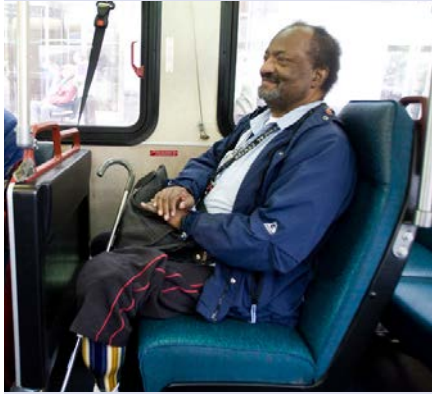


## CHAPTER 2: A PATHWAY TO THE FUTURE



### Metro's goals

The “what we deliver” goals are:

- **Safety:** Support safe communities.
- **Human potential:** Provide equitable opportunities for people from all areas of King County to access the public transportation system.
- **Economic growth and built environment:** Encourage vibrant, economically thriving and sustainable communities.
- **Environmental sustainability:** Safeguard and enhance King County's natural resources and environment.

The “how we deliver” goals are:

- **Service excellence:** Establish a culture of customer service and deliver services that are responsive to community needs.
- **Financial stewardship:** Exercise sound financial management and build Metro's long-term sustainability.
- **Public engagement:** Promote robust public engagement that informs, involves, and empowers people and communities.
- **Quality workforce:** Develop and empower Metro's most valuable asset, its employees.

### SECTION 2.1

## Goals, objectives and strategies

The goals, objectives and strategies in this plan reflect the priorities of King County residents, businesses, and leaders. They are designed to guide budget and management decisions that help Metro fulfill our mission and move us toward our vision.

**Goals:** The strategic plan has eight goals, including “what” goals that state what Metro intends to accomplish or services it intends to provide, and “how” goals that articulate how Metro intends to conduct its work (see sidebar).

Metro plans to move toward the goals by implementing this plan, but the goals are also intended to endure beyond the life of this plan.

**Objectives:** Objectives describe what Metro must do to achieve the goals. An objective may serve multiple goals, but each objective is listed with a specific goal to which it is most closely tied. Each objective has an associated outcome. Chapter 3, Plan Performance Monitoring, describes how Metro will measure progress toward the desired outcomes.

**Strategies:** This plan contains 40 strategies for achieving the objectives. Even though strategies may serve multiple objectives and goals, each strategy is listed with a specific objective to which it is most closely tied. Chapter 3 describes how Metro will measure our success in carrying out these strategies.



METRO'S GOALS: GOAL 1

**SAFETY**

Support safe communities.



*Metro provides a safe and secure transportation environment and ensures emergency preparedness.*





Metro's **All Hazards Response Plan** is designed to ensure the safety of all responders, deter and prevent incidents, guide the response of Metro and partnering agencies so it is quick and effective, and appropriately manage Metro's resources during an incident.



The **Adverse Weather Plan** matches service delivery to the severity of the incident and outlines procedures for internal and external communications.



### **Objective 1.1: Keep people safe and secure.**

Metro protects the safety and security of customers, employees and facilities in a variety of ways, including planning, policing, facility design, operational practices, safety training, and collaboration with local jurisdictions and other agencies on safety-related matters. *Intended outcome: Metro's services and facilities are safe and secure.*

#### **Strategy 1.1.1: Promote safety and security in public transportation operations and facilities.**

The Metro Transit Police (MTP) protects Metro's operators and riders by patrolling the Metro system and facilities by bus, bike and car. The MTP leverages its resources by creating partnerships with community groups, police and other government agencies, and other public transportation organizations. These partnerships allow the MTP to share information, ideas, and solutions to common safety issues.

Metro educates and trains its employees to improve the safety and security of the public transportation system and Metro's offices and facilities. A major focus of safety efforts is operator training, as transit operators directly impact the safety of riders and other road users. Metro also strives to ensure that its facilities use principles of safe design, such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, to maximize environmental safety.

Metro's Accident Prevention Program Plan and System Security Plan guide Metro's efforts to maintain and improve the safe operations of its vehicles and the safety and security of its facilities.

#### **Strategy 1.1.2: Plan for and execute regional emergency response and homeland security efforts.**

Metro prepares for emergency situations so we can help the Puget Sound region adapt and continue functioning when emergencies happen. Metro has developed two major plans for continuing to provide reliable transportation in "all-hazard" incidents ranging from major service interruptions to civil unrest as well as the more common adverse weather occurrences such as snow or flooding. These are the All Hazards Response Plan and the Adverse Weather Plan (see sidebar).

Metro also regularly conducts emergency-preparedness field exercises with local, county, state and federal agencies.

## GOAL 2

### HUMAN POTENTIAL

Provide equitable opportunities for people from all areas of King County to access the public transportation system.



*Metro provides equitable and accessible transportation options.*





**Objective 2.1 Provide public transportation products and services that add value throughout King County and that facilitate access to jobs, education, and other destinations.**

Metro strives to provide transportation choices that make it easy for people to travel throughout King County and the region. Metro provides a range of public transportation products and services, and coordinates and integrates its services with others. **Intended outcome: More people throughout King County have access to public transportation products and services.**

▪ **Strategy 2.1.1: Design and offer a variety of public transportation products and services appropriate to different markets and mobility needs.**

The traditional fixed-route transit system is the largest of Metro’s services, but it cannot meet every public transportation travel need. Metro provides a range of public transportation products and services to augment the fixed-route transit system and provide geographic value throughout King County.

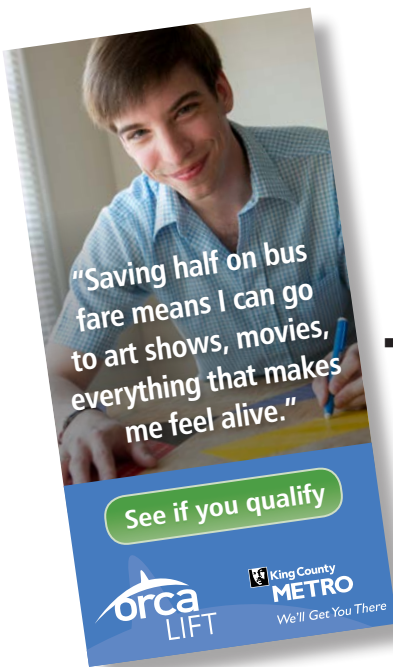
Within the fixed-route system, Metro provides several levels of service: very frequent, frequent, local, hourly and peak. Each level can be matched to the community served. Metro’s companion piece to the strategic plan, the King County Metro Service Guidelines, considers data for productivity, social equity, and geographic value to help identify which level of service will be appropriate for transit corridors throughout King County.

