

Partnership to Achieve Comprehensive Equity

# PACE

## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR COMPREHENSIVE EQUITY

Second Installment | 2015





# **PACE**

## **Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Equity**

### **2015**

#### **Second Installment**

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Metro Transit Division  
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## Letter from the PACE Sponsors

Dear Colleagues,

We are proud to present the second installment of the PACE Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Equity. This plan lays the groundwork for our continued work toward comprehensive equity. It recognizes the need to focus internally on our employees and our work environment so that we may provide the highest quality of service to our customers.

PACE is a groundbreaking approach to addressing difficult workplace issues—including those related to fairness, bias, equity and inclusion—through a unique partnership between employees, labor unions and management. Through PACE we work in true partnership with one another to identify changes to our system and work environment that will benefit individuals, groups and the organization as a whole. Through PACE we recognize the importance of every employee's contribution to the continued improvement of our service to the public.

Because of PACE we are daring to look honestly at our shared history and to consider changes needed to enhance not just policies, procedures and rules, but also our understanding and treatment of one another. As part of Metro Transit, you will now join us.

The document you now hold gives you an overview of PACE, where we've been and where we are headed as a community of colleagues. It also expands on our vision for comprehensive equity, including a summary of our priorities and the strategies (i.e. recommendations) that our employees identified to help meet them. The overriding goal of this plan is to help ensure that we are relentlessly attentive to our most important resource—our people.

Sincerely,

Kevin Desmond, General Manager  
King County Metro Transit

Paul Bechtel, President  
Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 587

Nancy Buonanno-Grennan, Director  
King County Human Resources

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## > Introduction

This plan builds on the initial draft of the PACE (Partnership to Achieve Comprehensive Equity) strategic plan. PACE is an initiative of King County Metro Transit, Amalgamated Transit Union 587, and PTE Local 17. The first draft introduced the PACE initiative and presented initial recommendations for enhancing the inclusiveness and fairness of the Metro workplace. Employees across Metro were invited to provide feedback about the recommendations and to generally share their perspectives.

This edition of the plan expands on the PACE vision for Metro’s work environment. It also describes the multi-level approach we will use to build and sustain a truly equitable and inclusive community. It lays the groundwork for immediate action and future action.

This plan should not be considered complete or comprehensive—we still have a lot to learn together. Just as Metro regularly updates its Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, we will refresh and update this plan annually.



# > Chapter 1: Vision and Plan

The service that King County Metro Transit provides is vitally important to the Puget Sound region. Public transportation gets people to jobs, schools, and many other destinations. It enables those with limited mobility options to travel.

Metro is committed to serving the region with the highest quality products and services possible as we work toward a sustainable public transportation system that helps our region thrive. Metro recognizes that to meet this commitment, we must effectively draw on the diverse perspectives and knowledge of *all* our employees.

## > Our vision

Recognizing that our differences and our interdependence are what make us most able to serve the people of King County, PACE adopted the following vision statement:

***“King County Metro is committed to building and sustaining an inclusive, fair and equitable workplace for everyone. Our culture thrives on the richness and diversity of our unique workforce. We are a community built on a foundation of collaboration and mutual respect.”***

The PACE vision aligns with those of King County, the Department of Transportation, and Metro Transit, and reflects the County’s commitment to achieving equity and social justice (see page 7).

## > Our plan

The plan below charts a path to attaining the PACE vision. It has three major areas of focus: **People, Organizational Culture, and Systems and Structures.**

For each of these areas the plan defines priorities, objectives and strategies that are the result of the work done by employee-driven subcommittees. The following table summarizes these plan elements:

### A. FOCUS ON PEOPLE

<b>PRIORITY: Recruit and Retain a Diverse Workforce</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE: Recruitment and promotional processes are fair, inclusive and transparent</b>	
<p><b>Strategy A1:</b> Require mandatory hiring panel/hiring authority recruitment and selection training</p> <p><b>Strategy A2:</b> Require mandatory HR staff recruitment and selection training</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> All parties who play a significant role in recruitment and selection are educated in principles of bias, cultural competency and inclusion for everyone</p>
<p><b>Strategy A3:</b> Establish and use standardized recruitment/selection processes</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> Recruitment/promotional processes are fair, consistent and adequately documented</p>



<b>OBJECTIVE: Applicant pool is diverse and competitive</b>	
<p><b>Strategy A4:</b> Establish and execute strategic outreach/recruitment plans</p> <p><b>Strategy A5:</b> Provide support to new hire/promotional candidates</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> The potential for successful navigation of recruitment and selection processes by a diverse applicant pool is increased</p>
<b>PRIORITY: Equitable Access to Development Opportunities</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE: Employee opportunities for tangible (hands-on) work experience are increased</b>	
<p><b>Strategy A6:</b> Identify methods to systematically increase use of on-the-job training or cross-training opportunities to meet work needs and simultaneously increase employee development opportunities</p> <p><b>Strategy A7:</b> Establish and standardize a primary approach for employees to learn about special projects, details, acting and special-duty assignments, etc.</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> The use of on-the-job, hands-on employee development opportunities to get needed work done is increased, and those opportunities are communicated systematically</p>
<b>OBJECTIVE: Employee career development, mentoring and career pathway opportunities are established and increased</b>	
<p><b>Strategy A8:</b> Plan and hold an internal King County career fair where employees can learn about existing opportunities for advancement and development across Metro and King County</p> <p><b>Strategy A9:</b> Establish and implement a system-wide career development program</p> <p><b>Strategy A10:</b> Establish and implement an integrated mentoring program</p> <p><b>Strategy A11:</b> Establish and implement a Career Pathways program</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> The focus on and use of structured and systematic career development approaches within Metro is increased; and those opportunities are communicated systematically</p>

