



## King County

### **Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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June 30, 2021

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

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits the King County Metro Transit COVID-19 Response Title VI Service Equity Analysis report on impacts of transit service suspensions during and resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, per Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1B, Chapter V, Section 7, and a proposed Motion that would, if enacted, approve the report.

FTA regulations require transit agencies serving large urbanized areas to evaluate major service changes and determine whether proposed changes would have a discriminatory impact on low-income or minority populations as defined in the United States Department of Transportation's Title VI regulations. Such a service equity analysis is required by the FTA for service changes lasting longer than 12 months, even if those service changes were initially implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the exercise of emergency powers vested in the King County Executive, Metro implemented pandemic-related service suspensions that, due to the ongoing public health crisis, lasted more than 12 months. The COVID-19 response and service equity analysis report demonstrates Metro's compliance with federal regulations applicable to recipients of federal financial assistance from the FTA.

The King County Metro Transit COVID-19 Response Title VI Service Equity Analysis report provides detailed information on the impact of transit service suspensions on low-income and minority populations and impacted areas during the COVID-19 emergency. Equity considerations included the low-income and minority populations required for the Title VI analysis, but also included route-level opportunity scores, which consider persons of color; those living in poverty; persons for whom English is not their primary language; persons living with disabilities; and foreign-born populations. Metro communicated with the FTA regarding these service changes in multiple instances to keep the agency informed of service changes necessitated by the widespread and worsening COVID-19 global pandemic as it evolved.

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Decision-making for route suspensions included consideration of many factors. These factors included equity; changes in ridership demand and trip needs; the expiration of funding from the Seattle Transit Benefit District; prioritizing frequent, all-day transit service; and guidance from Metro's Service Guidelines. Metro defines equity more broadly than the populations included in the Title VI report, so analyses based on route-level opportunity index scores, impacts to equity priority areas, and access to community assets were also considered.

This work furthers the King County Strategic Plan goal to deliver a safe, reliable, and seamless network of transportation options to get people and goods where they need to go, when they need to get there. The King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan transportation and mobility goals informed Metro's approach for determining where suspensions may occur, focusing on maintaining service in the places and for people with greatest needs.

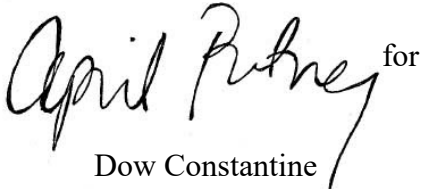
It is estimated that the report required 68 hours of staff time to produce, costing approximately \$3,500. The estimated printing cost for this report is nominal.

I look forward to continuing to work with the King County Council on Metro's post-pandemic recovery planning and ensuring a safe, equitable, and sustainable future for public transit in King County. Any significant service suspensions that are proposed to become permanent as part of a future service change would be subject to future King County Council approval.

Thank you for your consideration of this report and the accompanying proposed Motion.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Bill Bryant, Managing Director, Service Development, Metro Transit Department, at 206-477-6456.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers  
ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff  
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council  
Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive  
Karan Gill, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive  
Terry White, General Manager, Metro Transit Department (MTD)  
Christina O'Claire, Director, Mobility Division, MTD  
Katie Chalmers, Deputy Director, Mobility Division, MTD  
Bill Bryant, Managing Director, Service Development, MTD