Corridors that have the potential for high ridership give Metro opportunities to focus transit service and facility investments. Metro is pursuing these opportunities through the RapidRide program. Six RapidRide lines are in operation, and additional lines could be developed in the future. Communities can leverage Metro’s transit investments with supportive development along each line.

In other parts of the county, fixed-route transit—even at an hourly or peak-only level—is not efficient. In these cases, Metro will work with the community to create alternative service options such as community shuttles, real-time rideshare, community vans, or other innovative ways to provide mobility responsive to community needs. Metro will foster local partnerships and work with local partners to develop and implement these alternative transit services.

▪ **Strategy 2.1.2: Provide travel opportunities and supporting amenities for historically disadvantaged populations, such as low-income people, students, youth, seniors, people of color, people with disabilities, and others with limited transportation options.**

Metro serves historically disadvantaged populations with a wide variety of public transportation services and supporting amenities such as bus stops, bus shelters, seating, lighting, waste receptacles, and public information. All buses on the fixed-route system are accessible for most people with disabilities, complementary paratransit services are available for eligible individuals with disabilities who cannot use regular bus service, and facilities are accessible in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Metro offers other services as well, such as the innovative Community Transportation Program which includes the Taxi Scrip Program, Transit Instruction Program, and Community Access Transportation (CAT). Metro also provides programs such as Jobs Access and Reverse Commute



(JARC), a federal program that is intended to connect low-income populations with employment opportunities through public transportation. Metro also works with local school districts to respond to student transportation needs. Metro regularly reports on its services in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**Strategy 2.1.3: Provide products and services that are designed to provide geographic value in all parts of King County.**

Metro provides public transportation products and services that offer flexible travel options for King County residents and visitors. Metro makes public transportation investments that are appropriate to the land use, employment densities, housing densities, and transit demand in various communities. Metro will continue to provide public transportation to all communities currently served by transit.

There should be a relationship, but not an exact formula, between the tax revenue created in an area of King County and the distribution of public transportation products and services. Service design should also recognize all of the revenues (taxes and fares) generated in the various areas of King County.

Public transportation investments are critical for economic prosperity and the future growth of the region. Metro should get the greatest number of workers to and from job centers. Metro will support access to destinations that are essential to countywide economic vitality.

- **Strategy 2.1.4: In areas that are not well-served by fixed-route service or where geographic coverage service gaps exist, seek to complement or “right-size” transportation service by working with partners to develop an extensive range of alternative services to serve the general public.**

Innovative public transportation services and delivery strategies may meet mobility needs more effectively than regular bus service does in areas not well-suited to fixed-route transit. Metro will seek to replace poorly performing fixed-route services under certain circumstances, to provide better connections to, from and between centers, to serve rural communities, and to seed new routes that would serve emerging markets. These services may also be less costly and more cost-effective than traditional bus service. Metro is exploring opportunities to expand effective and lower-cost alternatives to fixed-route bus service to a broader range of users.



Partnerships are essential to expanding alternative services to these new users. A local partner organization, such as a municipality, nonprofit or business, must be actively engaged and contribute to the development and implementation of the project. Partnerships may include sharing the cost of community engagement, planning, equipment, contracted services, promotions, or other project elements and may involve either cash or in-kind contributions from the partner organization. Local partners may also enact transit-supportive land-use policy or may make infrastructure investments that support transit. Metro will invite certain communities to partner on alternative services projects based on a defined set of allocation criteria. Metro will also create opportunities for local partners to submit alternative services project ideas for consideration. When considering where to implement alternative services projects, Metro will give special consideration to communities with high proportions of low-income or minority populations who depend on public transportation.

To provide an extensive array of services to the general public, changes may be necessary to current code. Metro should consider code changes that clarify eligibility criteria for special programs to allow use by the general public when appropriate.

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  <p><b>Existing Alternative Services</b></p> <p>VanShare<br/>VanPool<br/>Rideshare Matching<br/>DART and CAT</p> |  <p><b>Community Shuttle</b></p> <p>Metro route with a Flexible Service Area, provided through community partnerships.</p> |  <p><b>Community Van</b></p> <p>A fleet of Metro vans for local group trips that are scheduled by a local transportation coordinator to meet locally identified transportation needs.</p> |  <p><b>Real-Time Rideshare</b></p> <p>Leveraging mobile applications to enable private carpool ridematching to take place in real-time.</p> |  <p><b>TripPool</b></p> <p>Real-time ridesharing between home neighborhood and a transit center. Uses Metro Vans and ORCA fares.</p> |
|---|---|--|---|---|

**Metro’s suite of alternative services and products**

Alternative services are a combination of traditional and innovative mobility services. Metro has been offering rideshare services like VanPool, Rideshare Matching, and VanShare for many years. Under the Alternative Services program Metro will be developing a new suite of products that leverage emerging technologies and trends. Current products, shown above, include: Community Shuttles, Community Vans, Real-Time Rideshare, and TripPool.

## GOAL 3

### ECONOMIC GROWTH AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Encourage vibrant, economically thriving and sustainable communities.



*Metro supports economic vitality in the region by moving people efficiently and improving the performance of the transportation system.*





**Objective 3.1 Support a strong, diverse, sustainable economy.**

A transportation system that moves people and goods efficiently is critical to economic vitality and the achievement of the region's vision for growth. The regional growth strategy emphasizes the need for an integrated, multimodal transportation system that links major cities and centers. Metro plays an important role in the growth strategy by offering travel options that connect people to areas of concentrated activity, providing affordable access to jobs, education and important social and retail services. *Intended outcome: Public transportation products and services are available throughout King County and are well-utilized in centers and areas of concentrated economic activity.*



- **Strategy 3.1.1: Encourage land uses, policies, and development that lead to communities that have good access to transit and that transit can serve efficiently and effectively.**

Metro provides a range of services to get people to work, school, and other places they want to go. The backbone of Metro's system is a network of all-day, two-way bus routes between residential centers, business centers and transit activity centers. Metro also provides commuter service to major destinations from many neighborhoods as well as from a network of park-and-ride lots. Metro provides local services to connect people to the larger transportation system. Rideshare services such as commuter vans and Rideshare-Online.com, as well as community programs such as In Motion and car-sharing, promote alternative travel options.

