

Transit Public Restroom Initiative Report

June 2024 | Updated July 16, 2024



King County

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II. Proviso Text

ER1 EXPENDITURE RESTRICTION:

Of this appropriation, \$600,000 shall be expended or encumbered solely to install, operate, and maintain one public restroom at the Aurora Village transit center and one public restroom at the Burien transit center. The public restrooms may be portable or permanent structures. Existing restrooms may be used if they can be safely and appropriately opened to the public. Each public restroom shall include at least one stall.

P1 PROVIDED THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$600,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a transit public restroom initiative report and a motion that should acknowledge receipt of the report, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the report is passed by the council. The motion should reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance number, ordinance section and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. A description of the public restrooms installed, operated, and maintained at the Aurora Village and Burien transit centers, including, but not limited to, the following:
 1. The cost to procure and operate each public restroom or to open an existing restroom for public use;
 2. The estimated monthly usage of each public restroom since it was opened for public use; and
 3. The impact of the public restroom on safety and cleanliness at each transit center;
- B. A plan to install, operate and maintain additional public restrooms at transit centers, including, but not limited to, the following:
 1. A list of transit centers that meet the criteria outlined in K.C.C. 28.94.100 for provision of public restrooms, including an evaluation of whether changes to the criteria outlined in K.C.C. 28.94.100 would promote greater safety, security, and cleanliness at transit centers;
 2. A proposed timeline to install additional public restrooms at the transit centers listed in response to subsection B.1. of this proviso; and
 3. Estimated costs to install, operate and maintain public restrooms at each transit centers listed in response to subsection B.1. of this proviso, including a comparison of these costs to rent a portable restroom or to install a permanent restroom structure; and
- C. Any legislation necessary to implement the transit public restroom initiative report. The executive should electronically file the report and motion required by this proviso no later than ~~((January 11, 2024))~~ June 30, 2024, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the transportation, economy and environment committee or its successor.

Ordinance 19546, Section 114, Metro Transit Department, P1 ¹
Ordinance 19633, Section 86, Metro Transit Department, P1 ²

¹ Ordinance 19546 [\[LINK\]](#)

² Ordinance 19633 [\[LINK\]](#)

III. Executive Summary

This report is provided in response to Ordinances 19546 and 19633. The report provides a description of the public restrooms installed, operated, and maintained at Aurora Village Transit Center and Burien Transit Center inclusive of the cost to procure and operate each, monthly usage, and impact on safety and cleanliness. This report also includes a list of transit centers that meet criteria outlined in King County Code 28.94.100 for the provision of public restrooms at transit centers. It also provides an evaluation of changes that would promote greater safety, security, and cleanliness and cost comparisons of portable and permanent restroom options as specified in the Ordinance.

Generally, King County Metro (Metro) has not installed, operated, nor maintained restrooms for public access. This is due to staffing models at transit centers not meeting criteria outlined in King County Code 28.94.100, public restroom policy for public transit. In 1999, Aurora Village Transit Center (AVTC) in the City of Shoreline was renovated, at which time a portable stall was placed on site for construction crews. Due to limited capacity to monitor access, over time the public began using the stall and ultimately the stall remained on site after renovations were completed. In accordance with King County Code (KCC) 28.94.100 outlining public restroom policy for public transit program, Metro approached the City of Shoreline to discuss sharing operational costs, though an agreement was not established. Metro continued to independently operate the stall until 2016 when it was removed following repeated incidents threatening security and public safety.

To inform Metro's planning to install, operate, and maintain a public restroom at Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers as directed by the proviso, Metro staff researched standard practices nationally and consulted with peer agencies regionally including Sound Transit and the City of Seattle. Within the transit sector nationally, restrooms are often located within fare paid zones facilitating passenger access at major hubs. Large transit agencies across the country typically lock the restrooms with access given by request. The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System operates fixed route bus, rapid bus, and light rail serving approximately 3 million people. The system provides restrooms within rail stations during operating hours, with on-site security to monitor access.³ The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) recognizes that restrooms can become significant security risks if they are not effectively designed and managed. APTA points out that public restrooms located outside of the fare paid zones are likely used by more people than those located within fare paid zones. Such restrooms may be more difficult to secure and monitor, requiring increased funding for more security mitigations to assist in monitoring.⁴ As part of APTA's Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities, a risk assessment is recommended to examine risk to personnel, assets, infrastructure, and the operating environment.

Sound Transit currently has 10 passenger restrooms throughout its system. The Sound Transit Executive Committee plans to consider adopting revisions to their restroom policy which staff are recommending adding criteria to guide siting inclusive of the provision within fare paid zones.⁵ Currently, Sound Transit

³ Restrooms at Trolley Stations. (2024) San Diego Metropolitan Transit System [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴ Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities. (2021) APTA Standards Development Program Recommended Practice. America Public Transportation Association. Washington, DC. [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵ Sound Transit 2024 Executive Committee Work Program (2024) [\[LINK\]](#)

stations with restrooms have security on site while the restroom is accessible, although security is not focused on the restroom and may be in other parts of the station. Recent station renovations have added cameras to enable remote monitoring, though Sound Transit facility managers' report cameras are often vandalized, and restrooms are used for illicit activity such as drug distribution. Facility managers noted restrooms are often closed due to vandalism and misuse, which limits accessibility. Sound Transit staff are recommending an update to their restroom policy, Motion No. M98-67, to include use of customer service and janitorial presence to monitor and clean the passenger restrooms.

To respond to community concerns in alignment with values outlined in King County's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan and ongoing efforts of the Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement Reform Initiative, Metro is operating the restrooms 24 hours daily.⁶ Based on APTA's recommended practice, King County Metro's Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, peer agency consultation, and Metro's Risk Management Framework, Metro allocated an additional security officer at each location focused on monitoring access and maximizing public safety in and around the public restrooms.⁷ A single portable stall compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and a supplemental handwash station was installed at Aurora Village Transit Center in December 2023 and at Burien Transit Center in January of 2024. Both units are cleaned three times a day by the vendor leasing the units to Metro.

The public restroom pilot was planned for six months at a total estimated cost of \$568,567. Through April 2024, average daily restroom usage at AVTC is 32, while at Burien Transit Center it is 19.⁸ Analyzing average daily restroom usage compared to average daily ridership, at AVTC usage represents two percent of ridership while at Burien usage represents less than one percent. Comparing the average count of monthly security incidents in the five months before restrooms were installed to the four months post installation, data from AVTC demonstrates a 25 percent decrease while at Burien Transit data illustrates a 13 percent decrease. While Metro has not received complaints of cleanliness specific to the public restroom, bus operators continue to observe excrement throughout both transit centers. Data from Metro's Transit Control Center, which processes requests from Metro operators, demonstrates the number of maintenance requests involving excrement, increased by 175 percent at AVTC and decreased by 33 percent at Burien Transit Center in the immediate five months after the restrooms were installed. Community feedback has been positive for AVTC, commending Metro for responsiveness to cleanliness and access to public restrooms.

Though originally only planned as a six-month pilot, which would expire during the summer of 2024, Metro intends to operate both locations through 2024. Metro's transit centers, including the two pilot locations, do not meet multiple criteria outlined in King County Code 28.94.100 guiding the provision of public restrooms at transit centers. Metro intends to comply with the code as written and therefore will cease operations of the public restrooms at the end of 2024.

⁶ King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan (2016-2022) [\[LINK\]](#)

⁷ King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation (2021) [\[LINK\]](#) King County Metro Risk Management Framework (2020) [\[LINK\]](#)

⁸ King County Metro Power BI Public Restroom Proviso Data (2024) [\[LINK\]](#)

IV. Background

Department Overview

King County Metro (Metro) is the Puget Sound region's largest public transportation agency. Metro provides bus, paratransit, vanpool, and water taxi services, and operates Seattle Streetcar, Sound Transit Link light rail, and Sound Transit Express bus service. Metro is committed to providing safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility, and prioritizing service where needs are greatest. As of February 2024, Metro had a 14-day rolling weekday average ridership of 257,254 on fixed route bus. Metro operates more than 200 bus routes and owns five transit centers.

Key Historical Conditions

In 2001, the Seattle City Council approved spending \$5 million to import five modular restroom units from Germany to replace portables in Pike Place Market, the waterfront, Pioneer Square, Chinatown International District, and Capitol Hill. After installation in 2004, the self-cleaning stalls became clogged with trash and became the site of illicit activity. In 2008, Seattle City Council voted unanimously to remove them.⁹

While there are more than 200 public restrooms in Seattle, most are closed at night.¹⁰ A report conducted by Seattle Office of City Auditor, found that in 2018, only six public restrooms were open 24 hours a day, seven days per a week. These include two permanent structures at Green Lake Park and four portable units funded by Seattle Human Services Department in Ballard, West Seattle, Lake City Park, and Belltown.¹¹ Health and safety issues have been observed at all of the six restrooms including: broken Americans with Disabilities (ADA) compliant railings; a lack of interior lights and sharps containers; syringe parts in and around the facilities; and a lack of sanitizer in units.

In September 1998, Sound Transit adopted station design standards and policy for public restrooms.¹² At the time, staff recommended public restrooms be provided where most warranted, with greatest security, where staff are already available, and where routine maintenance can be provided, with cost-sharing with all agencies utilizing facilities, and concessions to generate revenue to cover operating costs.

In late 2021, Sound Transit updated its restroom policy to provide passenger only restrooms throughout the system, utilizing a mix of security and customer service staff to control access to the restrooms.¹³ Between 1998 and 2021 decisions about siting of public restrooms were made on a project-by-project basis. The revised policy added the following criteria to guide siting of restrooms:

- Minimum 10,000 boardings per day
- Multi-modal locations with five routes or more
- Approximately 20-minute ride to the next passenger restroom

⁹ Fiscal Note to Resolution 31057. May 19, 2008. City of Seattle [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁰ Jones, David, G. (2019) Review of Navigation Team 2018 Quarter 2 Report. Seattle Office of City Auditor. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹¹ Jones, David, G. (2019) Review of Navigation Team 2018 Quarter 2 Report. Seattle Office of City Auditor. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹² Motion No.98-67 (1998) Station/Facility Design Issues in Common for Commuter Rail, Link Light Rail, and Regional Express. Sound Transit [\[LINK\]](#)

¹³ Resolution No. R2021-15 (2021) Passenger Restroom Policy Update. Sound Transit [\[LINK\]](#)

Historically, Metro has not installed, operated, nor maintained restrooms for public access since staffing models at transit centers have not met the criteria in King County Code outlining public restroom policy for public transit.¹⁴ Aurora Village Transit Center (AVTC) in Shoreline was renovated in 1999, at which time a portable restroom was installed on site for construction crews. Due to limited capacity to monitor access, the portable was also used by the public and it remained on site after the renovation was completed for public access. In accordance with King County Code, Metro approached the City of Shoreline to request an agreement to share operational costs though an agreement did not materialize. The portable remained onsite until November 2016 when it was removed following a multi-year pattern of incidents posing safety and security concerns.

