


King County

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King County Executive

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February 7, 2024

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

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits for your consideration a proposed Ordinance that recommends service revisions to the King County Metro (Metro) bus system in central King County. If adopted, the proposed Ordinance would add one new route and revise eight routes beginning on August 31, 2024.

This service change, proposed concurrently with the Lynnwood Link Connections Ordinance, will improve mobility and better meet customer needs, especially those of historically underserved populations; deliver integrated transit service; and launch service on the new RapidRide G Line. When implemented, this proposal will put approximately 47,000 hours of service investment into the RapidRide G Line, while maintaining the same budget on project area routes. This proposal includes approximately 20,500 hours of service investment by the City of Seattle. Due to current workforce and vehicle maintenance constraints, Metro may need to implement a reduced version of the proposed network and grow service over time contingent upon operational capacity.

The approval of this proposed legislation would create the RapidRide G Line, Metro's eighth RapidRide line and the second line developed by Metro's RapidRide Expansion Program created by Ordinance 18409. A partnership with the City of Seattle, this project has transformed Madison Street to provide faster, more reliable transit operations in some of the most densely developed areas in Seattle. Infrastructure improvements delivered through this partnership, funded by the city of Seattle and Federal Transit Administration Small Starts grant include a dedicated bus lane, enhancing service reliability for riders and providing faster connections to Downtown Seattle, First Hill, Capitol Hill, Central District, and Madison Valley. Launch of the RapidRide G Line will introduce new bus stops, modern sidewalks, and improved street lighting that will enhance pedestrian access and accessibility. It will also feature frequent service that will come as often as every six minutes at many times of day.

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The RapidRide G Line project aligns with King County Metro's commitment to equitable and community-driven mobility. By integrating surrounding Metro bus routes with the RapidRide G Line, people traveling to, from, and through the Madison Street area and the surrounding neighborhoods will gain access to faster, more reliable connections to jobs, education, recreation, and essential services. The proposed changes will optimize service coverage by adjusting routes to connect with the new G Line stations. As part of these changes, the City of Seattle has reallocated Seattle Transit Measure service investments, which has also resulted in service changes to project area routes.

The proposed service revisions to Metro's routes around the G Line are the result of a year-long collaborative process grounded in equity, community engagement, and best practices in service design. To focus investment where needs are greatest, Metro's engagement strategies and community partnerships focused on reaching equity priority populations--defined in Metro's Service Guidelines as communities of color, low- or no-income populations, disabled populations, foreign-born populations, and people with limited English proficiency. In developing the proposed service revisions, Metro's goal was to include individuals who have historically been excluded from decision-making processes and who tend to be disproportionately impacted by such decisions. A comprehensive summary of these activities and how engagement influenced each project phase is provided in the enclosed public engagement report.

The proposed changes are consistent with the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021-2031 and King County Metro Service Guidelines. The project's emphasis on equitable community engagement, equity analysis, and prioritizing investment for people of greater need also aligns with the King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan and the Metro Mobility Framework Report. These improvements will also further the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through increasing transit use by improving transit connections to new RapidRide G Line stations, maximizing the use of the trolley bus network, and providing more travel alternatives to customers.

The project's equity analysis aligns with King County's equity and social justice objectives by identifying the relative impacts of proposed changes on priority populations. This analysis is detailed in the enclosed Equity Impact Review and Recommendation Development Report. The project's process and outcomes are also congruent with King County's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, 2016-2022. In compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Title VI regulations (49 CFR Part 21) and King County Code and policy, Metro has prepared the Public Transit Transportation Service Changes for King County related to Madison Street Area Bus Service Change Project: Title VI Service Analysis which is included in this transmittal.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance to approve public transportation service changes for August 2024. If your staff have questions, please contact Katie Chalmers, Managing Director, Service Development, Metro Transit Department, at 206-477-5869.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dow Constantine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" at the beginning.

for

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Penny Lipsou, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Michelle Allison, General Manager, Metro Transit Department

Christina O'Claire, Mobility Division Director, Metro Transit Department

Project: Madison Street Area Bus Service Change Project

Location: Seattle

Background

The proposed launch of the RapidRide G Line on August 31, 2024, is a significant opportunity for King County Metro (Metro) to enhance mobility within the Madison Street corridor while upholding principles of equity and community engagement. The G Line will be one of Metro's most frequent routes, with high service frequency, enhanced passenger amenities, and seamless integration with existing infrastructure. This project, which is a collaborative effort between Metro and the City of Seattle, has benefited from extensive street improvements facilitating improved bus operations within the corridor.

The proposed network design will introduce new connections for riders, while also expanding access to very frequent service throughout the Madison Street corridor.

Guided by Metro's Mobility Framework, Service Guidelines, and Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, this project prioritized outreach and engagement with equity priority populations, defined in Metro's Service Guidelines as communities of color, low- or no-income populations, disabled populations, foreign-born populations, and people with limited English proficiency. By actively listening to and incorporating the needs and perspectives of these equity priority populations, Metro can effectively deliver essential mobility solutions to those who rely on them most.

The proposed network modifications are informed by analysis of the transit system's performance and ridership patterns since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Data gathered through the System Evaluation and the Rider/Non-Rider survey have been instrumental in informing decisions regarding service levels and route optimization for the Madison Street Area Bus Service Change Project.

Service Proposal for Ordinance Approval

Route	Description of Ordinance Change
3	Extend some trips to serve Bellevue Ave. E. and Summit Ave. E. north of E. Olive Way and delete route variant that serves Queen Anne
4	Replace Route 3 variant that serves Queen Anne with Route 4 trips. Service levels will not change in Queen Anne
10	Revise pathway to serve Westlake Station and operate along E. Pine St.
11	Revise pathway to serve Capitol Hill Station and operate along E. Thomas St., E. John St., and E. Olive Way
12	Revise pathway to serve Westlake Station and operate along E. Pine St.
47	Delete route and replace with Route 3
49	Reduce frequency during weekday and weekend AM, midday, and PM periods and improve frequency during the weekday evening period
60	Improve weekday and weekend frequency
G Line (677*)	Implement new RapidRide G Line providing very frequent service on Madison St. connecting Downtown Seattle, First Hill, and into the Central District

* 677 will be the internal Metro numbering for the G line in data systems that require numeric entries

Summary of Seattle Transit Measure Changes

As part of the Madison Street Area Bus Service Change Project, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) will reallocate Seattle Transit Measure (STM) funding. This rebalancing will occur both within and outside of the project scope.

STM funding for routes 10, 11, and 12 will be reduced, while routes 49 and 60 will receive more funding, resulting in service increases on these latter lines. Additionally, some STM funding previously allocated within the project area will be redistributed to enhance weekday and weekend service on Route 125.

Route	Fall 2022 STM Investments	Madison Street Area Project STM Investments
3	0	0
4	0	0
10	8,073	0
11	4,855	3,233
12	104	0
49	132	2,209
60	12,065	15,112
125*	0	4,821
Total	25,229	25,375

*Route not within project scope