Metro augments its own investments by developing mutually beneficial partnerships with public and private entities to improve public transportation. Partners may include local jurisdictions, other agencies, employers, and institutions. Metro enters into agreements in which partners may contribute funding directly for service, including service that complements fixed-route service, that increases service in communities where corridors are below their target service levels, or that supports more service hours or service efficiencies. Partners also may invest in transit speed or reliability improvements. Partnerships may include local government land-use policy changes that promote higher concentrations of residential and employment density, which is conducive to transit. Metro also forms partnerships to develop and promote alternative commute programs and to manage parking and traffic to make public transportation more efficient and attractive. Metro works with the Washington State Department of Transportation and local cities to provide services that help mitigate the impacts of major construction projects. Metro also works with private transportation operators (employee and residential shuttles, transportation network companies, taxis, and other commercial transportation entities) to enable complementary use of Metro services and facilities with those operators.

**Strategy 3.1.2: Partner with employers to make public transportation products and services more affordable and convenient for employees.**

Metro develops and pursues market-based strategies with employers, institutions and property managers to encourage the use of alternatives to driving alone. Metro offers employers and organizations technical assistance, marketing and training to establish commute benefit programs. These programs give commuters access and incentives for using transit and rideshare services, cycling, walking and teleworking. Examples are ORCA business products and Home Free Guarantee (Metro’s emergency ride home service). Metro also coordinates with employer-sponsored transportation services to avoid duplicating existing public services. Metro seeks to identify potential new community and employer-based partnerships that would support transit options for low-income workers.

By working with employers, Metro can increase the use of its products and services as well as those of other transit agencies. Metro can also support progress toward community objectives, while helping employers manage parking and traffic, attract and retain employees, and meet commute trip reduction and sustainability goals.



**Objective 3.2: Address the growing need for transportation services and facilities throughout the county.**

The number of people and jobs in King County is growing, and the demand for public transportation continues to rise. Metro will prepare for this growth by seeking opportunities to expand service, by being more efficient, and by partnering with others to maximize the travel options available. Metro will also strive to improve access to transit—the ability of people to get to transit service and to get from transit service to their final destinations using a range of modes such as walking, biking, driving and other public transportation services. Access is affected by the environment—such as surrounding land use and connectivity, by the safety and security of the surrounding street and sidewalk network, by the availability of service at the access point, and other factors. **Intended outcome: More people have access to and regularly use public transportation products and services in King County.**

▪ **Strategy 3.2.1: Expand services to accommodate the region’s growing population and serve new transit markets.**

Population and employment growth are creating emerging and expanding travel markets throughout King County. These markets range from expanding employment centers such as Kirkland’s Totem Lake or Seattle’s South Lake Union to developing residential communities throughout King County. Metro has many tactics for accommodating growth, such as starting a new route, adding peak trips, extending hours of service to include the midday or evening, or modifying a route to serve a new location.



- Strategy 3.2.2: Coordinate and develop services and facilities with other providers, local jurisdictions and the private sector to create an integrated and efficient regional transportation system that takes innovative approaches to improving mobility.**



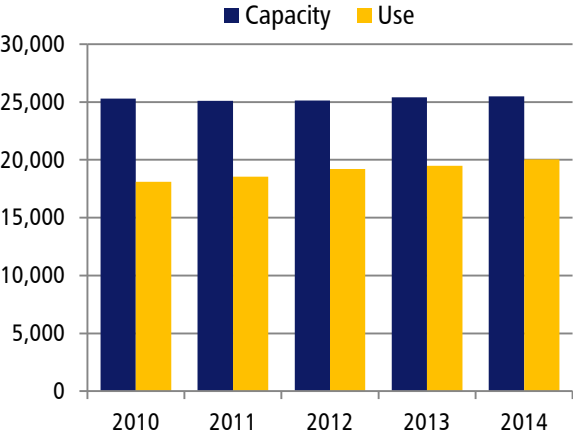
Metro collaborates with other agencies and organizations to build the best possible regional public transportation network, to make it easy for people to travel between transportation services, to maximize travel options, and to achieve efficiencies by providing services that are complementary rather than duplicative. For example, when Sound Transit introduces new services, Metro explores opportunities to restructure bus routes, improve service integration, enhance service and increase efficiency. By reconfiguring, reducing or eliminating poorly performing routes, Metro can free up resources to invest in routes with greater demand and unmet service needs. Where parallel services exist, Metro can restructure routes to create service that is more frequent, productive and reliable. Metro also coordinates with other agencies and jurisdictions to improve the efficiency of the system through transit speed and reliability improvements. Metro works independently and in coordination with local jurisdictions to implement improvements such as traffic signal coordination, transit queue-bypass lanes, transit signal queue jumps, transit signal priority, safety improvements, and stop consolidations. Metro also supports investments that improve service, attract transit riders, and achieve land-use goals that support transit services.

Metro also coordinates with other regional and local public transportation entities and the private sector on funding, design, construction and maintenance of capital facilities such as transit hubs, park-and-rides and stations to optimize intermodal connections, promote efficient operation and enhance access. Metro will take innovative approaches to improving mobility.

- Strategy 3.2.3: Facilitate convenient and safe access to transit by all modes.**

Metro will work with public and private partners to promote access to transit through all modes, including walking, bicycling, taking connecting transit or paratransit services, or driving to a pick-up/drop-off point or park-and-ride. Tactics include facility design and infrastructure investments to enhance safety, security and connectivity.

**FIGURE 6: Fourth quarter park-and-ride capacity and use, 2010-2014**  
(number of parking spaces)



- Strategy 3.2.4: Work in collaboration with transit partners, WSDOT and other public and private partners to address transit parking capacity demand through a range of approaches that use resources efficiently and enable more people to access transit.**

Park-and-ride locations provide access to the public transportation system for people who do not live near a bus route or who want the many service options available at park-and-rides. These facilities serve as a meeting place for carpool and vanpool partners, and add to the capacity of the state and interstate highway system. The use of park-and-rides continues to grow, and many lots are at or over capacity every day.

Metro will work with Sound Transit, WSDOT, local cities and others to explore affordable opportunities to increase park-and-ride capacity and enhance transit access. Tactics for responding to demand include managing existing lots including ensuring adequate signage, maximizing occupancy of existing spaces, considering additional potential for leased lots and shared parking, and creating new parking stalls. When creating new capacity, Metro will strive to meet multiple goals that respond to parking capacity demand while also creating mixed-use, transit-supportive development.

Metro will also pursue strategies to improve first/last mile connections and improve education and marketing. Metro will explore opportunities to improve bike and pedestrian access to park-and-rides and other hubs through improved connections, internal circulation, and enhanced facilities such as secure bike storage.

**Objective 3.3: Support compact, healthy communities.**

Communities that are compact and friendly to pedestrians and bicycles are most easily served by transit. Such communities foster healthier, more active lifestyles while reducing auto-dependency and associated road investments. By the same token, transit service can support and encourage development that is more compact.

