



King County
METRO

Metro Transit Division
Department of Transportation
King Street Center, KSC-TR-0415
201 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104-3856

ATTACHMENT 4

September 1, 2006

The Honorable Reagan Dunn
Chair, Regional Transit Committee
King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Dunn:

Thank you for your August 4, 2006 letter regarding the Regional Transit Committee's (RTC) plans for updating the King County long-range policy framework. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify our approach and want to assure you that we stand ready to work with you and your committee as we move forward to ensure appropriate policies and plans are in place to guide future development of the county's transit system.

The *Long Range Policy Framework for Public Transportation* is a set of policies guiding Metro's efforts to support growth management and improved mobility in the region, expand and modify the transit system, manage community involvement and ensure financial stability. As called for in the framework, subsequent Six-year Plans have provided short-term direction for development of the transit system. This has been done without the need for significant amendment of the underlying policies. This process has resulted, for example, in the evolution of Metro Transit's service from a peak period focus on downtown Seattle to an all-day network connecting centers throughout the county.

I appreciate the opportunity to address two of your specific concerns. The first is how Metro's current planning for streetcars and passenger ferries has been guided by existing policy. The other is how the Transit Division will respond to the growing county-wide emphasis on strategic planning and performance measurement.

With respect to passenger ferries, the Transit Division submitted a report in response to the King County Council's budget proviso on this topic in August 2005. In response to action by the Legislature earlier this year, the county plans to submit a proposed business plan for county operation of passenger ferry service to Vashon Island to the Governor by the deadline of November 1, 2006. If a ferry district is proposed, a new entity would be formed that would have its own governing board (the King County Council) and its own separate funding source. Policies guiding a ferry district would be separate and distinct from the policy framework guiding transit service. Executive Sims has stated his interest and intent for the county to provide passenger-only service and if the King County Council votes to form a ferry district as the implementation method, the Council, acting as the ferry district board, will be responsible for developing a policy framework governing that service.

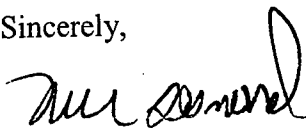
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Metro Transit and the City of Seattle have been working to determine how to ensure long term operation of the South Lake Union Streetcar. A Memorandum of Intent was signed by the King County Executive and Mayor of Seattle in April of 2005 outlining a strategy to fund streetcar operations consistent with the adopted Six-Year Plan in service strategy S-10 and Council Motion 10584. The Memorandum presumes resources to fund the streetcar operation will be provided through reallocation of existing Seattle service hours that are freed up with the implementation of Sound Transit's Central Link light rail line. A final agreement identifying responsibilities of each party in the operation of the streetcar will be submitted to the County Council and City Council for approval prior to the beginning of operation.

Finally, you asked how the Transit Division will respond to King County's growing emphasis on strategic planning and performance measurement and the recommendations of the 2005 Transit Capital Planning and Management Audit. Transit is currently involved in the county's KingStat performance measurement project which will provide a significant improvement in conveying performance measurement information to all interested parties. With respect to strategic planning and the capital audit, Transit expects to proceed as indicated to the King County Council with preparation of an Operational Master Plan and subsequent Capital Facilities Master Plan in the 2007-2008 timeframe. Preparation of a Capital Facilities Master Plan was specifically called for in the audit recommendations.

I appreciate your concerns and believe that we can successfully work together to ensure an appropriate policy and planning framework exists to continue to guide future development of the County's transit system. If you have additional comments or concerns about our approach, please do not hesitate to call me at 206-684-1619.

Sincerely,



Kevin Desmond
General Manager
Metro Transit Division

cc: Regional Transit Committee Members
The Honorable Ron Sims, King County Executive
Harold S. Taniguchi, Director, Department of Transportation, (DOT)
Victor Obeso, Manager, Service Development, Metro Transit Division, DOT