

October 2015

Summary of Recommendations

Metro's Service Guidelines were adopted by the King County Council in 2011, following consensus recommendations of the Regional Transit Task Force. Metro uses the guidelines to evaluate the transit system and develop plans to add, reduce, change and maintain transit service. The guidelines help Metro deliver productive, high-quality service where it's needed most.

In 2015, after Metro had used the guidelines for over four years, the County Executive and Council formed a Service Guidelines Task Force to review the guidelines and recommend any needed adjustments. The Service Guidelines Task Force unanimously made the following consensus recommendations:

Change the way service types are described and compared

- To better reflect all the geographic areas Metro serves and the full array of services provided, redefine the current service types from "Seattle Core and "Non-Seattle Core" to "Urban" and "Suburban." Create a new service type for DART and Alternative Services Community Shuttles so these services are not compared to fixed routes when Metro evaluates their performance. (Note: Metro's Access paratransit service is not directly managed by the guidelines.)
- Protect peak-only service from reductions to demonstrate value across the county.

Revise the guidelines for setting target service levels for transit corridors to better reflect social equity and geographic value

Social equity

- Change the scoring system used to set target service levels to better reflect low-income and minority populations near the county average while reducing year-to-year fluctuation in points awarded for low-income and minority ridership.
- Change the definition of "low-income" from 100 percent to 200 percent of the federal poverty level (the same as for ORCA LIFT).

Geographic value

- Place more emphasis on serving and connecting job, growth and activity centers throughout the county.
- Consider the value of park-and-rides throughout the county when determining where Metro should invest.
- Develop minimum service standards for each type of service—at least every 60 minutes on corridors.

Expand alternative services

- Use alternative services, such as Community Shuttles and flexible rideshare, to meet different transportation needs across the county: replace poorly performing fixed-route services, provide better connections between centers, serve rural communities, and "seed" potential new bus routes in emerging markets.
- Work with local governments, employers and residents to identify and plan alternative services.
- Measure the performance of these services.

(over)

Principles agreed upon by the Service Guidelines Task Force

- Recognize that different parts of the county have different travel demands
- Measure the performance of services against similar services
- Right-size service and seed new markets
- Create better connections between centers
- Maintain and improve services that meet productivity, social equity and geographic value objectives.
- The demand for transit services far outweighs current available resources
- Foster new partnerships with private and public entities



Improve the transit planning process

- Use origin and destination information to better identify how best to serve the travel needs of riders.
- Better identify and work to meet the needs of disadvantaged populations throughout the county.
- Develop a way to measure how long it takes to get to jobs and major destinations, and work to improve these connections.
- Let local governments know in advance about how their routes are performing, what potential changes could be made to serve more riders, and the timeline for service changes Metro is considering.

Expand partnerships

- Collaborate with businesses, social service organizations and communities to explore public-private partnerships to expand mobility.
- Proactively manage Metro's park-and-ride program to identify parking and service needs throughout the system. Work with partners to add park-and-ride capacity and better utilize existing park-and-rides.
- Work with local governments on ways land use, capital investments and other local actions can help expand and improve transit service.

Seek resources through funding and efficiencies

- New resources are needed to support growth of the transit system.
- Continue to focus on efficiency and accountability to make the best use of resources.



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Task Force members

The 31 members represented all parts of King County and different stakeholder groups that use transit.

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Vic Bishop, Eastside
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John Chelminiak, City of Bellevue
Suzette Cooke, City of Kent
Dorene Cornwell, mobility advocate
Lauren Craig, Puget Sound Sage
Chris Eggen, City of Shoreline
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Jim Stanton, Microsoft

Ex officio members

Kevin Desmond, General Manager,
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Mike Harbour, Acting CEO, Sound
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** Resigned partway through the process*