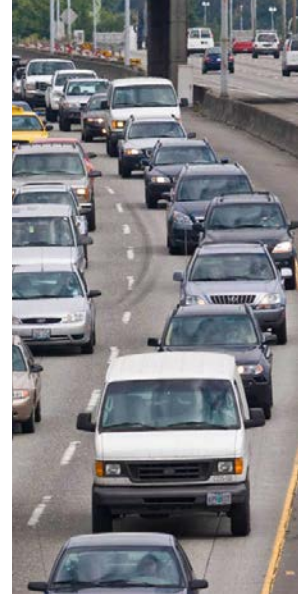
***Intended outcome: More people regularly use public transportation products and services along corridors with compact development.***

- **Strategy 3.3.1: Encourage land uses, policies, and practices that promote transit-oriented development and lead to communities that have good access to transit and that transit can serve efficiently and effectively.**

Metro encourages the development of transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly communities by working with jurisdictions and providing services to transit-oriented developments. Metro recommends strategies for jurisdictions and agencies to make communities more transit-friendly. Metro also partners with jurisdictions, other agencies and the private sector to spur transit-oriented development through redevelopment opportunities at, or adjacent to, park-and-rides, transit hubs and stations along major transit corridors.

- **Strategy 3.3.2: Support bicycle and pedestrian access to jobs, services, and the transit system.**

Metro collaborates with local jurisdictions, transit agencies and others to enhance bike and walk connections to transit. Metro develops programs and facilities to improve bicyclists' and pedestrians' connections to transit. Metro also collaborates with public and private partners to enhance the use of bicycles for commute and non-commute purposes to help reduce drive-alone travel. Metro provides three-position bike racks on transit vehicles and is working to increase the availability of secure bicycle parking at new and existing Metro transit facilities. Metro will also explore opportunities to coordinate with local jurisdictions to address safety and security concerns and improve wayfinding measures for all populations. Metro will seek opportunities to improve nonmotorized access and facilities at park-and-rides and major transit hubs.



### Objective 3.4: Support economic development by using existing transportation infrastructure efficiently and effectively.

Use of transit can increase the efficiency of King County's transportation infrastructure. By carrying more people in fewer vehicles, transit reduces the need for parking spaces at major employment centers and other activity hubs, keeping development costs down. Transit also moves more people on existing roadways, reducing the need for expansion. **Intended outcome: Regional investments in major highway capacity projects and parking requirements are complemented by high transit service levels in congested corridors and centers.**



#### ▪ Strategy 3.4.1: Serve centers and other areas of concentrated activity, consistent with Transportation 2040.

Metro focuses on serving King County's designated centers and other areas of concentrated activity, as shown in Figure 3 on page 15 and as prescribed in Transportation 2040 (see below).

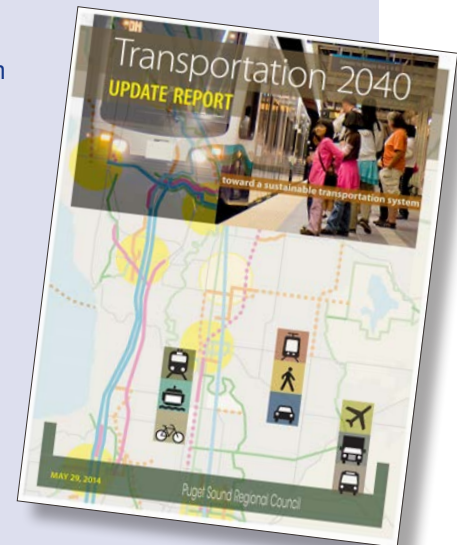
Metro also works with property owners, building managers and employers on a variety of efforts to increase the use of transit. These include parking management, fare media programs, outreach, incentives, work-option programs such as telework, and community programs such as In Motion.

### Transportation 2040

Transportation 2040 is an action plan for transportation in the central Puget Sound region that was developed and adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

The region's population is projected to grow from 3.9 million in 2015 to nearly 5 million by the year 2040. The number of jobs is projected to increase from 2.2 million in 2015 to 3 million in 2040. This growth is expected to boost demand for travel within and through the region. Metro's annual service is expected to grow by 2.3 million annual service hours, from about 3.5 million hours in 2015 to 5.8 million hours by 2040. Metro expects to serve about 800,000 weekday boardings.

Transportation 2040 outlines a long-term vision for how the Puget Sound region should invest in transportation to accommodate rising travel demand. The plan identifies investments in roads, transit and non-motorized travel that will support this growth and improve the transportation system. The document lays out a financing plan with more reliance on user fees to fund transportation improvements. It also proposes a strategy for reducing transportation's contribution to climate change and its impact on air pollution and the health of Puget Sound.



## GOAL 4

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Safeguard and enhance King County's natural resources and environment.



*Metro provides transportation choices and supports travel that uses less energy, produces fewer pollutants and reduces greenhouse gases in the region.*



**Objective 4.1: Help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region.**

King County has a long-term target of reducing greenhouse-gas emissions from countywide sources by 80 percent by 2050 (compared to a 2007 baseline), and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from its operations by at least 50 percent by 2030 (also compared to a 2007 baseline). The transportation sector is the source of more than half the emissions in the region, so reducing vehicle-miles traveled and emissions is critical to achieving these goals. Every step Metro takes to make transit a more accessible, competitive and attractive transportation option helps to counter climate change and improve air quality. *Intended outcome: People drive single-occupant vehicles less.*

- **Strategy 4.1.1: Increase the proportion of travel in King County that is provided by public transportation products and services.**

Metro offers an array of alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel, and will continue to improve the attractiveness of Metro's products and services and promote them to existing and potential customers.

**Objective 4.2: Minimize Metro's environmental footprint.**

King County's 2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan provides a road map for confronting climate change in King County, with new targets adopted by the King County Council. These targets include: reduce normalized energy use in County-owned facilities by at least 5 percent by 2020 and 10 percent by 2025, and reduce normalized energy use in Metro's vehicle operations by at least 10 percent by 2020 (all target reductions are compared to a 2014 baseline). In support of this plan, Metro is committed to being a leader in green operating and maintenance practices and minimizing both energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Metro also educates its employees about reducing energy consumption at work and using public transportation to commute. *Intended outcome: Metro's environmental footprint is reduced (normalized against service growth).*

- **Strategy 4.2.1: Operate vehicles and adopt technology that has the least impact on the environment and maximizes long-term sustainability.**

Metro will continue exploring opportunities to employ energy-efficient vehicles for both fixed-route and other services, such as its commuter van programs. Metro has already reduced vehicle emissions by developing and using clean-fuel bus technologies, such as hybrid diesel-electric coaches and zero-emission electric trolleys. Metro is committed to being a leader in the adoption of new energy-efficient and low-emission technologies.