In February 2017, Echo Lake Townhomes Board reached out to the City of Shoreline to express concerns about excrement on the residential property adjacent to AVTC. Metro communicated the challenges maintaining a safe environment for patrons using the portable restroom as rationale for the decision to remove it in 2016. The City of Shoreline operates a public restroom five hundred feet due south of the transit center at Echo Lake Park, directly across the street from AVTC. The restroom has frequently been vandalized over the years. In 2015, the park and the restroom were renovated using principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design to deter people from living or conducting illicit activity in the park.¹⁵ The renovated restroom continued to be a site of illicit activity and vandalism before it was closed by the City of Shoreline in 2019 after severe fire damage. The City of Shoreline approved the purchase of a Portland Loo, a modular stand-alone stall constructed of stainless steel for durability and designed to deter illicit activity.¹⁶ While City of Shoreline replaced the restroom in 2020 with a Portland Loo, it is only accessible during the day, which adjacent residents attribute as a contributing factor to excrement observed on their property. While the Portland Loo at Echo Park has withstood vandalism, neighbors report to Metro they continue to observe human waste in the park, on their adjacent residential community, as well as at the AVTC.

In June 2020, amid growing awareness of racial injustices both regionally and nationally, King County Executive Constantine declared racism a public health crisis and reaffirmed King County's commitment to becoming anti-racist and pro-equity. In response, Metro began its agency-wide Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform initiative in January 2021. The initiative's 2022-2023 priorities focus several strategies on the same locations identified by King County Council for the installation of public restrooms, Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers.¹⁷ The focused strategies involve assignment of two security officers at each location who have been on-site 24 hours daily since July of 2023. At Burien Transit Center behavioral support specialists are on site daily for a daytime and evening shift to support de-escalation, crisis intervention, and connection to social services.

In June of 2020, King County Sheriff's Office & Shoreline Police reached out to Metro to share feedback received from residents of Echo Lake Townhomes regarding excrement on the residential property adjacent to the transit center. In fall of 2020, residents of Echo Lake Townhomes also directly contacted Metro to express concern and request a public restroom be installed at AVTC again. Metro staff

¹⁴ King County Code 28.94.100 Public Restroom Policy for Public Transit Program [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵ Shoreline Area News. (2015) The New Echo Lake Park. City of Shoreline. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁶ Staff Report (2019) Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract with Madden Manufacturing to Purchase a Portland Loo Single Occupant Public Toilet. City of Shoreline, Washington. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁷ King County Metro Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement Reform Initiative (2022-2023) [\[LINK\]](#)

responded to residents and King County Sheriff’s Office in 2020 and continued to follow up with the Echo Lake Townhome Association by attending their community meetings in October of 2022 and 2023.

Key Current Conditions

Seattle ranks among the top 15 cities nationally with the highest density of public restrooms with 17 per every 100,000 residents.¹⁸ Most of the city’s public restrooms are at parks, libraries, or post-secondary education campuses managed by various public agencies. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapid increase in people living outside both nationally and within Washington, increasing 11 percent from 2022 to 2023, has increased demand for public restrooms.¹⁹ Concurrently rising rates in drug addiction and overdose deaths, increasing 32 percent in King County from 2022-2023 has posed new challenges to maintaining safety within and around public restrooms.²⁰ Physicians who treat addiction patients recommend public restrooms contain biohazard boxes for needles and be actively monitored.²¹

Within the transit sector nationally, the standard practice for the provision of public restrooms is to site them within fare paid zones at major hubs so they are accessible only to passengers.²² Large transit agencies across the country typically keep the restrooms locked with access by request. For example, the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) is a heavy rail public transit system with average weekday ridership of approximately 150,000. During operating hours, BART provides attendants to monitor restroom access.²³ The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System operates fixed route bus, rapid bus, and light rail serving approximately 3 million people. The system provides passenger restrooms within rail stations or in partnership with nearby businesses. Most of the restrooms provided within rail stations during operating hours involve on-site security to monitor access.²⁴

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) operates bus and rail within a service area serving 10 million residents. Historically, LA Metro has only provided three public restrooms throughout their 140 rail and bus transit centers.²⁵ In the fall of 2023, LA Metro started a six-month pilot with Throne Labs, a start-up provider of innovative portable self-contained restrooms at three of their busiest rail stations for passengers and one for operators. Throne units have bright lights, sinks with running water, ventilation systems, and 21 internet sensors enabling remote access, monitoring of length of use, maintenance needs and illicit activity. Restroom access is granted via app or QR code on a smart phone, text message request. Access exclusively by phone may impact equity of access so the

¹⁸ Which Cities Have the Most Toilets in the US and the World? (2024) Portland Loo. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁹ Annual Homeless Assessment Report (2023) Office of Policy Development and Research. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁰ Overdose Deaths Data Dashboard. Trends in Overdose Deaths that Occurred in King County 2014 – 2023. King County Medical Examiner’s Office. [\[LINK\]](#)

²¹ Bebinger, M. (2017) Public Restrooms Become Ground Zero in The Opioid Epidemic. All Things Considered National Public Radio. [\[LINK\]](#)

²² Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities. (2021) APTA Standards Development Program Recommended Practice. American Public Transportation Association. Washington, DC. [\[LINK\]](#)

²³ Restroom Attendant Program. (2022) San Francisco Bay Area Transit. [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁴ Restrooms at Trolley Stations. (2024) San Diego Metropolitan Transit System [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁵ Our Pilot Program to Test Restrooms for Riders and Staff Begins This Month at Four Metro Stations. (2023) Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. [\[LINK\]](#)

start-up is exploring access by transit card. A report of pilot outcomes is anticipated to the Metro Board in April of 2024, but were not available at the time of this report.²⁶

During 2024, the Sound Transit Executive Committee plans to review and consider adoption of a public restroom policy updating Motion number 98-67.²⁷ During consultation, staff shared they are proposing a combination of security and customer service presence to monitor the restrooms during daily operating hours.

In 2021 Metro began its Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform initiative in support of the King County Executive's declaration of racism as a public health crisis. One of SaFE's implementation priorities is a behavioral health support pilot in partnership with King County Department of Community and Human Services.²⁸ The pilot involves providing behavioral health specialists outreach services at the Burien Transit Center through a day and evening shift daily. The outreach team provides de-escalation, crisis intervention, peer support, and connection to social support services to community members in crisis. Metro Security Officers will be present at both locations to provide additional support.

As part of the SaFE Reform initiative, Metro conducted a series of walking tours with community partners. The tour of Aurora Village Transit Center in September of 2023 included Compass Housing Veterans Center, North Urban Human Services Alliance, and Echo Lake Neighborhood Association along with a discussion of the public restroom pilot in development at the time. Community members reported to Metro that the Portland Loo at Echo Park has withstood vandalism better than prior restrooms on site, but it continues to be closed for extended periods due to pipes bursting during freezing winter temperatures. Residents continue to report to Metro the observance of excrement in the park and their adjacent residential property which they communicated to King County Council, prompting this Proviso.

Report Methodology

Planning and preparation to install, operate, and maintain one public restroom at Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers began in April 2023. A portable stall was installed at AVTC in December 2023 and at Burien Transit Center in January 2024. Planning, implementation, evaluation, and composition of this report involved multiple divisions of Metro including: the General Manager's Office; Transit Facilities; Capital; Safety, Security, and Quality Assurance; Mobility, and Finance and Administration.

- Leadership in the General Manager's Office provided oversight, direction, and communication with Council and the Executive Office. The Partnerships and Engagement team led the walking tour and outreach related to the SaFE Reform initiative.
- Government relations staff in the Finance and Administration division managed the project inclusive of planning, evaluation, analysis of King County Code, and composition of the report. Government relations staff analyzed pilot data, researched recommended practice nationally, and consulted with peer agencies regionally to inform pilot plan and recommendations outlined in the report.

²⁶ Scauzillo, S. (2023) Toliets at LA Metro Train & Bus Stations Are Very Rare, But Four Are Being Tested At Busy Stops. Los Angeles Daily News. [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁷ Executive Committee Work Program (2024) Sound Transit [\[LINK\]](#)

²⁸ SaFE Reform Initiative (2023) King County Metro [\[LINK\]](#)

- The Safety, Security, and Quality Assurance division informed the team of safety considerations, managed the contract security staff, and on-site data collection.
- The Transit Facilities division informed operational considerations relative to siting, staffing, and installation and managed data regarding cleanliness.
- The Capital division led siting at each location, permitting, vendor procurement, contract management, and supported cost analysis for permanent options.
- The research team in the Mobility division designed the survey, observation protocol, and customer communications strategy in collaboration with project lead and analyzed survey findings.

Community Outreach

Metro utilized several methods of community outreach, including conducting walking tours with community organizations, participating in neighborhood association meetings, requesting feedback via survey to residents, compiling research on historical context at each location, and interviewing community members. As part of the SaFE Reform initiative, Metro conducted a series of walking tours with community partners. The tour of Aurora Village Transit Center in September 2023 included representatives of the Compass Housing Veterans Center, the North Urban Human Services Alliance, and the Echo Lake Neighborhood Association along with a discussion of the public restroom pilot in development at the time. Staff from the General Manager's Office and leadership from Safety, Security, and Quality Assurance attended the Echo Lake Neighborhood Association meeting in October 2023 to listen and understand resident concerns.

Residents living within a quarter mile of both Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers received a postcard with options to answer survey questions via computer, smartphone, or in writing. The brief survey involved both rating and narrative response to evaluate perceptions of safety, cleanliness, and restroom access. Metro surveyed residents two months after the public restrooms were installed at each location in February and March of 2024. The postcards and the survey were translated into both Spanish and Simplified Chinese. To incentivize participation in the survey, Metro offered a gift card raffle to respondents. Staff reached out to both the City of Shoreline and the City of Burien to request support in communicating awareness of the survey via neighborhood associations and city communications. Metro mailed a total of 2,241 postcards, with 495 to residents living within a quarter mile of AVTC and 1,746 living within a quarter of Burien Transit Center. The response rate for Aurora Village was one percent and for Burien Transit Center it was two percent.

Multiple Metro staff conducted informal interviews and ongoing engagement with community advocates living adjacent to AVTC, who provided insight on community context relative to restroom access at both the Transit Center and the adjacent Echo Lake Park based on their daily observations. Direct feedback from engaged community members informed planning of both the pilot and permanent options Metro explored.

Data Collected

Table 1 Data Collected Through Public Restroom Pilot

Source	Data
On-site Observation Protocol	Count of restroom usage hourly, daily, and monthly
	Time to access restroom (wait time)
	Behavior around restroom (people congregating)
	Illicit behavior in/around restroom
	Cleanliness of restroom
Customer Communication & Services	Public initiative feedback via call or online form
Survey Responses	Level of concern of cleanliness in/around transit center
	Extent of visible garbage or waste in/around Transit Center
	Extent of visible garbage or waste in/around home
	Awareness of Metro efforts to improve cleanliness
	Perception of safety change at transit center
	Level of satisfaction with cleanliness and availability of public restrooms
	Observations about conditions at 2 transit centers and how they could be improved
Metro Performance Business Intelligence Dashboards	Platform ridership volume
	Bus volume during peak hours
	Count of security incidents on-site
	Type of security incidents on-site
Transit Control Center	Count of operator maintenance requests involving excrement at each location

Legal Elements

The King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office provided legal analysis of the report. Additionally, the following regulatory requirements were also complied with during siting of the portable at each location.