## B. FOCUS ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

<b>PRIORITY: Leadership Support</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE: Supervisory staff are supported in their efforts to provide PACE-related leadership and to increase the consistency and fairness of management practices</b>	
<p><b>Strategy B1:</b> Require mandatory basic equity and social justice (ESJ) training for all supervisors and leads</p> <p><b>Strategy B2:</b> Provide cultural competency/diversity training for all supervisors and leads</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> Supervisory staff possess the skills, tools and understanding necessary to incorporate PACE principles (including ESJ and cultural competence) into all elements of the work and the environment</p>
<p><b>Strategy B3:</b> Develop managers’ toolkits and reference guides to support effective and consistent management across the division</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> Supervisory staff have the information necessary to consistently make management decisions that are aligned with adopted policy and established practices</p>
<b>PRIORITY: Engaged and Inclusive Workforce</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE: Effective and regular two-way PACE-related communication occurs throughout Metro</b>	
<p><b>Strategy B4:</b> Provide ongoing avenues and resources to effectively communicate PACE-related information to all employees</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> Members of the Metro community are well-informed about PACE</p>
<p><b>Strategy B5:</b> Provide ongoing avenues and resources to effectively gather PACE-related input from employees</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> PACE leadership and Metro management are well informed about employees’ PACE-related perspectives, ideas and suggestions</p>
<p><b>Strategy B6:</b> Establish and maintain a regular column focusing on PACE, EEO, diversity/inclusion in Metro’s In Transit newsletter, Local 587’s News Review, IPTE Local 17’s Insight, and other union publications</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> The importance of labor/management partnering to advance PACE, EEO, diversity and inclusion is continually reinforced through joint labor/management communications</p>
<p><b>Strategy B7:</b> Create a “diversity day” where employees share culturally specific experiences, food and customs and learn about diversity and inclusion</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> Members of the Metro community appreciate and respect cultural differences</p>

## C. FOCUS ON SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

<b>PRIORITY: Effective EEO/Diversity Program</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE: Metro has an effective EEO/Diversity Program</b>	
<p><b>Strategy C1:</b> Establish and hire the position of EEO/diversity manager</p> <p><b>Strategy C2:</b> Ensure the alignment of the role of EEO/diversity manager with PACE principles through the incorporation of PACE EEO Subcommittee members in the hiring process</p> <p><b>Strategy C3:</b> Develop a plan to provide sufficient staffing of the EEO/Diversity Program</p> <p><b>Strategy C4:</b> Establish an EEO/Diversity Advisory Committee structure and approach to support the EEO/Diversity Program</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> EEO and diversity are important considerations in the effective management of Metro</p>
<b>PRIORITY: Effective Customer Comment and Complaint System</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE: Metro has an effective customer comment/customer complaint system</b>	
<p><b>Strategy C5:</b> Revise and enhance the customer contact/complaint policy and procedure (Policy 15)</p> <p><b>Strategy C6:</b> Train all chiefs and superintendents and inform all operators on revised Policy 15</p> <p><b>Strategy C7:</b> Develop an effective approach to handling non-standard customer comments/complaints</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> Metro’s Customer Comment/Customer Complaint System is fair to operators and leads to enhanced customer service</p>
<b>PRIORITY: Effective Disciplinary System</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE: Metro has an effective disciplinary system</b>	
<p><b>Strategy C8:</b> Update the Operator Discipline Report and associated recommendations</p> <p><b>Strategy C9:</b> Expand the Operator Discipline Report to include VM, Sales and Customer Service, and Power/Facilities (i.e. Transit Discipline Report)</p> <p><b>Strategy C10:</b> Develop a workable principle to balance the interests of effective correction, consistency, discretion and compassion in discipline</p> <p><b>Strategy C11:</b> Construct a process and structure to systematically examine and review elements of the disciplinary system in order to guard against disparate treatment/disparate impact</p>	<p><b>Intended outcome:</b> Metro’s disciplinary system is free of bias, leads to enhanced customer service to the public and incorporates a balance between consistency, discretion and compassion</p>
continued on next page	

**OBJECTIVE: Metro has an effective disciplinary system (cont.)**

**Strategy C12:** Assess non-disciplinary grievances to explore practices/structures that could lead to adverse impact

**Strategy C13:** Implement a training program and training cycle for managers and employees to increase understanding of contract language and disciplinary policies and application of the balancing principle

**Intended outcome:**

Metro's disciplinary system is free of bias, leads to enhanced customer service to the public, and incorporates a balance between consistency, discretion and compassion

**How we'll know that we're beginning to realize our vision**

As a community, we seek continual transformation that is profound, holistic, and irreversible. In our vision, our transformed work environment is not only sustainable, but also resilient (i.e. continuing regardless of what challenges the organization faces). The following will be indicators that we're making progress toward our vision:

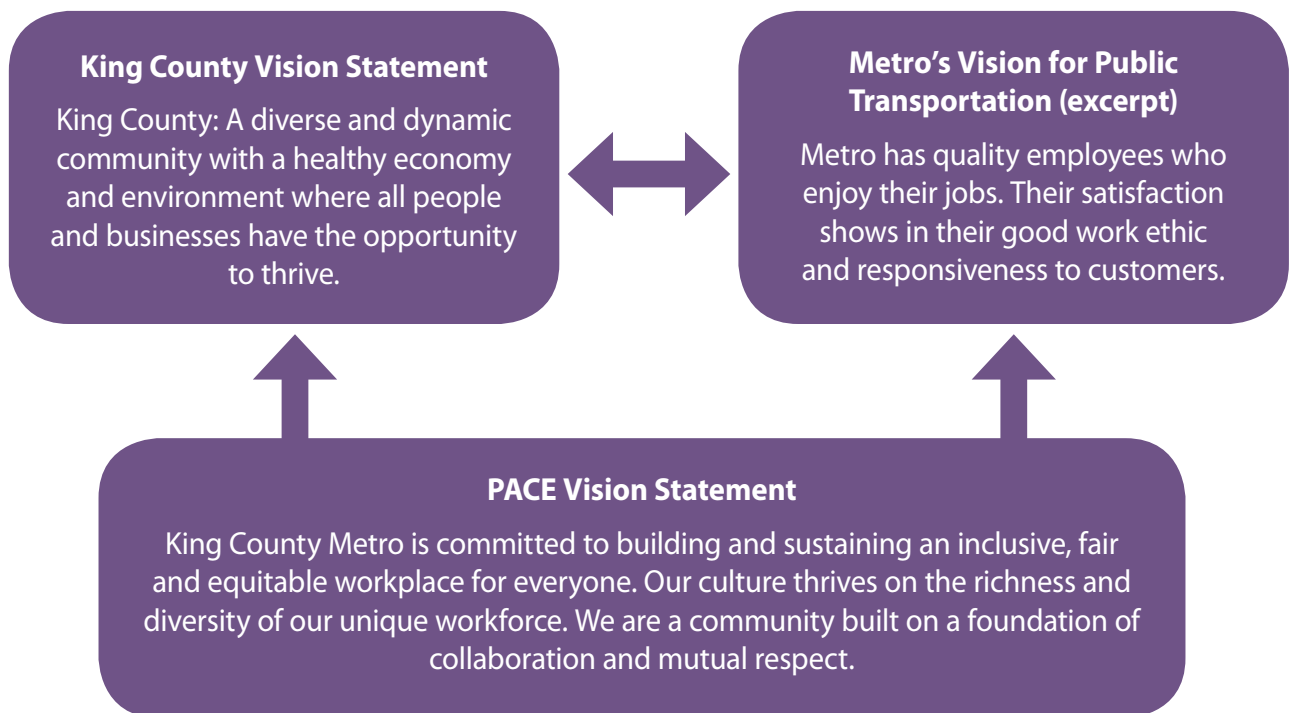
- > Metro employees understand that their individual performance and their part in the team are critical to Metro's ability to provide the best service possible to the public.
- > Our environment makes all employees feel safe in sharing their thinking on the best ways to do the work.
- > Our standard approach is to lower the barriers that separate individuals and groups.
- > We strive for empathy, understanding, respect, trust and compassion for one another.
- > Metro's policies, procedures, systems, and structures are built upon the principles of equity and inclusion.
- > We have the courage to be honest about what is not working while our focus is on the positive possibilities for our future.
- > We understand the importance of objective facts, but we also understand that these facts don't capture the whole reality. Rather, we realize that there is room for different perspectives and we value those as legitimate.
- > We are committed to trying something different even if we do not know where each step along the path to change will take us.
- > We recognize that we will make mistakes, stumble and fall, but we will get back up in a spirit of collaboration and partnership with our unions and our employees and continue along this journey.
- > All employees are valued, respected, engaged and empowered.
- > We are patient with one another and we try to create a safe space to heal from past hurts.
- > We recognize and learn from the lessons of the past and we bring into the future what is good and enhancing to our community, our culture and our environment.



# How PACE Aligns with King County, Department of Transportation, and Metro Transit Vision Statements and Strategic Plans

## Vision

The PACE Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Equity advances the overall vision of King County government—specifically, its focus on diversity and the opportunity to thrive. It also supports both the Department of Transportation’s vision of being known for its transportation innovations and Metro Transit’s strategic plan, specifically its focus on employee satisfaction.



## Equity and social justice

The PACE strategic plan directly addresses King County’s “fair and just” principle through its alignment with the mission of the equity and social justice ordinance:

**King County serves all residents by promoting fairness and opportunity and eliminating inequities.**

PACE specifically addresses this determinant of equity: Equity in County practices.

# Advancing Metro Transit’s Strategic Plan for Public Transportation

The PACE strategic plan significantly advances Metro’s goal “...to develop and retain an effective, customer-oriented workforce that embraces collaboration, innovation and diversity.” Specifically, PACE advances goal 8 of Metro’s strategic plan.

**King County Metro Strategic Plan**  
**Goal 8: Quality Workforce**  
 “Develop and empower Metro’s most valuable asset, its employees.”

<b>PACE OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>Fair, inclusive recruitment processes</b>	<b>Diverse, competitive applicant pool</b>	<b>Opportunities for hands-on work experience</b>	<b>Career development, mentoring &amp; career pathways</b>	<b>Supervisor training &amp; support</b>	<b>Effective two-way communication</b>	<b>Effective EEO/diversity program</b>	<b>Effective customer comment &amp; complaint system</b>	<b>Effective discipline system</b>
<b>Metro Objective 8.1: Attract and Recruit quality employees</b>									
<b>Intended Outcome:</b> Metro is satisfied with the quality of its workforce									
<b>Strategy 8.1.1:</b> Market Metro as an employer of choice and cultivate a diverse and highly skilled applicant pool	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
<b>Strategy 8.1.2:</b> Promote equity, social justice and transparency in hiring and recruiting activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>Metro Objective 8.2: Empower and retain efficient, effective and productive employees</b>									
<b>Intended Outcome:</b> Metro employees are satisfied with their jobs and feel their work contributes to an improved quality of life in King County									
<b>Strategy 8.2.1:</b> Build leadership and promote professional skills			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
<b>Strategy 8.2.2:</b> Recognize employees for outstanding performance, excellent customer service, innovation and strategic thinking						✓		✓	
<b>Strategy 8.2.3:</b> Provide training opportunities that enable employees to reach their full potential	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				

## > Chapter 2: History and Context

### > History of PACE

The Partnership to Create Comprehensive Equity (PACE) is a response to the April 2013 open letter to King County that was signed by the entire ATU Executive Board. It called on King County and Metro to respond to long-standing issues of inequality. The concerns expressed by ATU touched on many important topics: recruitment and selection practices, workforce training and development, the impact of customer complaints, the way Metro's disciplinary system is administered, and the way discrimination complaints are handled. A copy of the open letter can be found on the PACE website ([metro.kingcounty.gov/PACE](http://metro.kingcounty.gov/PACE)).

Shortly after the open letter was published, a working group made up of representatives from both labor and management formed to develop a systematic approach to addressing the workplace issues. The group agreed to a governance structure to assure that work would be accomplished and to hold both labor and management accountable for their commitments. (Visit the PACE website to see the Response to the Open Letter and the PACE Charter). The group also created a list of the work it would do.

It's important to understand that PACE is not the first effort undertaken at Metro to address issues of inequality. Many within Metro remember a similar effort titled "Cultural Change." This well-intended initiative took place in the early 1990s following recommendations made by a consultant, captured in what is commonly known as the Myriad Report. By many accounts, the work that followed that report was valuable. Various programs were put in place and the general tone of the work environment began to shift toward greater openness and inclusion. However, it was not sustained due in part to the challenges associated with the merger of Metro with King County in 1994.