- **Strategy 4.2.2: Incorporate sustainable design, construction, operating, and maintenance practices.**

Metro incorporates cost-effective green building and sustainable development practices in all capital projects that it plans, designs, constructs, remodels, renovates, and operates. Metro will continue seeking opportunities to improve energy efficiency and conservation and to decrease energy use in its facilities. Metro follows King County's Green Building and Sustainable Development Ordinance and strives for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification where possible.

## GOAL 5

### SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Establish a culture of customer service and deliver services that are responsive to community needs.



*Metro seeks to provide reliable, safe and convenient transportation services that are valued by customers and responsive to the needs of people, businesses and communities.*





### Objective 5.1: Improve satisfaction with Metro's products and services and the way they are delivered.

Metro associates customer satisfaction with a favorable public image, customer loyalty, and strong community support, as well as the provision of quality service. Metro is committed to giving its customers a positive experience at every stage, from trip planning to arrival at a destination. **Intended outcome: People are more satisfied with Metro products and services.**

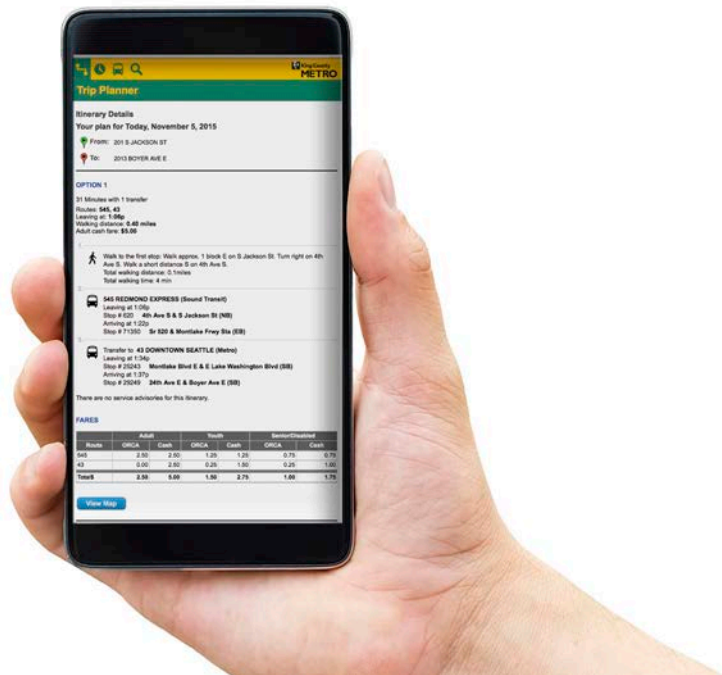


- **Strategy 5.1.1: Provide service that is easy to understand and use.**  
A public transportation system that is easy to understand and use is important to attracting and retaining riders and increasing market share. People may not try public transportation if they do not know which bus routes or other services to use, how to pay a fare, how to transfer among services, or where to get off. Customer information tools are essential to inform riders about services and help them easily navigate the public transportation system. These include tools that remove barriers for people with disabilities, such as auditory stop announcements. Products such as the ORCA fare card simplify fare payment and transfers among transit agencies in the Puget Sound region. Customer information tools ease public transportation use for new and existing riders alike.
- **Strategy 5.1.2: Emphasize customer service in transit operations and workforce training.**  
Every customer experience affects perceptions of the quality of Metro service. Metro operators are at the front lines of transit service, interacting with customers daily. Other Metro employees interact with customers at service centers, over the phone, or at public meetings. Metro will work to achieve high levels of customer service in all of these interactions, and to continually emphasize to employees the importance of good customer service.
- **Strategy 5.1.3: Improve transit speed and reliability.**  
Transit speed and reliability is an important aspect of customer satisfaction. Metro regularly monitors the on-time performance of its bus routes and strives to achieve its performance guidelines. To help improve transit speed and reliability, Metro is committed to managing transit pathways. Its speed-and-reliability program places high priority on corridors with high ridership and bus volumes, such as Metro's six RapidRide corridors, and on corridors impacted by major construction projects, such as replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the SR-520 bridge. A range of speed and reliability improvements including traffic signal coordination, transit signal priority, bus lanes, queue bypass, safety improvements and stop consolidation can be implemented on a corridor or spot basis. Metro works independently and in coordination with local jurisdictions to make improvements that enhance the speed and reliability of bus service, help maintain even intervals between buses, and reduce overcrowding and delays.

**Objective 5.2: Improve public awareness of Metro products and services.**

People will use public transportation products and services that meet their needs, but they must first learn about the service that is available. Marketing and customer information tools are critical for increasing ridership by communicating the availability, value, benefits and “how to” of using public transportation. **Intended outcome: People understand how to use Metro’s products and services and use them more often.**

- **Strategy 5.2.1: Use available tools, new technologies, and new methods to improve communication with customers.**  
 Metro currently uses a range of tools to give customers up-to-date information on public transportation services and service disruptions and to promote Metro products and services. Internet-based media will offer new opportunities to reach even more people and keep them informed. Independent application developers augment and support Metro’s efforts to improve customer communications. Metro will continue to improve its communications so that customers can easily access information when they need it most.
- **Strategy 5.2.2: Promote Metro’s products and services to existing and potential customers.**  
 Effective marketing generates ridership and improves overall awareness and understanding of the public transportation system. Marketing activities include direct promotion, advertising, product branding and positive customer service. These activities can support events such as periodic service changes, major initiatives such as Transit Now, and campaigns focused on target groups. As Metro seeks to grow overall ridership and increase efficiency by attracting riders to services with existing capacity, expanded marketing efforts—including market research and promotion—will make a difference.



## GOAL 6

### FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Exercise sound financial management and build Metro's long-term sustainability.



*Metro is committed to using resources wisely and increasing the efficiency of its operations.*

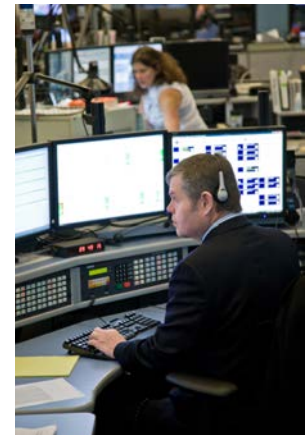


**Objective 6.1: Emphasize planning and delivery of productive service.**

Metro should create a public transportation system that emphasizes productivity, while ensuring social equity and providing geographic value. A focus on productivity will support regional and local growth and economic development as well as environmental and financial sustainability. *Intended outcome: Service productivity improves.*

- **Strategy 6.1.1: Manage the transit system through service guidelines and performance measures.**

Service guidelines and performance measures will help the public, Metro and King County decision-makers determine the appropriate level and type of service for different corridors and destinations. Metro will use the service guidelines to plan and manage the transit system. The Guidelines will clearly state how the priorities of productivity, social equity and geographic value will be used to establish service levels for the All-Day and Peak-Only Network. The guidelines also provide direction for evaluating system performance, restructuring service, designing service, planning alternative services, planning service changes, and working with partners. The establishment and use of route, system and peer-comparison performance measures will enable Metro and the public to better understand how Metro's services are performing.