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - Standards for Accessible Design, Title II, and Title III regulate requirements for facilities to be physically accessible to people with disabilities.²⁹
- City of Burien Permit Regulations
 - The City of Shoreline waived their permit process for the portable at AVTC

If King County pursues permanent modular units, the following state policy would apply.

- Washington State Department of Labor & Industries

²⁹ Americans with Disabilities Standards for Accessible Design [\[LINK\]](#)

- Factory Assembled Structures Laws and Rules (Revised Code of Washington 43.22, 43.22A and Washington Administrative Code Title 296-Chapter 49A and 150F).³⁰³¹³²

V. Report Requirements

A. A Description of the Public Restrooms Installed, Operated, and Maintained at the Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers

In response to the Proviso directive to install at least one public restroom stall at each location, Metro initially planned to install a portable trailer with four stalls and sinks at each location. Metro did not consider permanent structures for the initial evaluative pilot phase, given time constraints and interest in collecting additional information before planning permanent solutions. Metro originally selected a trailer with a multiple stalls option to address concerns of safety and vandalism, while providing the highest quality of service. Ultimately, electrical capacity constraints at each location presented challenges that would have significantly delayed installation and led to notable cost increases.

To address the electrical constraints and, given the time sensitive nature of the Proviso, Metro revised the initial plan and installed a single portable stall that is ADA compliant and gender neutral at each location, with an external handwashing station. The plastic stalls and handwash stations do not require electricity nor connection to plumbing, as they are self-contained units with tanks and a translucent roof to support interior visibility. The stalls are wheelchair accessible with adequate turning space through the approximate footprint measurements of ten feet by six feet. The handwash station provides touchless sanitation with soap and paper towel holders.

Figure 1 Single Portable ADA Compliant Restroom Installed at AVTC

Figure 2 Single Portable ADA Compliant Restrooms Installed at Burien Transit Centers



³⁰ Revised Code of Washington Chapter 43.22 – 43.22A. [\[LINK\]](#)

³² Washington Administrative Code Title 296 Chapter 49A & 150F Factory Built Housing & Commercial Structures. [\[LINK\]](#)

At AVTC, the portable stall and sink are installed next to the rider platform near Bay 2. The portable and sink are located across two parking spaces in the southeast corner of the adjacent parking lot. At the Burien Transit Center, the portable stall and sink are located next to the entrance of the park and ride garage. At both locations the stalls are anchored to a cement ecology block as a theft prevention tactic with another block alongside as a barrier. Siting at both locations involved assessment of lighting and line of sight from the rider platforms to maximize visibility of both transit and local security officers to maximize safety. Metro prioritized accessibility of people with physical disabilities during siting.

Figure 3 Aerial View of Aurora Village Transit Center
Figure 4 Aerial View of Burien Transit Center



Given extensive community member and Metro staff concerns regarding safety in and around public restrooms, Metro is providing an additional security officer on site 24 hours a day to monitor access and any behavior that may threaten public safety. Metro considered reduced levels of security staffing, such as limiting use to typical office commute time frames or only overnight, in an effort to reduce costs. To mitigate the risk of increased security incidents, address concerns of residents of adjacent property, align with national standard practice, and provide the highest level of customer service, Metro decided to have a security officer dedicated to managing access and safety of the public restrooms which remain open during bus operations from 4 a.m. – 2 a.m. daily. Metro contracted Security Services Northwest to provide on-site staffing.

The vendor leasing the stalls pumps them out daily and cleans them three times a day. Metro outsourced maintenance due to staffing levels required to ensure cleanliness, along with labor contract constraints relative to the handling of syringes. Both stalls have a sharps container adhered to the interior wall for safe disposal of needles and syringes.

The costs to procure and operate the two portables and handwash stations at both locations are itemized below to illustrate the monthly unit cost per location and total costs. Maintenance costs are based on the pilot plan of vendor-conducted daily cleaning. If Metro staff cleaned the units, it would

entail labor contract negotiations. The contract security officer cost is specific to the management of the restroom and independent of security costs associated with the SaFE Initiative. The expense list below does not include Metro administrative expenses associated with staff time to research, evaluate, and compose this report.

Table 2 Costs of Pilot

Expense	Description	Monthly Unit Cost Per One Location	6 Month Cost Per Two Locations
Planning	Cross division coordination, evaluation of options, & preparation to operate	One-Time Cost	\$70,716
Design & permitting	Feasibility Review, Siting, & Permitting Costs	One-Time Cost	\$34,557
Delivery of Portable	Cost to Deliver to Site	\$75	\$150
Installation	Translation, Print, & Installation of Signage, Securing Unit to Ecology Block	One-Time Cost	\$2,000
Lease & Maintenance of Portable ADA Compliant Stall	Monthly lease rate inclusive of cleaning x3/daily and x1/daily pump out	\$2,775	\$33,300
Lease & Maintenance of Portable Handwash Station	Monthly lease & cleaning x3/daily and x1/daily pump out	\$2,700	\$32,400
Supplies	Sanitizer & seat covers	\$37	\$444
Contract Security Officer	On-site 24 hours daily dedicated to monitoring access & safety of public restroom stall	\$33,000	\$395,000
TOTAL		\$38,587	\$568,567

The figures below illustrate usage of the public restroom stalls at each location monthly, daily, and hourly. The security officer on site dedicated to managing access to the public restroom collected usage counts. Through April 2024, average daily restroom usage at AVTC is 32, while at Burien Transit Center it is 19.³³ Analyzing average daily restroom usage compared to average daily ridership, at AVTC usage represents two percent of ridership while at Burien usage represents less than one percent. Use of both stalls peaks in early afternoon and both are used throughout the overnight timeframe.

³³ King County Metro Power BI Public Restroom Proviso Data (2024) [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 5 Monthly Restroom Usage by Location

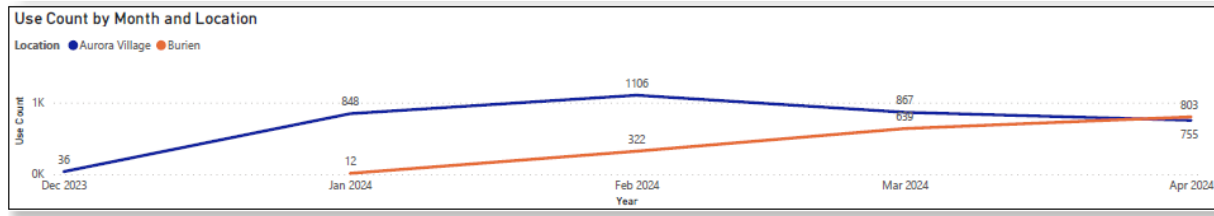


Figure 6 Daily Restroom Usage by Location

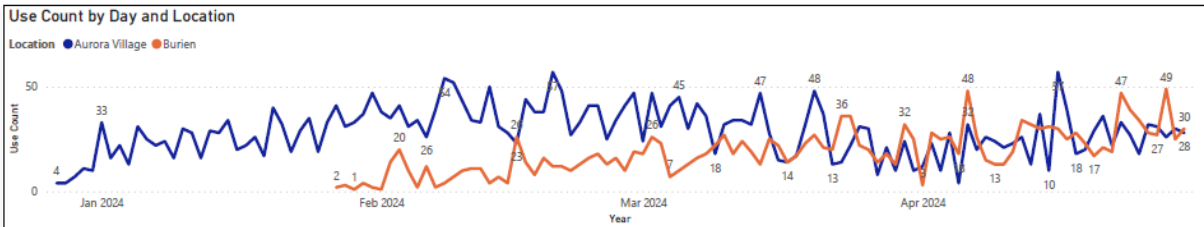
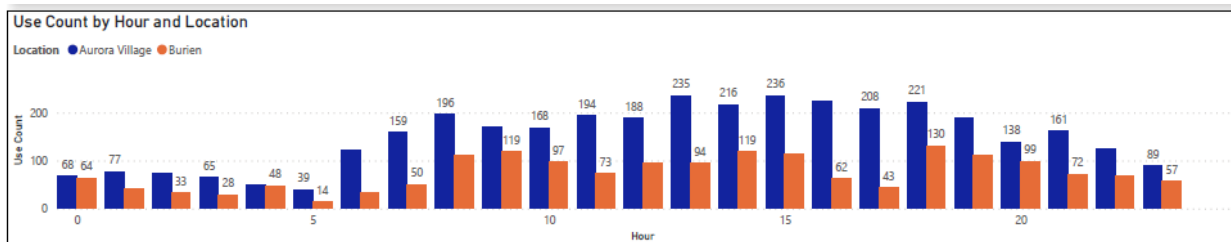


Figure 7 Hourly Restroom Usage by Location



Throughout planning of the public restrooms at the two locations, community members and Metro staff voiced concerns of safety based on historical data at proximate locations such as the portable installed during renovation of AVTC which attracted illicit activity and the public restroom at Echo Lake Park across the street from AVTC which has been vandalized many times and has been the site of on-going illicit activity.³⁴ Metro staff researched security and design considerations both regionally and nationally to inform planning to maximize public safety in and around the restrooms. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) recommends increased funding to provide additional security measures to assist in monitoring restrooms that are located outside the paid fare zone and therefore open to public access.³⁵ Based on APTA’s security and emergency management standards, Metro planned and implemented an additional security officer on site 24 hours daily at both public restroom locations to mitigate safety concerns and monitor access to the restrooms.

In response to community concerns, Metro is operating the restrooms 24 hours daily in alignment with King County’s Equity and Social Justice Plan.³⁶ Residents living adjacent to the Aurora Village Transit

³⁴ Currents News from the City of Shoreline (September 2019) City of Shoreline.Vol.21 No7. [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁵ Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities. (2021) APTA Standards Development Program Recommended Practice. American Public Transportation Association. Washington, DC. [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁶ King County Equity and Social Justice Plan (2016). King County [\[LINK\]](#)

Center and Echo Lake Park expressed concern that overnight closure of the public restroom at Echo Lake Park is a contributing factor to the observance of excrement on their residential property. Given the historical context of people living outside proximate to both transit centers, Metro decided providing access 24 hours daily would be most responsive to community concerns.

As part of the SaFE Reform initiative, prior to installation of the public restrooms, two security officers have been on site at both locations since the spring of 2023. Initially, in April of 2023, two security officers were on site from 1:30pm-5:30am. In July, two security officers were on site 24 hours daily. When the public restrooms were installed in December at AVTC and January at Burien Transit Center, an additional security officer was deployed on site to focus on monitoring the restrooms. Since installation of the public restrooms, the number of security incidents at each location has decreased.