In 2000, after Metro's integration into the County, the still-unaddressed issues surfaced again in another consultant's report. In this case, too, the effort to correct them did not take hold as budgetary pressures and other political events distracted Metro leaders from giving their full attention to the recommendations.

Finally, in 2010, following the release of the Operator Discipline Report, yet another set of

recommendations was created aimed at improving Metro's record of addressing issues of inequities, particularly in the area of discipline. The agency again failed to follow those recommendations through to completion.

These past events form the backdrop for this Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Equity. PACE is Metro's approach to bring greatness from the deficiencies of the past. Put another way, **PACE is intended to become the engine of sustainable organizational change that is holistic, profound and irreversible.** With mutual accountability across labor and management, collaboration between employees and supervisors, and commitment from colleagues across the agency, PACE defines our response to this challenge.

### > Why a Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Equity?

History has proven that equity and inclusion will not just happen, either in our society or in our workplace. It takes purposeful planning and hard work. Just as Metro must plan to provide effective transit services to our customers, we must systematically plan to develop and maintain a workplace that is inclusive and enables every member of our workforce to contribute fully to Metro's success. To achieve this goal, Metro must look internally at its culture and processes to identify practices that can create barriers to inclusion and engagement, hindering its employees' ability to maximize their contribution



to Metro’s mission. That mission is to “provide the best possible public transportation services and improve regional mobility and quality of life in King County.”

This plan is needed to eliminate such barriers and replace them with a truly inclusive work environment that welcomes and values diversity, provides equitable access to development opportunities, and supports effective leadership and an engaged and culturally competent community. As a result, Metro will be a stronger organization, better positioned for the future.

### **Because diversity makes us better**

The traditional role of manager/supervisor as the one with all the answers is out of date in today’s work world. The team approach to problem-solving brings together individuals with diverse perspectives and a richness of work and life experience that far exceeds the thinking of any one individual.

Diverse employees who are involved shoulder-to-shoulder with co-workers and supervisors not only develop ownership of proposed solutions, but also experience higher morale and exhibit more positive organizational citizenship behavior. They are more productive and more willing to go the extra mile for their work. Finally, research has shown that diverse people who work together to solve problems come to appreciate one another more.

According to Katherine Phillips, Professor of Leadership and Ethics at Columbia Business School, without diversity it is difficult to be cutting edge and innovative. She posits that this is so because different perspectives lead to better decision making and stronger problem-solving abilities. Different perspectives based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age and other dimensions and experiences lead to what Ms. Phillips calls “informational diversity.” In contrast, being surrounded by only those who are the same as us leads us to think that we all share the same perspectives, hindering creativity and innovation (Phillips, 2014).

Professor Phillips also suggests that diversity makes us work harder. When we are with people just like us we may assume we hold a shared understanding that will result in similar opinions and perspectives. When we are with those who appear to be socially different, our expectations change and we realize the need to work harder to come to consensus and build understanding. This means the harder cognitive work required when our team is diverse brings about better decisions and problem-solving outcomes. Finally, diversity of people, perspectives and thinking can make us more diligent and more open-minded to alternatives, promoting creativity and innovation (Phillips, 2014).

### **Because of the harmful impact of disengaged employees**

If there is any doubt about the benefits of employee engagement, consider the alternative: the potential harm to the work environment caused by disengaged employees. Disengaged employees evade work and reluctantly accept additional responsibility. They have a negative effect on co-workers, affecting team morale by withdrawing from full participation. Their disengagement is often seen by customers, and in King County’s case, by constituents—with the ultimate outcome being a negative perception of King County government.

Disengaged employees negatively impact team performance since they are loathe to think creatively and to innovate at work, ultimately costing the organization extra money. A 2013 Gallup study showed that annually, disengaged employees cost business in the United States \$450-550 billion.

Finally, the work-related apathy experienced by a disengaged employee can lead to pent up frustration that affects not only the workplace but also his or her personal life and the organization’s bottom line through workers’ compensation claims, EEOC complaints, discipline events, sick leave, grievances and other negative outcomes.





## Because we must position Metro for the future

King County is projecting a 61 increase in retirements in 2018 from what it was in 2010. The PACE focus on employee development and equal opportunities will help Metro attract and retain the best talent and will aid in succession planning. The PACE focus on ensuring fairness and equity in Metro's policies and procedures will ultimately enhance the productivity of new and existing employees. When employees perceive that they are welcomed and treated fairly, they are more productive, trusting, loyal, entrepreneurial and satisfied—as well as more physically and mentally healthy (Huffington Post, 2012).

### > How will this plan be used?

Recognizing how important diversity, engagement and inclusion are to the provision of public transportation services, this strategic plan is intended to do the following:

- > Broadly communicate PACE's vision for an inclusive, fair and equitable work environment.
- > Define a multi-level approach to equity and inclusion tailored to the needs of Metro and the experiences and concerns of its workforce.
- > Raise performance through the development and maintenance of an organizational culture that facilitates true employee engagement.

- > Enhance processes and systems through increased transparency, continual learning and shared accountability.
- > Guide budget and implementation decisions that move Metro toward its vision for comprehensive equity.

Ultimately, this plan is intended to increase and enhance Metro's organizational strength and well-being.

### > What will this plan achieve?

This plan presents a vision for Metro's work environment and describes the steps Metro has committed to take to significantly advance toward that vision. This plan provides actionable strategies associated with the plan's priorities. It also begins to identify the longer-term direction that will be taken to continue Metro's progress toward comprehensive equity and inclusion.

The work toward comprehensive equity in our workplace will not end in 2015. But through this plan, Metro's employees have the beginnings of a road map by which progress can be measured into the future. Since learning about inclusion, equity, engagement, diversity and cultural competence will necessarily be ongoing, this installment of the Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Equity provides the basis for updates and modifications as knowledge increases and circumstances change.