- **Strategy 6.1.2: Establish and maintain a long-range transit service and capital plan developed in collaboration with local comprehensive and regional long-range transportation planning.**

To implement the vision for public transportation, as established in the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, King County shall establish and maintain a long-range plan that: (1) reflects regional transit service and capital plans identified through Sound Transit's adopted long-range plan and incorporates transit service needs identified through adopted local comprehensive and other transportation plans; (2) uses, as a starting point, today's transit network and needs as defined by the King County Metro Service Guidelines; and (3) remains consistent with the policies and values of the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation. The Metro Transit long-range plan adopted by the King County Council should include the unmet transit service needs throughout King County as identified by the existing Metro Service Guidelines, as well as the service and capital elements of a future Metro transit network at various funding levels that support local jurisdiction and regional plans. The plan shall take into consideration the Puget Sound Regional Council's economic, growth management, and transportation plans.

King County shall develop the long-range plan in coordination with local jurisdictions and regional transit agencies. Development of the long-range plan shall be based on the principle that jurisdiction comprehensive and transportation plans inform the long-range plan and the long-range plan informs jurisdiction comprehensive and transportation plans. The specific approach to coordination shall be subject to the financial and staffing constraints of Metro as specified at the time of developing or updating the plan. In order to provide a realistic funding framework for addressing existing unmet and future system needs, this plan shall reflect resource availability and financial estimates of the total Metro transit need to support regional and local comprehensive and other transportation plans.

This strategy shall be implemented within the approved financial, staffing and policy framework of King County Metro, especially as it pertains to inputs from other plans and jurisdictions. Nothing in this strategy is intended to infer a responsibility for jurisdictional planning beyond King County's direct authority.

### Objective 6.2: Control costs.

Metro should control costs to provide a structure that is sustainable over time.

***Intended outcome: Metro costs grow at or below the rate of inflation.***

- **Strategy 6.2.1: Continually explore and implement cost efficiencies, including operational and administrative efficiencies.**

Metro will continue to seek efficiencies in the administration and operation of the agency, including overhead costs, to ensure that Metro develops a more sustainable financial structure in the long term. Opportunities to improve service and increase efficiency include restructuring service and maintaining the practices that were recommended in the 2009 King County auditor's performance audit of Metro and subsequently adopted by Metro. This audit identified areas where Metro could achieve cost efficiencies, such as in the way it schedules fixed-route service. Metro will continue striving to maximize cost-efficiency in all sections of the agency through the use of Lean and other process improvement methods.

- **Strategy 6.2.2: Provide and maintain capital assets to support efficient and effective service delivery.**

Metro's capital program supports service delivery and provides for ongoing replacement of aging infrastructure. Regular maintenance and upgrades keep Metro's facilities in good repair and support efficient, safe and reliable transit operations. Metro also invests in new operations facilities, on-board systems, signal priority improvements, and real-time technology. Strategic investments in new infrastructure allow Metro to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the public transportation system.

Metro will develop a prioritized set of strategic procurement goals to guide procurement processes and decisions. Metro will replace and adjust the transit bus fleet so that the size, fleet mix, and fleet age are consistent with service projections and operating characteristics of the regular bus system. Metro will replace and expand its vanpool fleet to provide the appropriate mix of vehicle sizes, both to encourage and support vanpool program participants and to minimize costs. Metro will also replace and expand the fleet of Access paratransit vehicles to support efficient operations.

- **Strategy 6.2.3: Develop and implement alternative public transportation services and delivery strategies.**

Fixed-route transit service is most cost-efficient in areas of King County where housing and employment are concentrated, and where neighborhood design supports walking as the first- and last-mile mode choice. Fixed-route transit service is not cost-effective in some areas of King County because of the type of land uses, infrastructure, or density. However, people in these areas still have mobility needs and, by circumstance or choice, require public transportation services. Metro provides alternative service products such as ridesharing, community vans, community shuttles, Dial-A-Ride Transit, and Community Access Transportation in these areas. Metro will continue to complement the fixed-route system with these

and other innovative public transportation services and delivery strategies that keep costs down while providing mobility to people throughout King County.

- **Strategy 6.2.4: Provide alternative or “right-sized” services in the context of overall system financial health and the need to reduce, maintain or expand the system.**

Metro will extend alternative service delivery products to communities according to market characteristics and resources available. Alternative or “right-sized” services can provide cost-effective mobility options for communities. Depending on Metro’s financial standing and financial outlook, it may provide these services as a cost-effective alternative to a fixed-route service or as a complement to the public transit network.

When financial challenges require Metro to consider service reductions, alternative services can provide a lower-cost service option in low-density areas that are surrounded by or adjacent to rural areas, or provide a lower-cost service in place of an existing fixed route in other areas. When revenues are stable or growing, Metro will consider alternative services in other corridors to provide a cost-effective complement to existing public transit services.



### **Objective 6.3: Seek to establish a sustainable funding structure to support short- and long-term public transportation needs.**

New, sustainable funding sources are critical if Metro is to continue current operations and achieve the region’s goals and vision for the future. Additional and sustainable revenue sources, along with changes in the way service decisions are made and public transportation resources are allocated, will allow Metro to support the growth and economic development of King County. **Intended outcome: Adequate funding to support King County’s short- and long-term public transportation needs.**

- **Strategy 6.3.1: Secure long-term sustainable funding.**

Even with efficiency measures, Metro’s resources must increase over time to meet growing customer demand. New, sustainable funding sources are crucial to ensure that Metro can support existing transit service and plan for future growth. Funding that reduces Metro’s reliance on sales tax revenue, which fluctuates significantly as economic conditions change, is also critically important for maintaining the transit system. Metro is exploring several potential revenue sources that would improve Metro’s funding situation. Among these potential sources are fares, grants, advertising, and partnerships with local jurisdictions and businesses. Metro places high priority on funding sources that enable sustained operations over time and on one-time revenue sources that allow implementation of a particular project or program. When revenue-backed funding expires or a partner ends a partnership with Metro, Metro will strive to continue the service if resources are available and if the service supports Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines goals. If sufficient resources are not available, Metro will seek efficiencies in existing service in the same general area, or propose a restructure in collaboration with the affected communities, to support the continuation of revenue-backed service that supports Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines goals. If these options are not feasible, Metro may reduce service to pre-grant or partner-contribution levels.

