings riders from residential areas to job centers.

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

1. **Corridor productivity** is the *potential* market for transit based on the number of households, jobs and students along the corridor. Higher concentrations of people support higher use of transit.
2. **Route productivity** is the *actual* use of transit, determined using two performance measures of ridership—rides per platform hour and passenger miles per platform mile.

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

**Ride:** A single passenger using a single transit vehicle for a segment of the person’s trip. This can also be called a “boarding,” which identifies every time a passenger boards a bus.

**Ridership:** The number of passengers who use the transit system on a route or corridor.

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

**Schedule reliability:** A measure used to determine if a route is on time, measured as the percentage of transit trips that arrive between 1 minute early and 5 minutes late. If a route is on time less than 80 percent of the time (65 percent for weekday PM peak), it is a candidate for investment of service hours. This threshold allows for variations in travel time, congestion and ridership.

**Service restructure:** Changes to multiple Metro routes along a corridor or within an area, including serving new corridors, in a manner consistent with service design criteria in Metro’s Service Guidelines.

**Service types:** Categories of service based on chosen criteria. Metro’s current service types are Seattle Core and Non-Seattle Core. The service types recommended by the task force are: Urban Routes, Suburban Routes, and DART/Community Shuttles. See individual definitions.

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

**Suburban Routes:** A service type recommended by the task force that includes routes primarily serving and connecting suburban and rural areas in throughout King County.

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

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

**Transit-dependent populations:** Those who do not have access to or are unable to operate a private automobile, and those for whom other modes of transportation are unsuitable for accessing their daily needs.



**Urban Routes:** A service type recommended by the task force that includes routes serving the densest parts of the county, including downtown Seattle, First Hill, Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, University District, or Uptown; this includes routes serving suburban or rural areas that provide connections to the densest parts of the county.

**VanPool:** A way for groups of five or more commuters to share a ride to work, using a Metro-supplied van. One of Metro's alternative services.

**VanShare:** A way for groups of five or more commuters to share the ride to or from a public transit link or transit hub. One of Metro's alternative services.