



**A message from Metro Transit
General Manager Kevin Desmond**



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Metro has cut costs by acting on audit recommendations

The King County Auditor's Office conducted a performance audit of Metro in 2009, and gave us a number of recommendations for managing costs. We've been following up, and in April the Auditor released a report on the progress we've made. Metro has captured \$17 million in annual savings by acting on the recommendations—a big contribution to the many other actions we have taken to preserve bus service as the economy has continued to constrict our operating revenues.

Metro's largest cost reduction stemming from the performance audit is \$10 million saved annually by reducing the length of layovers in our bus schedules. Layovers are the periods of time at the end of trips when bus drivers can take a break and can get back on schedule if service ran late on the prior trip.

Although that \$10 million savings is a success story, it also shows how cutting costs has to be balanced with preserving quality. With shorter layovers, some of our bus drivers have been getting less of a break from the stresses and physical demands of their job. And less "catch-up" time caused our on-time performance to decline through most of 2010. Although on-time service has been improving over the past six months, it's still lower than in the past. We suspect that's the reason customer satisfaction has slipped a bit over the past year. See the trends on our [monthly performance measures dashboard](#).



Cost-cutting must have limits—we can't undermine the transit system we're trying to preserve. Since we actually saved more money from schedule adjustments last year than the Auditor's Office had projected, in June we're going to restore some time on 13 routes that haven't been running as well as we'd like.

While making these corrections, we will keep working on audit recommendations and other endeavors to operate as cost-efficiently as possible. This is especially important now. Metro faces large budget deficits in the years ahead because of the recession's lingering impact on our revenues. At the same time, high gas prices and the beginnings of economic recovery are causing our ridership to climb. Metro's customers and our region's economic prosperity depend on a robust transit system, and we want to preserve as much service as we can.

Sincerely,

Kevin Desmond, General Manager
King County Metro Transit

Find the Auditor's full report and our list of highlights on [Metro Online](#), along with other reports we have posted to ensure Metro's public accountability.