

Community Mobility Contracts Program

Metro's Community Mobility Contracts program allows cities to purchase transit service above what Metro is currently able to provide given current financial constraints. This program should not be viewed as a permanent solution to the region's transit funding challenges, but rather as an option for cities to enhance or restore transit service. The program is similar to Metro's existing Service Partnership Program, but allows for a more significant investment that covers the full cost of providing service.

The Community Mobility Contracts program is based on three principles:

- Contracts must reflect the full cost of providing the service.
- Contracts cannot come at the expense of other cities or the regional allocation of service.
- The program is intended as a bridge to keep buses on the street until the state legislature provides a sustainable funding tool for local transportation needs.

How the Community Mobility Contracts Program will work

Under this program, any city or group of cities in King County can contract with Metro to avoid planned cuts. The program could also provide enhanced transit services to advance a community's economic, planning and development, and livability goals. Contracted services give cities the flexibility to tailor transit services to meet unique local transportation needs.



The program is based on a contracted service model. Cities can invest in additional transit hours beyond the countywide level of service provided by Metro. Cities participating in this program will pay the full cost associated with the enhanced level of service.

There are several reasons why cities may consider a contracted services model:

- Preserve service slated for cuts: Cities can choose to invest in routes that are proposed to be reduced or eliminated.
- Enhance service on underserved corridors: Metro's 2013 service review found that more than 500,000 additional hours of bus service are needed annually to meet demand throughout the County. Many of the hours are to be needed to adequately serve underserved corridors that connect important employment and educational centers. Cities could choose to invest in meeting this existing demand.
- Tailored service: Cities could use this program to develop services tailored to their unique community needs. Cities can contract for enhanced services such as circulators and shuttles.

Metro will offer technical assistance to interested cities to help identify service investments that meet the communities' transit and economic objectives. Once a contract is signed, service would begin at the time of Metro's next quarterly service change, when practical.

Maintaining a regional transit system

Metro's regional bus service is essential to maintaining a strong economy and mobility throughout King County. The county remains committed to finding a sustainable funding source to restore and grow regional transit service to meet the large and growing demand. The Community Mobility Contracts program provides an option for cities to offset transit

service cuts or tailor an enhanced form of transit service, during the near term, when the current system will experience service reductions.

Metro's service reduction proposal

This approach to contracting service does not solve Metro's financial situation. In the absence of new revenue, the Metro will have to reduce 550,000 service hours, or 16 percent, based on current projected revenues. Contracted services can be used by cities to help restore lost service hours.

Metro's service guidelines

Metro uses adopted service guidelines to plan where to add or reduce bus service, and these guidelines will be used to help jurisdictions identify routes that could provide productive service and meet the needs of their communities.

Every year, Metro analyzes our transit system using the service guidelines. The 2013 analysis identified 58 corridors in which the current service level does not meet ridership demand in one or more time periods of the day. These corridors could be candidates for city investments in transit service.

Cities could also invest in preserving service that Metro has proposed to eliminate or reduce in response to the funding shortfall. Metro planned these reductions following the service guidelines. The first priority in the guidelines is to cut the lowest performing service—service that carries fewer people or carries them for shorter distances to fewer of the places the route goes. The second priority is to restructure service—changing 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. In the case of the current shortfall, Metro is also recommending third priority reductions--cutting services that are not the lowest performing.

Use of the guidelines can help ensure that communities keep service where it is 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.

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