## > Challenges

Implementation of the multifaceted work to achieve Metro’s vision for comprehensive equity faces numerous challenges that must be eliminated or mitigated to ensure success. The focus areas, priorities, objectives and strategies in this plan are meant to address the following challenges:

### **Accountability and shared responsibility**

The partnership between labor and management and between employees and supervisors that characterizes the PACE initiative has been based on shared responsibility for the health of the organization and the well-being of its employees. Maintaining and strengthening these groundbreaking partnerships and the associated sharing of responsibility will be critical in the future as we continue to search for new and different ways to work together. Through 2015 and onward we will identify additional ways to hold one another accountable for further advancement of the PACE principles of fairness and inclusion.

### **Bargaining implications**

As we implement the 2015 plan and those to come in future years, ideas for improved process and increased opportunities will most assuredly include issues that have bargaining implications. Where this is the case, Metro will continue to progress in the institutionalization of equity and inclusion while simultaneously engaging in good faith in meeting bargaining responsibilities.

### **Effective and ongoing communication**

Communication to and from employees in an organization as large and dispersed as Metro has long been an issue. While this plan includes a number of recommendations related to communication, we will continue to expand on those, recognizing that effective two-way communication is key in building the inclusive and engaged work environment that we seek.

### **Funding and resources**

The PACE approach is multi-dimensional, seeking to address people, culture and processes simultaneously. While the PACE initiative has made progress using existing resources, that may not be the case in the future. As with all of the work Metro does, we seek to be fiscally responsible with the public’s funds

and trust. To this end, Metro remains committed to creatively identifying and devoting the resources necessary to provide meaningful advancement toward the PACE vision.

### **Facts v. perspectives**

The PACE Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Equity is based in part on the experiences, concerns and perspectives of its workforce and of the labor organizations that represent them. Through this plan, we confirm respect for these individuals and groups and for the information they have honestly shared. While we recognize that the readers of this document may hold a variety of opinions about this information, it provides a form of environmental assessment which should not and cannot be ignored. True employee engagement and our success as an organization requires that we seek the honest perspectives of our employees. In the coming year, we will continue to seek ways to respect, engage and empower our employees.

### **The courage to honestly address sensitive issues**

This plan is one element in Metro’s commitment to changing its work environment to maximize inclusion for all. It is one step in Metro’s efforts to address the issues of bias based on race and other “isms,” as well as power and privilege, equity, and marginalization. Talking about, let alone addressing such sensitive issues has proven difficult for society as a whole. These sensitivities and the discomfort that can be associated with

them are among the major challenges for this initiative.

### **Implicit bias**

Bias and stereotyping are major challenges to meeting the objectives of this plan. We all have bias. Even those committed to equity and social justice, and those who work to behave in non-prejudiced ways, still have hidden negative (i.e. implicit) biases.

Implicit biases are embedded stereotypes that influence our decision making without our conscious knowledge of it (Godsil, Tropp, Goff & Powell (sic), 2014). This is important because of the potential link between hidden biases which, if left unchecked, can result in discriminatory behavior. The reality that implicit bias exists and that it impacts our interactions means that it also impacts the way people experience and affect the work environment and their colleagues. Our ability to reach our vision for comprehensive equity, inclusion and engagement rests on our ability to recognize, manage and alter the automatic working of our minds—and our implicit biases.

*“The negative impacts of psychological functioning such as implicit bias go beyond interracial relations, holding broad implications for bias against a wide range of groups.”*

– Godsil, et al

## Understanding the unique implications of race, power and privilege in our society

While PACE seeks to foster true inclusion of everyone, credibility in that work requires the courage to admit to and seek some level of understanding of the unique role that race plays in our society and in our workplace. We must attempt to recognize how the societal dynamics associated with race may impact not only people of color, but also those who have historically been in a position of dominance.

For instance, while it is true that we all have bias, Dr. DiAngelo (2011) clarifies that “the direction of power between whites and people of color is historic, traditional, normalized, and deeply embedded in the fabric of U.S. society.” DiAngelo concludes that even though one may reject the notion that he or she is inherently better than another, it is difficult to avoid internalizing the societal message of white superiority because it is pervasive in mainstream culture.

Achieving the culture of inclusion for everyone requires us to both be honest about the unique role race has played historically and to embrace the legitimacy of marginalization

and separation experienced by women, members of the LGBT community and others in our society.

## Meaningful metrics and measurement

This plan ultimately focuses on people and their well-being as a priority for the organization. Effective measurement of equity and inclusion in our work environment will necessarily be people-oriented. Therefore, we have chosen not simply to use measures that count the number of people who attend training, for example. Such measures are important and will be a part of our overall performance metrics, but in the coming year we will explore the development of measures that more clearly

illuminate and attempt to measure the human elements of this work.

## Sustainability

Institutionalizing a culture of equity and inclusion is the ultimate goal of PACE. Recognizing that such an overarching goal will only be achieved over time, one challenge to our success will be to continually reinforce the energy and focus necessary to continually fuel this effort until it becomes “just the way we do things around here.”

***“The continual retreat from the discomfort of authentic racial engagement in a culture infused with racial disparity limits the ability to form authentic connections across racial lines, and results in a perpetual cycle that works to hold racism in place.”***

**– Dr. Robin DiAngelo,  
Associate Professor of Multicultural  
Education, Westfield State University**



## > CHAPTER 3: Pathway toward Comprehensive Equity – Building the Community

The PACE process is multifaceted and seeks to affect positive change systemwide. Toward a future state characterized by comprehensive equity and true inclusion for everyone, the PACE process has used a number of foundational cornerstones to guide its work so far. These cornerstones are geared toward building an inclusive community.