Table 3 Count of Security Incidents Before and During Operation of Public Restrooms

	Time	Level of Security Staffing	AVTC	Burien
Average Count of Monthly Security Incidents Per Each Pilot Location	December 2022 – March 2023	No Security on Site	12	16
	April 2023 – June 2023	2 security officers deployed 1:30pm-5:30am daily	9	15
	July 2023 – November 2023	2 security officers deployed 24/7 daily	8	15
	December 2023 – March 2024	Public restroom pilot phase 1 additional security officer deployed 24/7 with 2 officers throughout transit center 24/7	6	13

Comparing the average count of monthly security incidents in the five months before restrooms were installed to the four months post installation, data from AVTC illustrates a 25 percent decrease while Burien Transit data demonstrates a 13 percent decrease.

Metro has not received requests for cleaning of the restroom stalls specifically. A vendor cleans both stalls three times a day. Based on data from Metro’s Transit Control Center, which processes requests from Metro operators, from December 2023 to April 2024, there have been 11 counts of maintenance requests involving excrement at AVTC and 13 counts at Burien Transit Center, despite the presence of a public restroom stall on site accessible 24 hours daily. For comparison, in the five months prior to installation of the restrooms, July 2023 through November 2023, the count of maintenance requests involving excrement was four at AVTC and 18 at Burien Transit Center. The number of maintenance requests involving excrement increased 175 percent at AVTC and decreased 28 percent at Burien Transit Center in the immediate five months post installation of the public restroom stall. Metro’s Customer Call Center, which processes feedback and requests from the public, has only received two complaints of excrement at AVTC from December 2023 to April 2024 and none were received specific to Burien Transit Center.

Table 4 Count of Maintenance Requests Involving Excrement at Each Location

	July 2023 – November 2023 (5 Months Prior to Restroom Installation)	December 2023 – April 2024 (5 Months Post Restroom Installation)	Percent Change
AVTC	4	11	175%
Burien Transit Center	18	13	-28%

To evaluate community member perceptions of cleanliness, Metro administered a survey to residents living within a quarter mile of both transit centers two months after the restrooms were installed. A vendor provided mailing lists of residents living within a quarter mile of each transit center, resulting in 495 addresses proximate to AVTC and 1,746 proximate to Burien Transit Center. Based on review of demographic data in the associated census blocks, surveys were translated into both Spanish and Simplified Chinese with response options available online or by paper. Requests to complete the survey were sent to residential mailing addresses via a postcard.

Survey response rates were below two percent for both surveys despite incentives offered for completing. Regarding cleanliness at AVTC, 60 percent of survey respondents noted some waste has been visible around the Transit Center. An interview with a highly engaged resident living nearby AVTC who walks through the transit center daily, has reported increased cleanliness both prior to and post installation of the public restrooms. Regarding cleanliness at Burien Transit Center, 88 percent of respondents noted there was some waste visible around the transit center.³⁷ Comments from the survey, noted consistent visibility of drug paraphernalia, trash, and excrement around Burien Transit Center with multiple respondents requesting more security on site. Metro’s customer call center has not received direct complaints about excrement on site at Burien Transit Center.

Figure 8 Community Reaction to Installation of Public Restroom at AVTC



Overall, direct community feedback received via email from local advocates has been positive about installation of the public restroom at AVTC, level of security staffing to monitor access and support public safety, as well as cleanliness in and around AVTC. Feedback noted reports of excrement around residential property and occasionally at the transit center. This feedback is consistent with Metro’s facility data. Specific design elements community members valued were accessibility throughout the night and presence of security on site to monitor access and promote public safety.

³⁷ Metro Public Restroom Resident Survey (2024) [\[LINK\]](#)

B. A Plan to Install, Operate, and Maintain Additional Public Restrooms at Transit Centers

In 1995 Ordinance 11962 added a new section to King County Code 28.94.100 entitled: Public Restroom Policy for Public Transit Program outlining the following criteria to guide the provision of public restrooms at transit centers.³⁸

- A. The County will provide public restrooms at transit centers that meet the following criteria.
 1. The transit center has been designed and sited principally to facilitate transfers between different routes.
 2. The transit center is to be developed off-street on property that the county either owns or controls through a long-term lease.
 3. County service through the transit center makes significant use of “timed meet” schedules.
 4. The transit center has capacity for eight or more in-service coaches; layover bays or terminal space do not count toward meeting this capacity requirement.
 5. There is adequate space on the transit center platform to provide a restroom facility without compromising operating requirements.
 6. A daily platform population of 2,000 (two thousand) or more patrons is projected. This includes transfer activity as well as trips originating or terminating at the center.
 7. At least 25 (twenty-five) buses per peak hour pass through the transit center.
 8. Independent of any decision to provide a public restroom, the level of operation activity at the transit center justifies the on-site assignment of a service supervisor for all or a portion of the operating day.
- B. If these criteria are met, the public restroom will be a gender-neutral facility that will be used both by county employees and by the general public. The restroom will only be available to the public for those hours when a department representative is scheduled to be on-site to manage the service. During those hours, public access to the facility will be controlled by this representative.
- C. If a local jurisdiction or adjacent property owners wish to expand hours of public access to the restroom beyond those available through the department’s normal staff assignments, the local jurisdiction or property owner and the county may elect to enter into an agreement to share the additional operating costs for expanded restroom hours; provided, that such agreements shall be approved by the council as required by the King County Charter, ordinance and/or applicable state law.
- D. The department shall not provide public restrooms at any of the county’s customer facilities that do not meet the criteria above, including the Downtown Seattle Tunnel.
- E. The county will not staff its customer facilities simply to maintain or expand hours of access to public restrooms.

The Code was last revised in 2018 via Ordinance 18670 making minor technical adjustments such as spelling out numbers and changing “unisex” to “gender neutral.”³⁹ Based on Metro’s analysis of the KCC 28.94.100 criteria, none of Metro transit centers meet criteria eight. Criteria eight notes that independent of any decision to provide a public restroom, the level of operational activity at the transit

³⁸ Ordinance 11962 (1995) King County Legislative Search. [\[LINK\]](#)

³⁹ Ordinance 18760. (2018) King County Legislative Search. [\[LINK\]](#)

center justifies the on-site assignment of a service supervisor for all or a portion of the operating day. None of Metro transit centers have staff assigned on-site for all nor a portion of the day. Metro operations and facilities staff are deployed in mobile ways throughout the field to promote efficiency and responsiveness. Section D of the Code notes the department should not provide public restrooms at any of the county's customer facilities that do not meet the criteria above.

To address the Proviso's requirement to install at least one restroom at Aurora Village and Burien Transit Centers, Metro utilized contract security service to provide on-site management of access to the restroom in effort to align with elements of the Code when feasible, such as those outlined in section B of the Code.⁴⁰ Metro staff researched security and design considerations both regionally and nationally to inform planning to maximize public safety in and around the restrooms. The APTA recommends increased funding to provide additional security measures to assist in monitoring restrooms located outside the paid fare zone and therefore open to public access.⁴¹ Based on APTA's Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities which recommends additional security measures to monitor restrooms located outside of fare paid zones, Metro provided a security officer on site 24 hours daily at both locations of the public restroom locations to mitigate safety concerns and to monitor access to the restrooms.⁴²

Metro's decision to provide on-site security for the restroom was also based on consultation with peer agencies regionally, such as Sound Transit and the City of Seattle, research of peer agencies nationally, including San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit, San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and taking into consideration the American Public Transportation Association's recommended practices regarding public restrooms. Metro recommends that the provision of public restrooms include dedicated staffing to monitor access and promote greater safety, security, cleanliness, and accessibility. If interest in public restrooms at transit centers sustains, opportunities exist to improve congruence between Metro recommendations and the Code.

The two pilot locations identified by the Council do not meet other elements of the Code, such as criteria seven, which notes that at least 25 buses per peak hour pass through the transit center. On average, 16 buses pass through Aurora Village Transit per peak hour and 23 per peak hour at Burien Transit Center. Additionally, Aurora Village Transit Center does not meet criteria six, which notes that a daily platform population of 2,000 or more, as daily platform ridership averaged 1,346 between December 2023 to May 2024.⁴³

While there are transit centers that meet one or more of the criteria, none meet all the current KCC criteria, even with potential removal of the criteria outlining level of staffing on-site.⁴⁴ For example, even excluding the staffing requirements, Burien does not meet peak bus volume criteria. Only four

⁴⁰ King County Code 28.94.100 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴¹ Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities. (2021) APTA Standards Development Program Recommended Practice. American Public Transportation Association. Washington, DC. [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴² Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities. (2021) APTA Standards Development Program Recommended Practice. American Public Transportation Association. Washington, DC. [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴³ Public Restroom Proviso Business Intelligence Dashboard. (2024) King County Metro [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁴ List of Transit Centers Meeting King County Code Criteria [\[LINK\]](#)

Metro transit centers meet criteria two requiring county ownership or control via long-term lease along with criteria four outlining capacity for eight or more in-service coaches. Of those four, they each do not meet other criteria such as platform volume or peak hour bus volume requirements. No transit centers meet adequate space on platform for a portable due to impact on operating requirements. Therefore, at this juncture, Metro is not planning to install, operate, or maintain additional public restrooms at transit centers.

Additionally, the Code notes that if a local jurisdiction or adjacent property owners wish to expand hours of public access to the restroom beyond those available through the department's normal staff assignments, the jurisdiction or property owner and the county may elect to enter into an agreement to share the additional operating costs for expanded restroom hours. Implementation of Metro's public restroom initiative thus far has not involved agreements with the City of Shoreline, the City of Burien, or adjacent property owners.

Given King County Council interest in a public restroom at the two locations identified, Metro is currently planning to maintain operations at both locations through the end of 2024. At this juncture, given none of Metro transit centers meet multiple elements of the King County Code criteria, to continue would require further discussion with the King County Executive Office and King County Council to consider options and inform next steps regarding the provision of public restroom at the two pilot locations and possible modifications to King County Code. Further discussion with the King County Executive Office and Council could also inform potential agreements with the City of Shoreline or City of Burien, should they indicate shared interest in operation of the restrooms.

To inform further discussion with the Executive Office and the Council, Metro researched permanent purchased structures as an alternate solution via installation of self-contained modular units such as the Portland Loo and the Throne. The Portland Loo, patented in 2010, is now in use in over 90 locations throughout the United States and Canada.⁴⁵ The Loo is constructed of stainless steel to withstand high volume usage and vandalism while deterring illicit activity based on design of louvered panels at the top and bottom of the stalls. It has become a preferred option to mitigate safety concerns and maximize accessibility, due to its durability. The City of Seattle, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, and the City of Shoreline have each installed Portland Loos, primarily at parks, and seen positive outcomes. The units do require connections to power and plumbing, increasing initial one-time costs and constraining feasible siting. The long-term durability and accessibility of these units may outweigh initial cost differentials. The Washington State Department of Labor and Industries recently updated rules and laws governing Factory Assembled Structures, and Madden Manufacturing, the manufacturer of the Portland Loo, is in the process of updating design to comply with Washington laws.⁴⁶

King County Parks installed four Portland Loos at Steve Cox Park in White Center in 2019. Overall, Park staff have observed better outcomes for access, maintenance, and deterrence of illicit activity compared to both building restrooms and temporary portable units. In response to a request for feedback, staff at Steve Cox Park reported the Loos are easier and safer to clean, deter graffiti as advertised, and improve their ability to monitor illicit activity in the restroom.

