



King County

Shannon Braddock
King County Executive

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104

206-296-9600 Fax 206-296-0194

TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov

September 25, 2025

The Honorable Girmay Zahilay
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Zahilay:

This letter transmits the Maximizing Climate Benefits through Transit Report, in response to Ordinance 19861, Section 115, Proviso P2.

As required, the enclosed report provides an update on King County Metro Transit Department's (Metro) zero-emission (ZE) fleet transition. The report includes an update on Metro's ZE timeline and cost, a comparison of Metro's potential ZE cost to a more gradual ZE implementation, and an analysis of the potential greenhouse gas (GHG) benefit of Metro's ZE fleet program as well as future investments in transit service.

In 2020, King County Ordinance 19052 set a target for the Metro Transit Department to transition to a fully ZE revenue bus fleet by 2035. Metro has taken significant steps to align with this goal. Metro retired its last diesel (non-hybrid) bus in 2020 and has delivered more than two million miles of service to date with a fleet of 40 battery-electric buses (BEBs). Metro is also preparing to open its Tukwila Base in 2026. It will be Metro's first new bus base in more than three decades, and the first designed to support an entirely BEB fleet. In 2025, Metro began using renewable diesel and is working to rapidly transition its full hybrid-diesel bus fleet to run on renewable diesel, further reducing its carbon footprint as an interim step toward a 100 percent ZE fleet. This strategy balances service reliability, emissions reduction, and financial realities.

However, like many transit agencies across the country, Metro is also currently facing challenges that complicate the BEB transition. These include limited domestic bus

manufacturing and uncertainty around federal policy and funding. Metro's proposed 2026-2027 budget will reflect these challenges and outlines a paced transition to ZE beyond the 2035 timeline. Metro will revisit the ZE transition timeline and cost estimates every two years through the budget and CIP process, adapting as new data, funding, and/or technologies emerge. This strategy reaffirms Metro's commitment to climate action and equity – advancing our County towards a cleaner, more resilient transit system while delivering service for riders.

As detailed in this report and the accompanying analysis, investments in both service growth and the transition to a ZE fleet contribute to reducing air and noise pollution, thereby improving public health for employees, riders, and residents. These strategies are most effective when pursued together. Growing service while investing in ZE fleets helps Metro reduce emissions and deliver reliable, sustainable mobility options that people depend on.

Thank you for your consideration of this report. The important work discussed in this report will help Metro continue to lead on climate action while navigating federal policy and funding uncertainty.

If your staff have questions, please contact Huoi Trieu, Zero Emissions Program Director, Metro Transit Department, 206-263-1206.

Sincerely,



for

Shannon Braddock
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
 ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council
 Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council
Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Stephanie Pure, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive
Michelle Allison, General Manager, Metro Transit Department