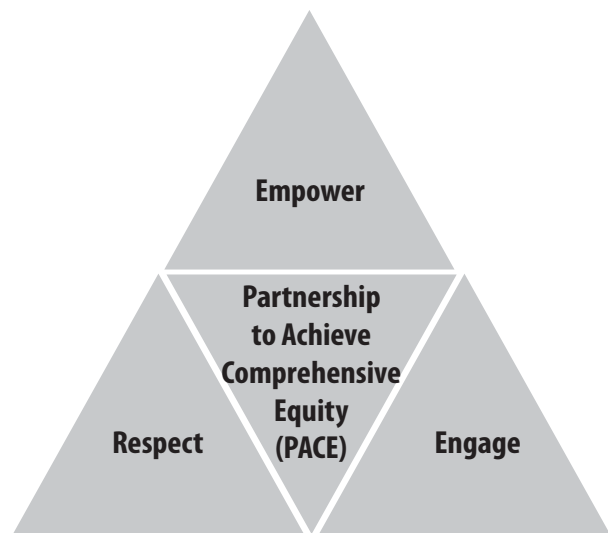
PACE Cornerstone  
**Kotter’s Theory of Organizational Transformation**

Harvard Business School Professor John Kotter, preeminent expert in organizational transformation, has identified eight steps that are critical to obtaining true organizational change. The PACE organizational change process seeks to incorporate elements of each of these important steps. (See the first installment of the PACE strategic plan for more details on these steps.)

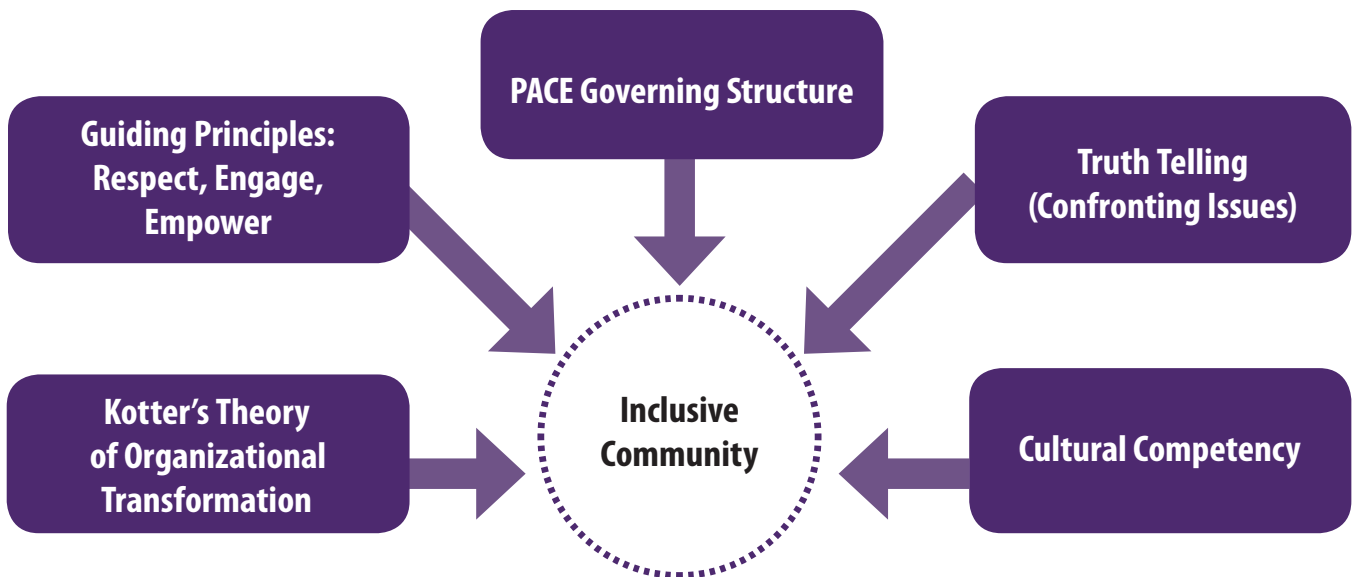
PACE Cornerstone  
**Guiding Principles:  
 Respect, Engage, Empower (the PACE Triangle)**

The PACE triangle incorporates three fundamental guiding principles: respect, engage and empower. The first leg of the

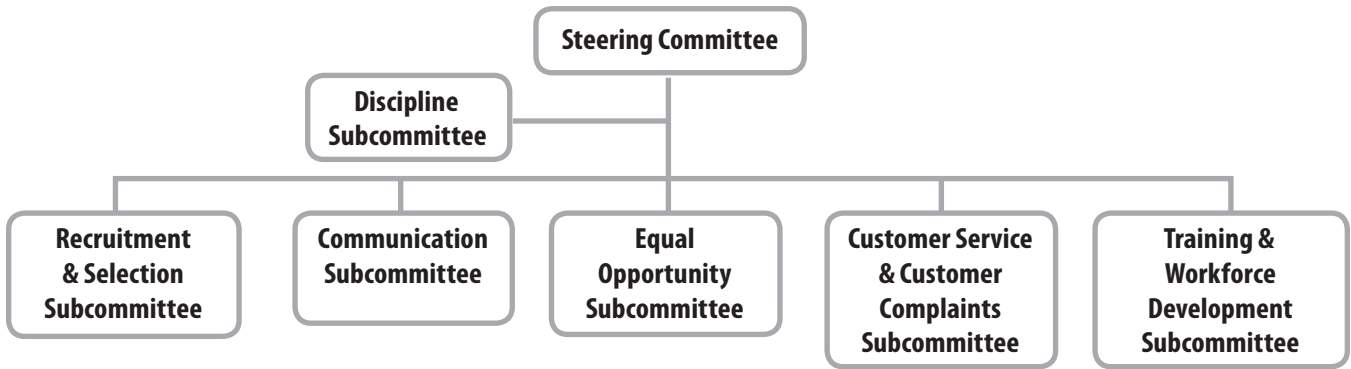
triangle is **respect** for one another and the diverse perspective each individual brings to the workplace. In PACE, the traditional adversarial approach has been suspended. Posturing and the trading of concessions have given way to collaboration and consideration for the good of the whole resulting in true **engagement**. And finally, the use of diversely populated subcommittees embodies the third leg of the PACE triangle: **empowering people to act**.



### > Intentionally Building the Community



## PACE Governing Structure



### PACE Cornerstone Governing Structure

The PACE governing structure incorporates executive-level sponsorship provided by the president of ATU, Metro’s general manager, and the King County Human Resources Division director. These sponsors sit on the Steering Committee along with the business agent for PTE Local 17 (the union that represents most of Metro’s supervisory staff), representatives of different sections of the Transit Division (including operators, chiefs, superintendents and first-line supervisors from Operations, Vehicle Maintenance, and Rail).