⁴⁵ United States Patent Application Publication. 2010 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁶ Revised Code of Washington Chapter 43 Section 22 Department of Labor & Industries Factory Assembled Structures [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 9 Portland Loos at Steve Cox Park in White Center, Unincorporated King County



Historically, park staff unlock the door each morning and rely on King County Sheriff's Deputies to lock the doors at night, although they are in the process of changing to programmed locks to automate access during operating hours. Staff have noted the drawback that the Loos are susceptible to plumbing issues during sub-freezing temperatures. The Portland Loo now offers a cold temperature option to mitigate those issues, which is built into to the cost estimates outlined below.

An analysis of cost estimates comparing lease to purchase options illustrates notable one-time cost differences given the initial costs to purchase a modular unit and install connections to plumbing and power. The annual operating costs are much more similar with estimates to operate a permanent structure, which costs an estimated \$44,000 more to operate. This difference does not include costs to repair leased portables that are vandalized. As City of Shoreline noted in the September 2019 issue of Currents, the public restroom at Echo Lake Park has been vandalized repeatedly over the years, including structural fires increasing maintenance costs.⁴⁷ Despite many jurisdictions reporting ongoing vandalism to public restrooms, leading to cost increases and long-term closures, available data appears to be insufficient to estimate maintenance costs due to vandalism, therefore it is not reflected in the table below. The actual cost differences to operate may be less, given that the materials used to manufacture temporary portable stalls are less durable than the stainless steel used to manufacture many modular units currently on the market. Cleaning costs below are based on pilot data of vendor providing cleaning; exploration of permanent options would entail re-negotiating labor agreements.

⁴⁷ Currents, News from the City of Shoreline. September 2019. Volume 21 No.7 [\[LINK\]](#)

Table 5 Cost Comparison of Lease and Purchase Options

		Cost Estimates			
		Lease Two Portable ADA Stalls with Handwash Stations	Lease One Portable ADA Stall with Handwash Station	Purchase & Install Two Permanent Modular Stalls	Purchase & Install Single Permanent Modular Stall
One-Time Costs	Delivery	\$150	\$75	\$5,535	\$2,768
	Installation	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,620,000	\$810,000
	Purchase	\$0	\$0	\$320,000	\$160,000
	TOTAL	\$2,150	\$1,075	\$1,945,535	\$972,768
On-Going Annual Costs	Lease Rate (Inclusive of daily cleaning)	\$132,288	\$66,144	\$0	\$0
	Routine Cleaning (Lease rate of portable includes)	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	\$50,000
	Security Staffing (based on 24/7 access)	\$790,000	\$395,000	\$836,000	\$418,000
	TOTAL	\$922,288	\$406,144	\$936,000	\$468,000

As another option, Throne, is a start-up company providing portable, modular, and ADA accessible units with a ventilation system, flush toilet, and sink with running water. The units can operate without connection to plumbing or power. Less is known about the costs, as the company did not respond to multiple requests for price quotes. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) is in the process of a six-month pilot of the Throne restroom at three of its highest volume stations, bringing their total public restroom count to six throughout their system. The restrooms are monitored by transit ambassadors, although access is controlled via a scan of a QR code or a text message sent by the person requesting entry. The stalls are equipped with 21 internet connected sensors to inform LA Metro if anything needs attention and to prompt users to exit the stall within 10 minutes by automatically opening the door at that time. The stalls are open from 6 a.m. until 9 p.m. The pilot is the result of an unsolicited proposal received from Throne.

Throne offers some distinct advantages over the Portland Loo, given that the units do not require connection to power or plumbing, thus reducing installation costs and expanding potential siting options within limited spaces such as a transit center. Due to its reliance on a cellular phone for access, it has built in accountability, enabling warnings or restricted access for users who have not followed conditions of use or have damaged the unit. A report of pilot learnings and outcomes is scheduled for delivery to LA Metro in April of 2024, which could further inform Metro planning and discussions with the Executive Office and the Council.

Figure 10 Throne Labs Modular Restroom



Metro recommends the current configuration for the provision of the public restrooms be maintained through end of 2024, including both the structure type and security staffing model. The current configuration is a plastic portable ADA compliant stall with a supplemental handwashing station on the exterior of the unit with dedicated security presence on-site to monitor access and ensure public safety throughout the 24 daily operating hours.

The rationale for the level of security staffing Metro is planning is based on the following:

- American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Recommended Practice
- Consultation with comparable peer agencies nationally and regionally
- Metro’s Risk Management Framework

APTA recognizes that restrooms can become significant security risks if they are not effectively designed and managed. As part of APTA’s Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities, a risk assessment is recommended to examine risk to personnel, assets, infrastructure, and the operating environment. APTA points out that public restrooms located outside of the fare paid zones are likely have higher usage volume than those located within fare paid zones and may be more difficult to secure and monitor, which would require increased funding for more security to assist in monitoring.⁴⁸

To inform planning, Metro consulted with peer agencies regionally, including Sound Transit and the City of Seattle. Sound Transit currently has 10 passenger restrooms throughout its system and the Sound Transit Executive Committee is planning to consider restroom policy changes in 2024.⁴⁹ Sound Transit staff are recommending the addition of criteria to guide siting within fare paid zones. Currently, Sound Transit stations with restrooms have security on site while the restroom is accessible, but it not focused on the restroom. Recent renovations have added cameras to enable remote monitoring, though Sound Transit facility managers’ report cameras are often vandalized, and restrooms are used for illicit activity such as distribution of drugs. The restrooms face repeated closures due to vandalism and misuse, which limits accessibility. Sound Transit staff are recommending their restroom policy, Motion No. M98-67, be updated include customer service and janitorial presence to monitor and clean the passenger restrooms.

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) evaluated best practices related to all-gender public restrooms and concluded adequate staffing involves attendants to monitor restroom facilities.⁵⁰ SPR installed a modular Portland Loo public restroom at Ballard Commons Park in 2019 with an attendant on site

⁴⁸ Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities. (2021) APTA Standards Development Program Recommended Practice. America Public Transportation Association. Washington, DC. [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁹ Sound Transit 2024 Executive Committee Work Program (2024) [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵⁰ All Gender Restroom Study. (2016) Seattle Parks and Recreation. [\[LINK\]](#)

during restroom access hours to monitor use and provide maintenance. The location has similarities to Metro’s pilot locations, as it is close to a high volume of people living outside.

On Metro’s Risk Management Framework, safety and security is a key area of risk involving hazards or actions which may lead to harm of employees or the public. Metro recognizes decisions often involve overlapping areas of risk and has determined that three areas take priority: the need to achieve our equity and sustainability objectives and to avoid or adequately control safety and security risks. Relative to safety and security, Metro is risk averse and risk concerned.⁵¹ Risk averse means Metro accepts as little risk as possible while risk concerned indicates a cautious approach to risk taking, involving willingness to only accept a small negative impact to pursue objectives. Metro proactively identifies hazards and vulnerabilities that may threaten safety and security of employees and customers and prioritizes resources to mitigate them.

C. Any Legislation Necessary to Implement the Transit Public Restroom Report

No legislation is necessary to implement the Transit Restroom Report.

⁵¹ Metro Risk Appetite Statement. (2020) Metro. [\[LINK\]](#)

VI. Next Steps

For the most part, Metro has not installed, operated, or maintained restrooms for public access. An exception occurred during renovations to Aurora Village Transit Center in 1999, during which a temporary portable stall was placed on site for construction crew. Due to limited capacity to monitor, over time the public began using the stall and it ultimately remained on site post renovation. In accordance with King County Code 28.94.100, Metro approached the City of Shoreline to request an agreement to share operational costs, although one was not established. Metro continued to independently operate the restroom until 2016, when it was removed following repeated incidents threatening security and public safety.

In response to the proviso directive to install at least one public restroom stall at AVTC and Burien Transit Centers, Metro installed a single portable ADA compliant stall with handwash station at each location, beginning in December 2023 at AVTC and January 2024 at Burien Transit Center. The vendor leasing the portable units also provides daily cleaning. Metro operates both restrooms 24 hours daily to be responsive to community concern that limited overnight access to restrooms was contributing to the observance of excrement on residential property and at the transit center. Responsiveness to community is in alignment with King County's Equity and Social Justice Plan.⁵² Based on consultation with peer agencies regionally, research of peer agencies nationally, and the American Public Transportation Association's recommended standard practice regarding public restrooms at transit facilities, Metro contracts a security officer on-site 24 hours daily to monitor access and promote greater safety, security, and cleanliness. The pilot was originally planned for a duration of six months at an estimated cost of \$578,567, which is within the \$600,000 withheld contingent upon submission of this report and accompanying motion.

Comparing the average count of monthly security incidents in the five months before restrooms were installed to the four months post installation, data from AVTC demonstrates a 25 percent decrease while at Burien Transit data illustrates a 13 percent decrease. Comparing the five months pre-installation to the five months post installation of the restrooms, the number of maintenance requests involving excrement on site increased 175 percent at AVTC and decreased 28 percent at Burien Transit Center.

Based on analysis of King County Code 28.94.100, none of Metro's transit centers meet criteria eight, which notes that, independent of any decision to provide a public restroom, the level of operational activity at the transit center justifies the on-site assignment of a service supervisor for all or a portion of the operating day. Section D of the code notes the department should not provide public restrooms at any of the county's customer facilities that do not meet the criteria outlined in code. Metro utilized contract security service to provide on-site management of access to the restroom as outlined in section B of the code. Staff researched security and design considerations both regionally and nationally to inform planning to maximize public safety in and around the restrooms. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) recommends increased funding to provide additional security measures to assist in monitoring restrooms that are located outside the paid fare zone and therefore

⁵² King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan. (2016) King County [\[LINK\]](#)

open to public access.⁵³ Based on APTA’s Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities, Metro provided a security officer on site 24 hours daily at both public restroom locations to mitigate safety concerns and to monitor access to the restrooms.

The two pilot locations identified by Council do not meet additional elements of King County Code, criteria seven, which states that at least twenty-five buses per peak hour must pass through the transit center. On average, 16 buses pass through Aurora Village Transit per peak hour and 23 per peak hour at Burien Transit Center. Additionally, Aurora Village Transit Center does not meet criteria six, which specifies a daily platform population of 2,000 or more riders, as daily platform ridership averaged 1,346 over between December 2023 to May 2024.

Additionally, the code notes if a local jurisdiction or adjacent property owners wish to expand hours of public access to the restroom beyond those available through the department’s normal staff assignments, the jurisdiction or property owner and the county may elect to enter into an agreement to share the additional operating costs . Implementation of this public restroom initiative thus far has not involved agreements with the City of Shoreline, the City of Burien, or the owners of adjacent properties.

In alignment with King County Executive Branch True North and Values of being one team and being responsible stewards, Metro is planning to operate the public restrooms at both sites through the remainder of 2024..⁵⁴ Metro’s transit centers, including the two pilot locations, do not meet multiple criteria outlined in King County Code 28.94.100 guiding the provision of public restrooms at transit centers. Metro intends to comply with the code as written and therefore will cease operations of the public restrooms at the end of 2024.