Metro will also pursue new revenue sources through state legislation, including sources that are currently authorized and those that may require new legislation. Metro must establish a stable revenue source or program that allows for system growth and keeps pace with changes in regional growth and employment.

- **Strategy 6.3.2: Establish fare structures and fare levels that are simple to understand, aligned with other service providers, and meet revenue targets established by Metro’s fund management policies.**

Metro’s fare structure and fare levels should enable Metro to meet cost-recovery targets that are established by fund management policies adopted by the King County Council. Fares should be set to reflect the cost of service, promote operational efficiency, ensure regional coordination, minimize impacts of fares on those least able to pay, and reduce the cost of fare collection. Metro fare prices should strike a balance between revenue generation objectives and the need to maintain existing service and attract new ridership. Metro’s fares will comply with state and federal regulations. The fare structure and level should be reviewed biennially.

Metro works with the region’s transit agencies to coordinate fares and schedules. Several transportation agencies, including Metro, collaborated to introduce ORCA, the regional fare payment method that enables customers to use one card to pay their fare on multiple systems throughout the Puget Sound area.

Metro also regularly works with other agencies to coordinate policies, practices and services throughout the Puget Sound region to provide a consistent transit experience for customers. Simple and consistent fares are important to make transit easy to use for both new and existing transit riders.

- **Strategy 6.3.3: Establish fund management policies that ensure stability through a variety of economic conditions.**

Metro is committed to comprehensive and prudent financial planning and forecasting that uses reasonable economic assumptions along with specific programmatic plans to project future revenues, expenditures, and resulting fund balances. Metro’s fund management policies guide the development of a six-year financial plan that is produced through the budget process and adopted by the King County Council. Metro’s fund management policies, planning, and ongoing forecasting allow the transit system to respond effectively to unforeseen emergencies and changes in the economy without large impacts to existing services.



## GOAL 7

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSPARENCY

Promote robust public engagement that informs, involves, and empowers people and communities.



*Metro is committed to informing and engaging the public as it develops products and services.*







### Objective 7.1: Empower people to play an active role in shaping Metro's products and services.

Metro is committed to being responsive and accountable to the public. One way Metro will meet this commitment is by continuing to conduct a community planning process and public outreach as part of any major service change or new service initiative. **Intended outcome: The public plays a role and is engaged in the development of public transportation.**

- **Strategy 7.1.1: Engage the public in the planning process and improve customer outreach.**

Metro's community engagement work is consistent with King County's Equity and Social Justice ordinance. Metro seeks to build its capacity to engage all communities in a manner that promotes and fosters trust among people across geographic, race, class and gender lines, resulting in more effective policies, processes, and services as well as supporting community-based solutions to problems.

Metro's planning process provides opportunities for the public to help design public transportation services. It involves riders, non-riders, elected officials, community leaders, city and County staff members, and social service agencies. Outreach targets historically under-represented populations, using translated materials or interpretation services as needed. Metro uses public meetings, open houses and a sounding board process to engage customers. Metro also does extensive public communication using direct mail, newspaper and radio ads, surveys and online information, and continually explores new media to reach a larger audience. Metro will strive to involve the public early in any planning process and offer opportunities for ongoing involvement.



### Objective 7.2: Increase customer and public access to understandable, accurate and transparent information.

Transparent decision-making processes and information will help build public trust in Metro and acceptance of the decisions made. **Intended outcome: Metro provides information that people use to access and comment on the planning process and reports.**

- **Strategy 7.2.1: Communicate service change concepts, the decision-making process, and public transportation information in language that is accessible and easy to understand.**

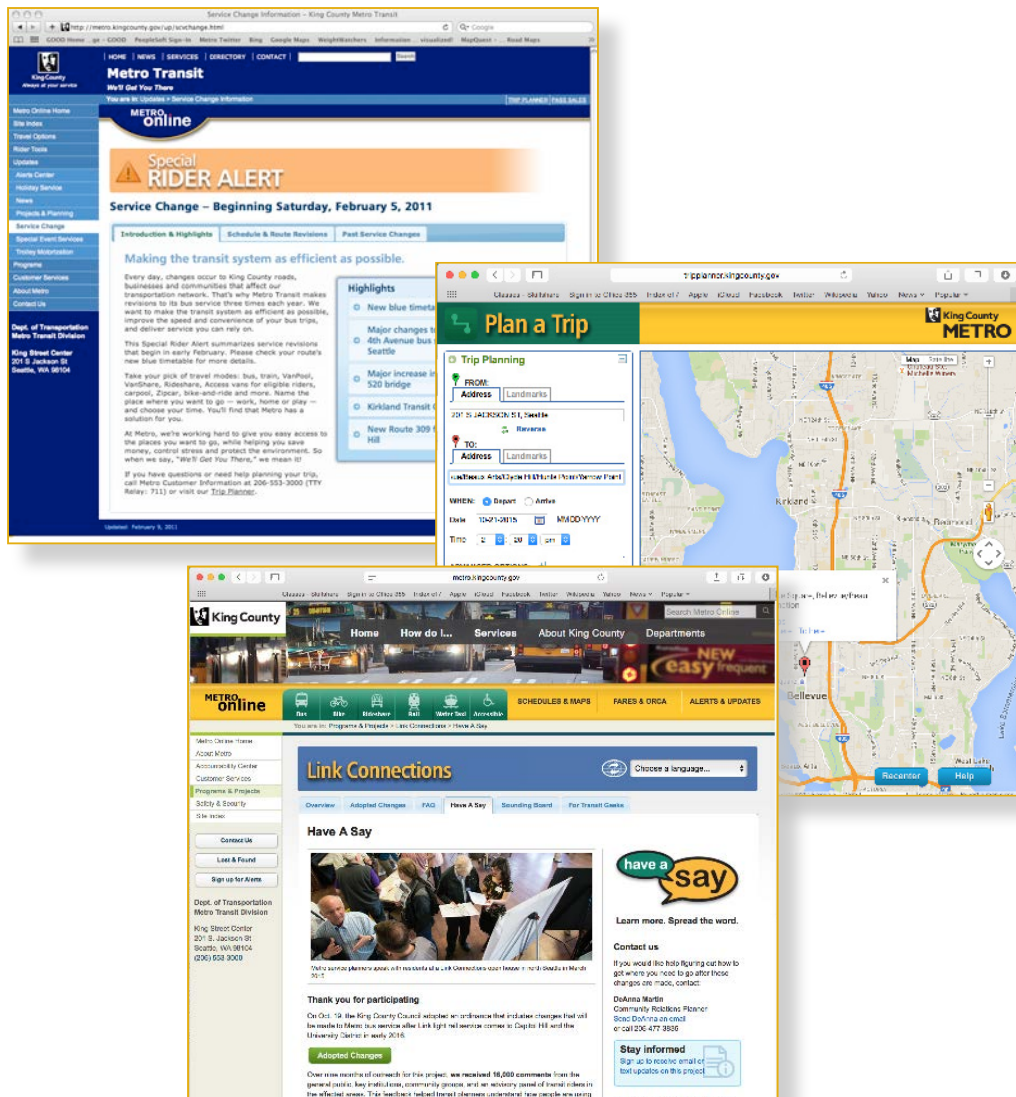
Metro's decision-making process should be clear, transparent and based on criteria that are easy for customers to understand. Metro considers equity and social justice in its decision-making process, particularly for people of color, low-income communities, people with limited English proficiency, and people with other communications barriers consistent with King County's Equity and Social Justice Ordinance, Executive Order on Translation, and federal law. Service guidelines and performance measures provide an outline of Metro's approach to decision-making. Guidelines are based on data that are understandable to the public and provide for a transparent process for making service allocation decisions. Performance measures will give the public a snapshot of Metro's performance on a systemwide level and allow for comparisons between service types and between peer