Mirroring the Steering Committee model, each subcommittee is co-chaired by one representative of labor and one member of management, and each incorporates employees representing each of the sections in the agency and includes members of management and labor.

### PACE Cornerstone Truth Telling (Honestly Confronting Issues)

Through working together, the PACE community has learned the importance of confronting difficult and sensitive issues through what has come to be known as “truth telling.” The PACE community has found that honestly (yet respectfully) addressing what is usually unsaid is necessary to move our community toward the achievement of comprehensive equity and inclusion. While confronting such issues is difficult, it has proven important, adding to the credibility of the PACE change effort and strengthening the resolve of the PACE community.

#### Truth telling – about the current state

In addition to specific feedback associated with the PACE subcommittee recommendations, a number of overarching

themes related to employee attitudes and concerns emerged as a result of the 2014 PACE outreach campaign. While these themes do not represent all of the current attitudes and concerns in our community, the consistent communication of them, the diversity of the employees sharing them, and the sincerity with which they were shared inform our need to look squarely at these issues. Following are some examples of that input.

**Pride and appreciation:** Metro employees express appreciation for the opportunity to work for King County government and Metro. They communicate pride in their work and their desire to do a good job for the people they serve.

**Importance of the role of management:** Employees recognize the important role management plays in setting the tone for the work environment. The general sentiment shared by many is that a top-down show of PACE principles is critical to the change Metro seeks.

**Accountability is crucial:** Employees communicate the need for accountability for adhering to the PACE principles of fairness and inclusion. Generally their sentiments include the belief that in order to achieve comprehensive equity, we all must “walk-the-talk,” and those who do not should not be ignored.

**Intellectual safety is important:** Employees communicate a general feeling of pressure to conform in thought and ways of being in order to be considered a valued part of the team. They communicate concerns about favoritism given to those considered to be “the right type.” Mentioning a fear of retaliation, they do not believe that the organization currently exemplifies valuing diversity and diverse ways of thinking and being. Employees do not communicate a broad sense of being encouraged to provide input or share their ideas.

**Consistency is important:** While employees recognize the reality of business-related differences across various parts of Metro, they communicate their concern with a lack

of consistency that appears to be based simply on individual choices of how things should be done (for example major differences in the application of rules from base to base).

**Hopeful but hesitant:** Many employees remain hesitant that PACE will achieve its stated goals—yet even in their hesitance they hold an overarching hope for real, positive and lasting change.

PACE Cornerstone  
**Community Building—Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Competency Defined**

Through PACE we are striving to build a culturally competent and inclusive community. In PACE those are more than just words, they are the concepts and ways of being that are at the very core of Metro’s vision for comprehensive equity. Given the importance of these concepts, we must continue to educate ourselves and grow in our shared understanding of them. The following definitions are offered to further a shared understanding of these important terms commonly used in the PACE community.



### Diversity defined

The PACE Charter defines diversity as including dimensions beyond those specified in nondiscrimination policies and statements. Diversity includes those things that influence the identities and perspectives people bring to the workplace. In addition, diversity involves policies and practices that encourage learning from others, and it captures the advantage of a wide array of perspectives by providing equal opportunity.

As a concept, diversity is about:

- > Being inclusive of everyone
- > Learning from others who are different from ourselves
- > Dignity and respect for all
- > Creating a welcoming workplace environment for everyone.

### Inclusion defined

The PACE vision statement states that “King County Metro is committed to building and sustaining an inclusive, fair and equitable work place for everyone. . .”

PACE defines inclusion as a sense of belonging, connectedness and shared responsibility. Inclusion is being respected and valued for our contributions and for who we are as individuals. It encompasses a “level of supportive energy and commitment from leaders and colleagues, so that we—individually and collectively—can do our best work.” (Katz & Miller)

In an inclusive work environment, people’s diverse thinking can be fully leveraged based on the realization that talent and ideas can be found at every level of the organization. Instead of feeling pressure not to bring forth different points of view, employees feel encouraged to do so. Differences are valued and thought of as a resource.

### Cultural competence defined

Inclusion together with cultural competence are important elements of the PACE initiative. In her work with Metro, psychologist Dr. Caprice Hollins has helped us to increase our understanding of cultural competence as follows:

**Cultural competence incorporates awareness:** To be culturally competent we must strive to be aware of

- Our own cultural heritage
- Our own values and biases and their potential effect on others

**“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”**  
– Martin Luther King, Jr.

***“It’s not about perfection, it’s about connection.”***

**–Verna Myers,  
Cultural Competency Trainer**

***Cultural competence incorporates knowledge:*** To be culturally competent, we must continually seek knowledge of:

- The socio-political systems operating in the U.S. (e.g. racism, power and oppression)
- Institutional barriers that have acted to prevent diverse groups from full access

***Cultural competence incorporates skills:*** In order to be culturally competent, we must build our ability to:

- Build relationships and trust with colleagues
- Engage in courageous conversations around bias, etc.

***Cultural competence incorporates advocacy (adapted from Katz, 1978):*** To be culturally competent, we must practice not only believing in inclusion and equity for all, we must take actions and advocate for it through:

- Educating ourselves and others about the “isms”
- Breaking our silence about the “isms”

- Demonstrating a commitment to change—within ourselves, others and our community as a whole.

(Select elements from Increasing Cultural Competence as presented by Dr. Caprice Hollins, Cultures Connecting – Adapted from Sue & Sue, 2003 and Katz, 1978)

These terms—diversity, inclusion and cultural competence—underpin the 2015 PACE Strategic Plan. Understanding them helps us grow together as a community.

