

How does Metro determine where to cut service? **By following priorities in the service guidelines**

When Metro has to reduce service to fit our budget, we follow service guidelines that set priorities for making cuts or changes. The guidelines also help us make the best use of fewer transit dollars by keeping service where it's needed most: highly productive routes that carry many riders, low-income and minority communities where many people rely on buses, and routes that get people to key destinations across King County.

Priority 1: Cut the lowest-performing service (bottom 25%) that:

1. Duplicates other service.
2. Runs in peak periods only and doesn't carry enough riders or travel faster enough compared to regular all-day service.
3. Is on a corridor where service is above the target service level.
4. Is on a corridor where service is at the target service level.

Priority 2: Restructure a network of routes

We also look for ways to change a group of routes in an area so the network serves the most riders and costs less to operate, and cuts have the least impact on our riders. We might combine routes, delete parts of routes that carry fewer riders, or move buses to different streets.

Priority 3: Cut the next-lowest performing service (above the bottom 25%)

When we must make deeper cuts, we have to take service from routes that are performing better than those in the lowest-performing group. Again, we cut service that:

1. Duplicates other service.
2. Runs in peak periods only.
3. Is on a corridor where service is above the target service level.
4. Is on a corridor where service is at the target service level.

Priority 4: Reduce the lowest performing service (lowest 25%) on corridors that are below their target service levels

Even though service in this category is among the lowest performing in the Metro system, it's not top priority to be cut because we try to meet the target service level in every corridor—although that's not always possible within our available resources.

Transit terms

Service can mean a whole route, part of a route, or a single trip.

Low performing service carries fewer people or carries them for shorter distances to fewer of the places the route goes.

Duplicates other service means a route or part of a route serves the same area or part of a street that another route serves, so another option is available to riders.

Corridor is a transit service area linking major destinations. More than one route can operate on a corridor.

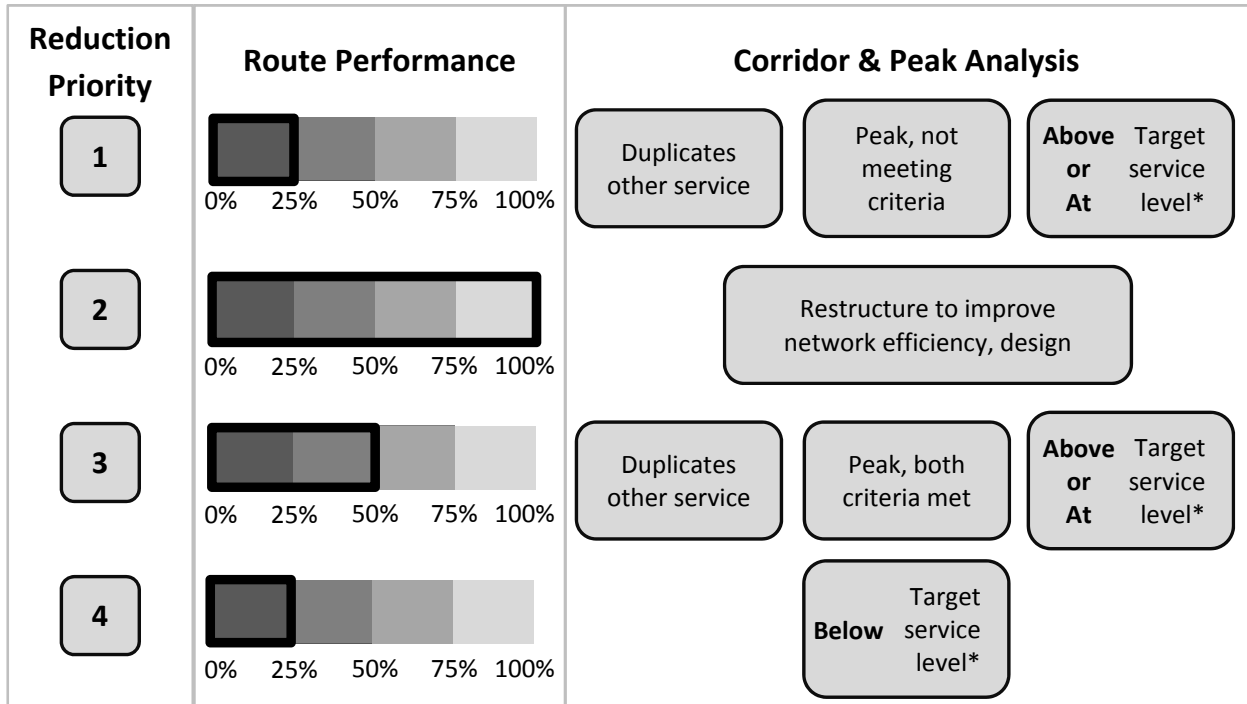
Service level means how often buses come, how many hours a day they run, and how many days of the week they provide service.

Target service level—Metro sets this for each corridor, based on:

- the number of homes, jobs, and colleges nearby
- the number of riders in areas that have many minority or low-income residents
- connections to major destinations
- the number of riders using the service

See an illustration of the process >>

Metro Service Guidelines Methodology for Reducing Service



*Target service level is based on demographics and demand between connections served by transit