## GOAL 7: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSPARENCY

agencies. Using a variety of forums, media channels and accessible formats, Metro will reach out to customers and the public to share information on the decision-making process and on the performance measures that are the basis of Metro service changes and new service initiatives.

### ■ Strategy 7.2.2: Explore innovative ways to report to and inform the public.

New forums for public outreach can help Metro reach more new and existing riders and make it easier for them to find the information they need. Metro will continue providing information to the public through various channels including printed materials, Metro Online, social media and other channels.



## GOAL 8

### QUALITY WORKFORCE

Develop and empower Metro's most valuable asset, its employees.



*Metro strives to develop and retain an effective, customer-oriented workforce that embraces collaboration, innovation and diversity.*



**Objective 8.1: Attract and recruit quality employees.**

Metro’s products and services are a reflection of the employees who deliver them. To maintain excellent services, Metro recruits quality and committed employees and creates a positive work environment. Metro prides itself as being a great place to work and a fair and just employer that values a diverse and skilled workforce.

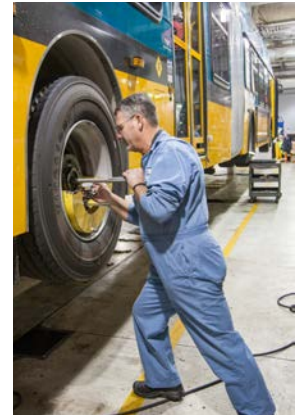
*Intended outcome: Metro is satisfied with the quality of its workforce.*

- **Strategy 8.1.1: Market Metro as an employer of choice and cultivate a diverse and highly skilled applicant pool.**

Metro makes itself a prominent employer through local and national recruiting. Networking with local community-based agencies and professional organizations encourages the development of a highly skilled applicant pool.

- **Strategy 8.1.2: Promote equity, social justice and transparency in hiring and recruiting activities.**

Metro constantly seeks to improve its hiring and recruitment process to ensure that it is open and competitive. Successful candidates are objectively selected on the basis of their qualifications. Metro promotes diversity in its hiring process. Metro believes that its workforce should reflect the populations it serves and recruits from the local workforce.



**Objective 8.2: Empower and retain efficient, effective, and productive employees.**

Metro strives to support its employees, empower them to excel, recognize their achievements, and help them develop professionally. Metro values input from employees on ways to improve business practices and make Metro more efficient.

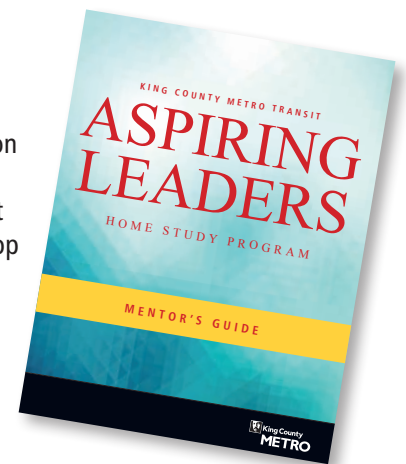
*Intended outcome: Metro employees are satisfied with their jobs and feel their work contributes to an improved quality of life in King County.*

- **Strategy 8.2.1: Build leadership and promote professional skills.**

Metro employs thousands of individuals in management, maintenance and operations positions. Metro management encourages a high level of collaboration with its employees, maintains effective labor relations, and identifies situations for improvement and for employee advancement. Metro recognizes that the next generation of leaders is likely already among us and seeks to identify and develop those leaders.

- **Strategy 8.2.2: Recognize employees for outstanding performance, excellent customer service, innovation and strategic thinking.**

The most effective way for Metro to remain a resilient organization is to develop a work environment where employees are rewarded for high performance and innovation. Metro empowers its employees to engage in problem-solving and service improvement by collaborating with them and recognizing their efforts. Developing a work force driven by excellence will help Metro reduce costs while providing high-quality, customer-driven service.





▪ **Strategy 8.2.3: Provide training opportunities that enable employees to reach their full potential.**

Training offers opportunities for employees to learn new skills, develop existing skills and grow professionally. Metro offers employees a number of training resources through national transit organizations, county agencies and other professional development groups. A focus of Metro’s training efforts is its operators, as they interact most directly with customers. Developing the workforce further is essential to Metro’s success as the organization continues to grow and plan for the future.

**PACE**

The Partnership to Achieve Comprehensive Equity (PACE), is a partnership between Metro employees, labor unions and managers who are working together to build and sustain an inclusive, fair and equitable workplace for everyone.

PACE asks employees to help identify barriers they see to inclusion and to recommend strategies for overcoming those barriers. PACE is also a platform for learning about sensitive issues like cultural competence, implicit bias, and power and privilege.

Formed in 2013, PACE seeks to:

- Respect, engage, and empower employees
- Create shared responsibility for the work culture
- Use proven processes for transforming organizations
- Be intentionally inclusive



In the culture PACE strives to achieve, all Metro employees will be respected, engaged, and empowered at work, enabling them to provide the best possible service to the community.

An example of a PACE-driven initiative was a recruitment effort to fill seven Transit Chief vacancies in 2015. Metro’s Human Resources group focused on increasing transparency about the hiring

process and helping applicants learn about the chief position and navigate the recruitment process. The result was a highly qualified and diverse group of new Transit Chiefs.