VII. Appendices

Appendix A: King County Code 28.94.100

Public Restroom Policy for Public Transit Program

King County Code, Title 28 Metropolitan Functions, Section 94.100 public restroom policy for public transit is foundational to analysis and recommendations noted throughout the report.⁵⁵

28.94.100 Public restroom policy for public transit program.

A. The county will provide public restrooms at transit centers that meet the following criteria.

1. The transit center has been designed and sited principally to facilitate transfers between different routes.

⁵³ Security and Design Considerations for Restrooms at Public Transportation Passenger Facilities. (2021) APTA Standards Development Program Recommended Practice. American Public Transportation Association. Washington, DC. [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵⁴ King County Executive Branch True North & Values [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵⁵ Title 28 Metropolitan Functions Section 94.100. King County Code [\[LINK\]](#)

2. *The transit center is to be developed off-street on property that the county either owns or controls through a long-term lease.*

3. *County service through the transit center makes significant use of "timed meet" schedules.*

4. *The transit center has capacity for eight or more in-service coaches; layover bays or terminal space do not count toward meeting this capacity requirement.*

5. *There is adequate space on the transit center platform to provide a restroom facility without compromising operating requirements.*

6. *A daily platform population of two thousand or more patrons is projected. This includes transfer activity as well as trips originating or terminating at the center.*

7. *At least twenty-five buses per peak hour pass through the transit center.*

8. *Independent of any decision to provide a public restroom, the level of operational activity at the transit center justifies the on-site assignment of a service supervisor for all or a portion of the operating day.*

B. If these criteria are met, the public restroom will be a gender-neutral facility that will be used both by county employees and by the general public. The restroom will only be available to the public for those hours when a department representative is scheduled to be on-site to manage the service. During those hours, public access to the facility will be controlled by this supervisor.

C. If a local jurisdiction or adjacent property owners wish to expand hours of public access to the restroom beyond those available through the department's normal staff assignments, the local jurisdiction or property owner and the county may elect to enter into an agreement to share the additional operating costs for expanded restroom hours; provided, that such agreements shall be approved by the council as required by the King County Charter, ordinance and/or applicable state law.

D. The department shall not provide public restrooms at any of the county's customer facilities that do not meet the criteria above, including the Downtown Seattle Tunnel.

E. The county will not staff its customer facilities simply to maintain or expand hours of access to public restrooms. (Ord. 18670 § 87, 2018: Ord. 11962 § 13, 1995).

Appendix B: On-Site Observation & Survey Protocols

Public Restroom Pilot: Data Collection Plan & Protocol

Approach: ON-SITE OBSERVATIONS	Observation Protocol
<p>Transit Security Officers (TSO) assigned to Burien and Aurora Village Transit Centers will conduct daily observations. This will be a dedicated assignment, i.e., this role is separate and distinct from the role of officers that provide security across the transit center and/or behavioral health interventions.</p> <p>Dedicated officers will be on site at Burien and AV Transit Centers 24/7.</p> <p>TSOs will note (via an MS form) each time a person enters the on-site restroom.</p> <p>Observations, completed by officers, will take place daily.</p>	<p><i>For each observation they make, patrol officers will document the following information:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Date: [date of observation] Start time/end time: [start time and end time of observation] Name or id of observer: [name or other identifier to indicate the officer who made the observation] <i>This is needed so that if there is a question about any of the information documented, it's possible to go back to the observer to clarify</i> Notable weather conditions: [short qualitative description, e.g., light rain, heavy rain, cold weather, snow, or nothing notable] Are there people waiting to use the public restroom? [closed-ended options, forced choice] <u>Response options</u> Yes=observer can clearly see people waiting in line or waiting to enter the restroom facility No=observer does not see a line, nor people obviously waiting to use the restroom Don't know/unknown=observer is uncertain or unclear if people are waiting to use the restroom facility Are there people congregating near or hanging around the restroom? [closed-ended options, forced choice] <u>Response options</u> Yes=observer can clearly see people congregating near the restroom; observer sees people hanging around the restroom who do not appear to have the intent to use the restroom No=observer does not see people congregating near the restroom, hanging around the restroom, loitering Don't know/unknown=observer is uncertain or unclear if people are loitering Are people engaging in unsafe or illicit behavior in or around the restroom? closed-ended options, forced choice] <u>Response options</u> Yes=observer can clearly see people engaging in unsafe or illicit behavior in or around the restroom No=observer does not see anyone engaging in unsafe or illicit behavior in or around the restroom

	<p>Don't know/unknown=observer is uncertain or unclear if people are engaging in unsafe or illicit behavior in or around the restroom facility</p> <p>8. Other observations about the condition of the transit center, the public restroom facilities, or the behavior of those at the transit center or using the restroom facilities? [open-ended]</p>
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Approach: RESIDENT SURVEY	Survey Protocol
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro will implement a brief survey with a defined sample of residents who live within ¼ mile of Burien and Aurora Village Transit Centers. • Those who complete the survey will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card (Total of 10 available) • Metro research team will implement and summarize results inclusive of translation of survey & post card. • Government relations staff will coordinate mailing list via direct buy from contractor, post card 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Date 2. Do you want to be entered into drawing for a \$50 gift card to Fred Meyer? 3. Preferred Method of Contact if Entering Drawing: Mailing Address or Email 4. To what extent are you concerned about cleanliness in/around the Transit Center? [closed-ended, forced choice] <u>Response choices:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very concerned • Somewhat concerned • Not concerned • Don't know/unsure 5. To what extent have you noticed garbage or waste in and around the Transit Center? [closed-ended, forced choice] <u>Response choices</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a <u>substantial amount</u> of trash or waste in/around the transit center—e.g., trash/waste is visible in many parts of the transit center; accumulated trash/waste is visible on the ground; trash is not contained in or is spilling out of trash bins on site. • There is <u>some</u> trash or waste visible in/around the transit center—e.g., trash/waste is visible in a few places in/around the transit center; there are a few places where accumulated trash/waste is visible on the ground; trash is not contained in or is spilling out of trash bins on site. • There is <u>a little</u> trash or waste visible in/around the transit center— e.g., trash/waste is visible in 1-2 places in/around the transit center; there are a 1-2 places where accumulated trash/waste is visible on the ground; trash is mostly contained in trash bins on site. • Trash/waste is <u>not visible</u> and/or <u>nearly completely contained</u> in trash bins 6. To what extent have you noticed garbage or waste outside your home ? [closed-ended, forced choice]

<p>development, respondent follow-up, & observation protocol with security staff.</p>	<p><u>Response choices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a <u>substantial amount</u> of trash or waste outside my home—e.g., trash/waste has accumulated or is visible in many areas outside my home • There is <u>some</u> trash or waste outside my home—e.g., there is trash/waste on the ground or visible in several places outside my home. • There is <u>a little</u> trash or waste outside my home— e.g., trash/waste on the ground or visible in 1-2 places outside my home. • There is <u>no</u> trash/waste outside my home. <p>7. Are you aware that Metro has taken steps to address cleanliness around certain transit hubs(for example, installing public restroom facilities at the [Burien/Aurora Village] Transit Center)? [closed-ended]</p> <p><u>Response choices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, I am aware • No, I am not aware <p>8. In your view, have safety incidents at AV / Burien Transit Center changed in the last 2 months? [closed-ended, forced choice]</p> <p><u>Response choices:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety incidents have increased • Safety incidents have decreased • Safety incidents have not changed • Don't know/unsure <p>9. How satisfied are you with how Metro is addressing cleanliness & availability of public restroom at AV and Burien transit centers? [closed-ended, forced choice]</p> <p><u>Response choices:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very satisfied • Somewhat satisfied • Not very satisfied • Not at all satisfied • Don't know/unsure <p>10. Metro values feedback from community members. Do you have observations or comments about conditions at the transit center or additional feedback to offer on how these facilities could be further improved? ? [open-ended]</p>
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Appendix C: Resident Survey Findings

Findings – Aurora Village Transit Center Public Restroom Survey

- There were very few responses – but those that did respond were greatly divided (with some reporting intense and pervasive issues with cleanliness, and others comparatively little).
 - There were only 12 total responses.
 - All responses were in English – one response was attempted in Spanish, but all questions were left blank except for the date (this response was excluded from analysis).
- Only a quarter of participants (3 out of 12) noted the presence of waste or trash outside their homes (and these three noted “little” waste, rather than “substantial” waste) – suggesting that where issues with trash did exist, they seemed largely restricted to the Transit Center itself.
- A majority of participants (7/10 – more than two thirds, and nearly three quarters) were not aware of efforts Metro had undertaken to improve cleanliness or bolster public restroom access at the Aurora Village Transit Center.
- Most respondents were NOT SURE or did not feel confident assessing whether safety incidents at the Transit Center had changed in prevalence following Metro’s interventions.
 - 8 out of 10 – four fifths of respondents overall – indicated that they were not confident expressing an opinion about changes.
 - Among the two that DID express an opinion, responses were evenly divided, with one person reporting an increase in incidents and a second person reporting a decrease.
- Overall satisfaction with safety and cleanliness at the Aurora Village Transit Center is low.
 - 9 out of 11 participants (82 percent) rated themselves as either “somewhat” or “very” concerned about cleanliness at the Transit Center; more than a quarter (3 out of 11) were “very concerned.”
 - 6 out of 10 (60 percent) complained that there was at least “some” waste visible around the Transit Center; 20 percent noted that there was “a substantial amount” of trash or waste.
- When asked about satisfaction with Metro’s response to the issues at the Transit Center, no participants were “very satisfied.”
 - Three were “somewhat satisfied.”
 - Two were dissatisfied (either “not very” or “not at all” satisfied).
 - Five were unsure.
- Some suggestions from the public:
 - “Increase security and law enforcement presence and authority at transit centers and on the buses. A better presence of transit staff and supervision at the transit center and stops. Make public restrooms readily available but put time limits on how long people can be in there and enforce the limits. Have timers on the interior/exterior of restrooms (when the door locks the timer starts). Give community members the ability to see something, say something with notices about it posted in visible areas. Have at least one transit staff posted at the center during operating hours and visible to the public, not hiding somewhere. At the end of every run, ensure the bus empties and enforce trespass laws if refusal to leave.”
 - “[There is] open drug use [at the Center].”

- “One concern is the graffiti on the seemly [sic] used building at the transit center. Additionally, the park at Echo Lake needs to have security monitoring. Many transit folks use that restroom as well and just hang around that area.”