***“Culture gives leadership to an organization and defines how it functions. No matter how much a new program or procedure is reinforced, it won’t succeed if it is at odds with the organization’s culture. Culture trumps policy and strategy every time...It is the general vibe one gets after spending time in an organization.”***

**– Judith Katz, Ed.D. and Fredrick Miller, CEO  
Kaleel Jamison Organizational  
Development Consulting Group**



## > CHAPTER 4: Future Focus – Sustaining the Community

Throughout 2015, PACE will continue its focus on building an inclusive community and will broaden its focus to include establishing the elements needed to sustain the community. These elements include:

- > **Focus on action** through the implementation of partnership-driven recommendations geared at positively impacting three major focus areas: People, Organizational Culture, and Systems and Structures.
- > **Focus on effective two-way communications** to provide information *to* employees and to receive information and perspectives *from* employees. We will strive to communicate more often and more effectively about PACE and its progress.
- > **Focus on meaningful measurement** to gauge our progress toward the ultimate vision of an inclusive and equitable work environment and joint accountability between management, employees and labor leaders

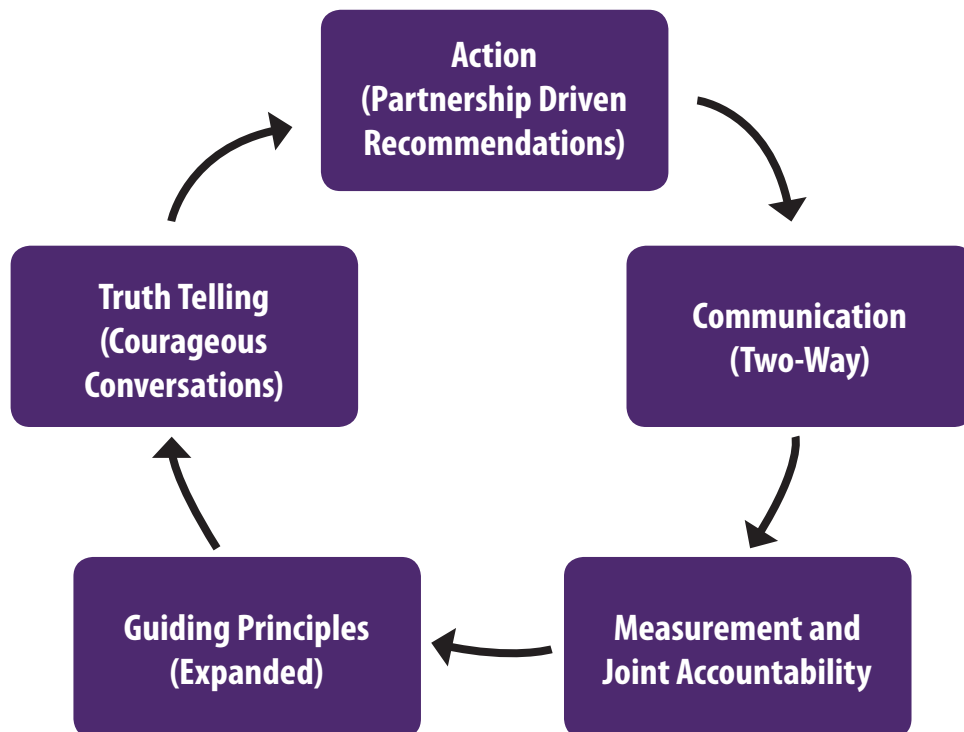
for instilling PACE principles into every aspect of our work culture. We will take steps to identify and establish meaningful and informative performance measures.

- > **Focus on guiding principles** – We will consider the establishment and adoption of specific principles that will guide ongoing PACE work.
- > **Focus on continued truth telling** in the form of courageous cross-cultural conversations to continue increasing the levels of respect and value placed on diversity in our workplace. We will seek to provide the PACE community with additional tools to be effective advocates for inclusion and equity within the work environment.

*“The future depends on what we do in the present.”*

– Mahatma Gandhi

## > Purposefully Sustaining the Community





## > Action – Implementation of partnership-driven recommendations

In 2015, we are focusing on the implementation of the partnership-driven recommendations. These recommendations were developed by the PACE subcommittees. The PACE Steering Committee reviewed these recommendations, setting priorities and providing guidance. Implementation of subcommittee recommendations is critically important because it will positively impact the three major focus areas: people, culture, and systems.

Metro management will be responsible for detailed planning and implementation of the recommendations. This will include securing needed resources, defining deliverables in alignment with the subcommittee recommendations, creating timelines for getting the work done, and providing regular progress reports. A regularly updated website will be a primary tool for communicating progress throughout the rest of the year. The PACE project manager and co-chairs will be responsible for overseeing and coordinating day-to-day implementation activities; the PACE Steering Committee will review and provide guidance for the work.

The PACE subcommittees will have an ongoing role throughout 2015. Their primary role will be to hold management accountable for implementing the recommendations. This role includes not only reviewing objective performance metrics but also making sure that the work done reflects the intent of the PACE committees that developed the recommendations. The committees will also be an important channel for communication between management and employees about what is being accomplished. The subcommittee activities may lead to adjustments to the work to make sure it achieves the desired outcomes.

## > What are we asking of you?

To be very clear: PACE is an ongoing effort. The work to improve our community's approach to valuing diversity, inclusion and engagement will take ongoing attention. Metro's goal is that our joint efforts will make noticeable changes, both in our practices and in the way people experience our work environment.

As we move forward, we are asking you to do the following:

- > *Be willing to talk about PACE, and just as important, be willing to listen.*
- > *Be willing to give PACE a chance, and know that there is no perfect approach to what we are attempting. When we stumble, please help us up.*
- > *Be proactive in looking for ways to eliminate inequities and increase inclusiveness and engagement; and then be courageous about bringing them forward – they may help to inform our work this year and to shape the PACE work plan for 2016.*
- > **Commit to the PACE Strategic Plan for the well-being of our community and the long term success of Metro.**

***“Just because we cannot see clearly the end of the road that is no reason for not setting out on the essential journey.”***

**– Robert F. Kennedy**



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## **By Any Means Necessary**

**"I feel like...it has become easy for us to get angry and self-righteous without really asking what is needed in that moment..."**

**"What if what's needed... is forgiveness...what if what is necessary is trusting people beyond their mistakes and shortcomings, trusting their best intentions...what if what is necessary is learning to see family where you have seen enemies?...Are we able to be that militant?"**

**"Are we strong enough to default to trust at a community level?"**

**– Adrienne Maree Brown**