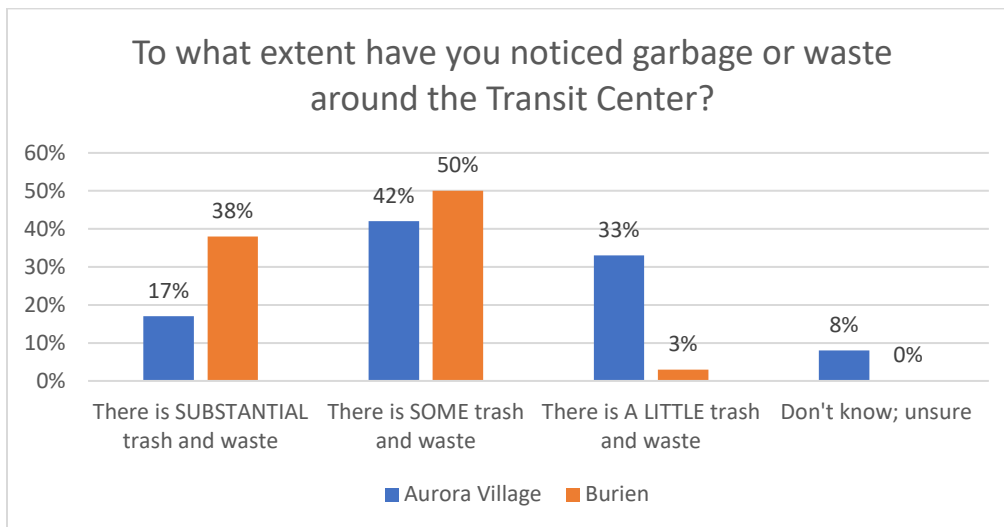
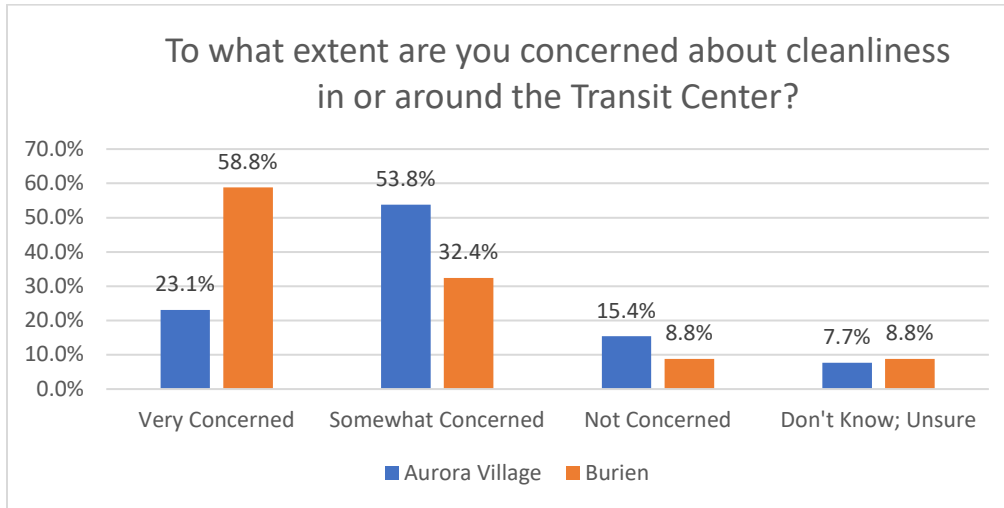
Findings – Burien Transit Center Public Restroom Survey

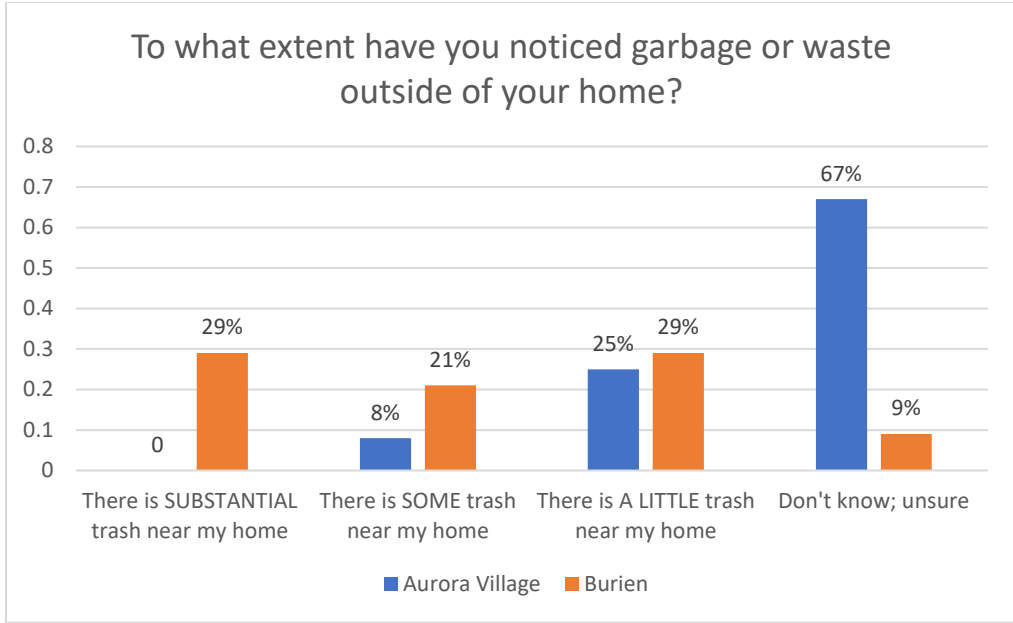
- There were twice as many responses to this survey as to the Aurora Village version (a total of **34** responses). 29 responses were provided in English, and five were provided in Spanish.
- Waste around and apart from the Transit Center is a bigger problem in Burien than at Aurora Village. More than half of participants (19 out of 34 – 55.9 percent) noted the presence of waste or trash outside their homes (and of these, ten (29.4 percent) reported “substantial” waste) – suggesting that issues with trash are not restricted to the Center itself.
- A majority of participants (18/34 – more than half, at 52.9 percent) were not aware of efforts Metro had undertaken to improve cleanliness or bolster public restroom access at the Burien Transit Center.
- Most respondents were NOT SURE or did not feel confident assessing whether safety incidents at the Transit Center had changed in prevalence following Metro’s interventions.
 - 9 out of 34 – about a quarter, at 26.5 percent – indicated that they were unsure or were not confident expressing an opinion about changes.
 - Among those that DID express an opinion, eight respondents felt that safety incidents had remained the same in response to the recent changes (23.5 percent); 13 (at 38.2 percent), a majority, felt that safety incidents at the Center had increased rather than decreasing.
- Overall satisfaction with safety and cleanliness at the Burien Transit Center is very low.
 - 31 out of 34 participants (91.2 percent) rated themselves as either “somewhat” or “very” concerned about cleanliness at the Transit Center; more than half (58.8 percent - - 20 out of 34) were “very concerned.”
 - 30 out of 34 (88.2 percent) complained that there was at least “some” waste visible around the Transit Center; 44.8 percent noted that there was “a substantial amount” of trash or waste.
- When asked about satisfaction with Metro’s response to the issues at the Transit Center, only one participant was “very satisfied.”
 - Five were “somewhat satisfied.”
 - Fourteen (41.1 percent) were dissatisfied (either “not very” or “not at all” satisfied).
 - Eleven (32.4 percent) were unsure.
- Some suggestions from the public:
 - “[Needs more] visible security.”
 - “[I] appreciate the security measures.”
 - “I believe the Transit Center is unsafe and a public health nuisance. There are people with drug addiction and drug dealers who frequent the area and cause problems for the Transit Center and surrounding shopping areas. I don’t feel safe in the area. There is

trash, human waste, foil from drug use, etc. on a daily basis – not only at the Transit Center, but flowing over into the immediate area.”

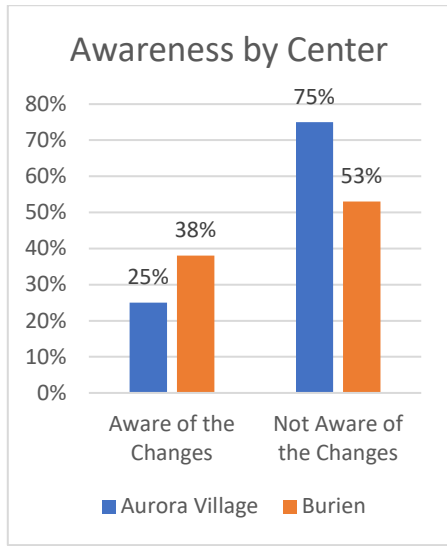
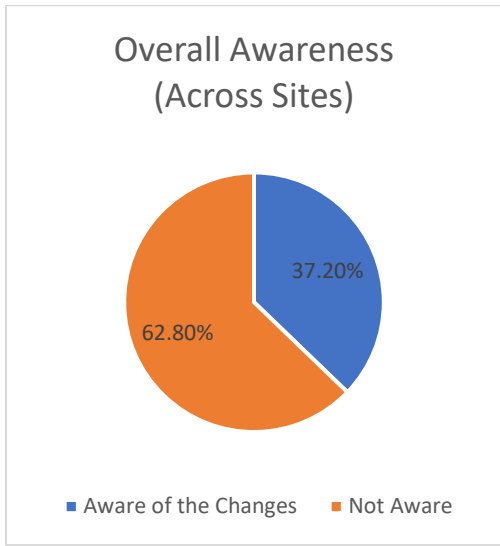
- “There is major drug use, and littering and defecation directly adjacent to the Burien Transit Center all day, every day.”
- “There is ALWAYS broken glass, needles, and trash at the Transit Center, making it impossible for me to take advantage of it. The issue is not maintenance, which only puts a band-aid on the issue, but enforcing the law.”
- “Make open air drug use a FELONY!!”
- “More police presence and no [more] homeless [people].”
- “More covered and wind-sheltered areas. The shelter that is there is fine, but it is so tall that the wind comes in very easily. It would also be nice to have screens showing when the buses will show up next. Also, the bay numbers are very small. It’d be nice if the bays had numbers on them you could see from across the transit center, mounted on top of tall poles.”
- “Too many homeless hanging around and at nearby businesses; feels unsafe.”
- “Very public drug dealing and using, even in the middle of the day. This has decreased a little in the past two months.”
- “Additional cleaners/security/crisis outreach staff/police nearby would be ideal. There is lots of garbage (and rats) near the Transit Center. There is always garbage at and around the curved seating area near the parking lot to the west. Bus stops, like H Line stops, have tons of graffiti and trash too, sometimes including broken glass and drug detritus. It will take lots of intentional work to improve these areas. Thank you for your efforts to keep our public areas clean and safe.”
- “The parking structure at the Burien Transit Center is a ghost town. People are not using that building due to the amount of individuals using drugs openly in and around the Transit Center. I’ve witnessed firsthand hired security sitting inside a private security vehicle, just staring at their phones and doing nothing to prevent what is going on there.”
- “More police controls are necessary. Prosecute criminals. Enforce loitering laws.”
- “Keep homeless people away.”
- “In the past, the areas by the parking lot have needed attention. I’m aware there are sometimes unhoused people using the area and understand the complexities.”
- “I don’t like it that people can openly use illegal drugs in public. Other laws are not allowed to be broken, so I don’t know why public drug use is an exception. I also REALLY want people to pay to ride. Right now, the bus is just enabling people to go downtown and buy drugs. STOP TRANSPORTING PEOPLE WHO DON’T PAY.”
- “[We need] more presence of security.”
- “The homeless population used the benches for their own use; very unsafe for all people to use.”
- “Hay mucha inseguridad cuando llegan los indigentes a los alrededores.” [There is a lot of insecurity when the homeless arrive in the surrounding area.]
- “Todo bien pero tienen q poner mas atencion con los que drogan en el buss.” [It’s all well and good, but you must pay more attention to those who do drugs on the bus.]

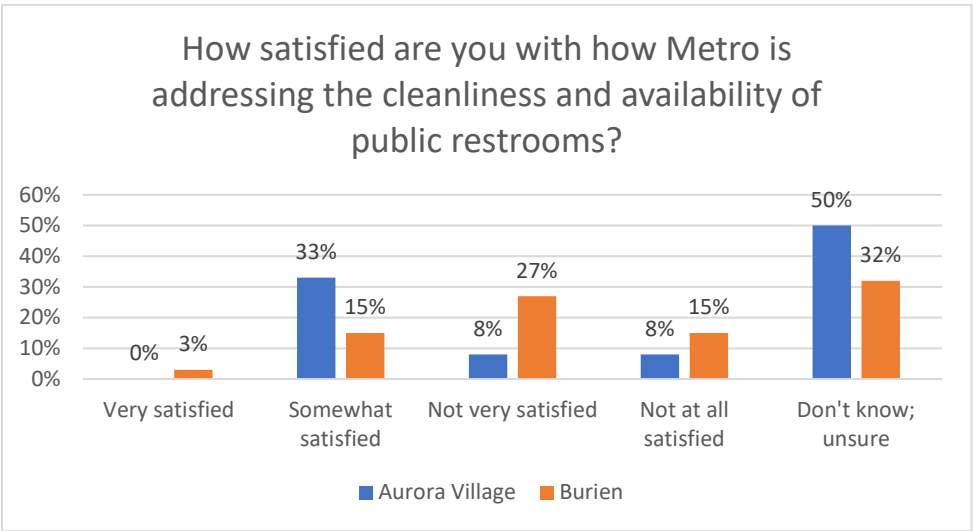
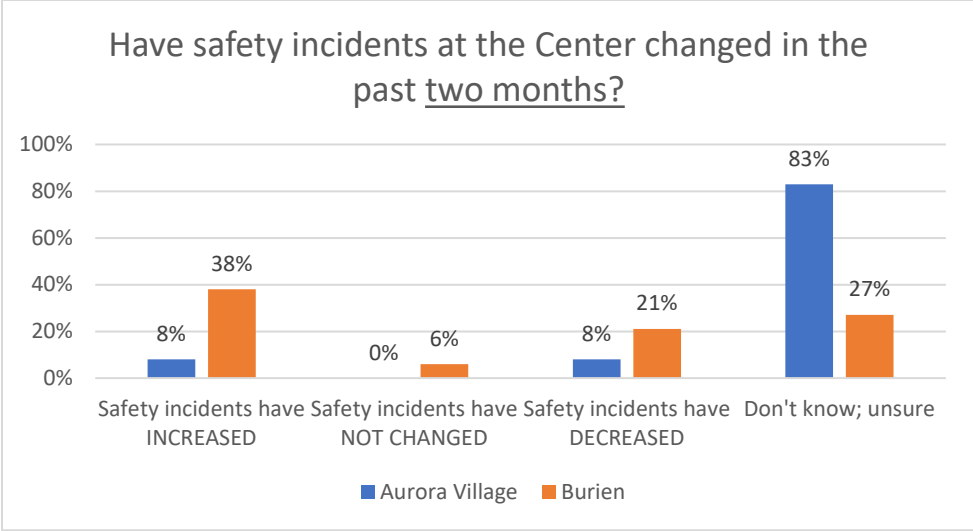
Survey Findings Location Side-by-Side Comparison





Are you aware that Metro has taken steps to address cleanliness around certain transit hubs (for example, installing public restroom facilities)?





Appendix D: List of Transit Centers Meeting King County Code Criteria

<i>KING COUNTY CODE 28.94.100 Public restroom policy for public transit program.</i>	Transit Centers Meeting Criteria	Possible Code Modifications
A. The county will provide public restrooms at transit centers that meet the following criteria.		
1. The transit center has been designed and sited principally to facilitate transfers between different routes.	All	
2. The transit center is to be developed off-street on property that the county either owns or controls through a long-term lease.	Auburn ⁵⁶ , AVTC, Burien, & Redmond	
3. County service through the transit center makes significant use of "timed meet" schedules.	All	
4. The transit center has capacity for eight or more in-service coaches; layover bays or terminal space do not count toward meeting this capacity requirement.	Auburn, AVTC, Burien, & Redmond	
5. There is adequate space on the transit center platform to provide a restroom facility without compromising operating requirements.	None of transit centers identified above	Define adequate per portable & permanent structures
6. A daily platform population of two thousand or more patrons is projected. This includes transfer activity as well as trips originating or terminating at the center.	Burien	Adjust minimum to 10,000 to align with Sound Transit
7. At least twenty-five buses per peak hour pass through the transit center.	Redmond ⁵⁷	
8. Independent of any decision to provide a public restroom, the level of operational activity at the transit center justifies the on-site assignment of a service supervisor for all or a portion of the operating day.	None	Dedicated staffing to manage restroom access

⁵⁶ Public Restroom Exists at Sound Transit Auburn Station. [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵⁷ If comparing to pre-pandemic data of 2019 data, Burien would qualify for both morning and afternoon peak while Aurora meets criteria for volumed during peak morning hours. [\[LINK\]](#)

B. If these criteria are met, the public restroom will be a gender-neutral facility that will be used both by county employees and by the general public. The restroom will only be available to the public for those hours when a department representative is scheduled to be on-site to manage the service. During those hours, public access to the facility will be controlled by this supervisor.

C. If a local jurisdiction or adjacent property owners wish to expand hours of public access to the restroom beyond those available through the department's normal staff assignments, the local jurisdiction or property owner and the county may elect to enter into an agreement to share the additional operating costs for expanded restroom hours; provided, that such agreements shall be approved by the council as required by the King County Charter, ordinance and/or applicable state law.

D. The department shall not provide public restrooms at any of the county's customer facilities that do not meet the criteria above, including the Downtown Seattle Tunnel.

E. The county will not staff its customer facilities simply to maintain or expand hours of access to public restrooms. (Ord. 18670 § 87, 2018; Ord. 11962 § 13, 1995).

None	Adjust so public restrooms are distinct from operator comfort stations
	Given no transit centers are currently staffed, adjust language from <i>may elect</i> to <i>dependent upon</i> cost share agreement with local jurisdiction

Appendix E: Metro Risk Appetite Statement

Metro Risk Appetite Statement

Metro endeavors to provide safe, efficient, and reliable public transportation that people find easy to use. The agency offers a cost-effective mix of products and services, tailored to specific market needs. Metro is continuously assessing new opportunities for innovation in how we deliver on our mission. Effective and balanced risk management increases the probability of successful outcomes while serving Metro's interests in providing safe, efficient, and reliable public transportation to our region.

Metro's risk management framework is comprised of:

- a clearly defined risk appetite statement,
- processes to identify, prioritize, and manage significant risks,
- procedures to report and communicate about risks, and
- an understanding of its governance obligations and inherent risk culture.

A clearly defined risk appetite statement is a critical component of our overall enterprise risk management effort. Metro's leadership will review and update these components as the Enterprise Risk Management program evolves.

This statement guides Metro staff regarding the amounts and types of risk the agency is willing to accept as it pursues opportunities to achieve its mission and objectives. Decision-makers should use this document to inform how they assess and respond to risks. It articulates our willingness to accept risk when making decisions regarding eight key areas of risk, defined below:

Equity – Fair access to opportunities, power, and resources needed to achieve one's full potential.

Sustainability – Actions, policies, practices that create a sustainable environment by environmental stewardship, reducing GHG emissions, preparing for climate impacts and building resilient frontline communities.

Safety and Security – Hazards or actions which may lead to harm to employees or the public.

Strategy – Strategic priorities, planning, leadership, innovation, allocating resources, and responding to changes.

Finance – Use of tax revenues and debt, non-traditional mobility investments, procurement, and outcome-based systems.

Reputation – Public perception and experiences. Confidence, trust, and support for Metro.

Operations – Service, schedule, procedures, systems, business practices, and policies.

Workforce – Recruiting, hiring, succession, employee development, discipline, and labor relations.

Compliance – Action or inaction which may conflict with laws, regulations, financial instruments and audits, agreements, or internal policies.

Metro's appetite for risk varies according to the risks involved in a decision, circumstance, or operation. Our acceptance of risk is subject to understanding the potential risks and benefits. Responsibility for making decisions within this risk appetite lies with department leadership, division directors, and other senior leaders. Assessments of risk and value should evaluate the risks associated with taking specific actions as well as the risks associated with doing nothing. These assessments inform and support decision making. A decision maker may deviate from this risk statement where an assessment of potential risks and benefits calls for such a decision.

Decisions will often involve overlapping areas of risk. In these situations, three areas take priority over the others:

- The need to achieve our equity objectives,

- The need to achieve sustainability objectives, and
- The need to avoid or adequately control safety and security risks.

Metro’s appetite for risk in each key risk area is characterized on the following scale:

Risk Averse	Accepts as little risk as possible. Not willing to accept any negative impact to pursue objectives.
Risk Concerned	Cautious approach to risk taking. Only willing to accept a small negative impact to pursue objectives.
Risk Neutral	Balanced risk approach. Potential negative impacts and objective completion are given equal consideration.
Risk Tolerant	Greater than normal risks are tolerated. Willing to accept some negative impact to pursue objectives.
Risk Seeking	Aggressive risk taking is justified. Willing to accept a significant negative impact to pursue objectives.

Metro’s risk appetite is illustrated in the shaded areas below.

Key Risk Areas	Risk Averse	Risk Concerned	Risk Neutral	Risk Tolerant	Risk Seeking
Equity					
Sustainability					
Safety & Security					
Strategy					
Operations					
Finance					
Workforce					
Compliance					
Reputation					

The following statements describe Metro’s risk appetite in each of the key risk areas in more detail:

Equity

Metro promotes robust community and employee involvement that results in genuinely sharing power with both. We work to advance racial and all forms of social justice throughout Metro and the communities we serve. This requires us to courageously interrupt business as usual which does not promote equity for all. In helping to advance fair access to opportunities, Metro takes an approach that is at a minimum risk tolerant, but which leans toward risk seeking in order to achieve our equity goals.

Sustainability

Climate change is a paramount challenge with fundamental and far-reaching consequences. Metro is committed to advancing equitable climate solutions, creating opportunity for all residents, and protecting the natural environment for everyone who lives here today and for all those who will

follow us. With these factors in mind, Metro takes a risk tolerant or risk seeking approach in pursuit of its objectives related to sustainability, climate change, and environmental stewardship.

Safety and Security

Metro is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our customers and employees. As one of Metro's core values, safety and security are foundational to the success and sustainability of our public transportation system. Metro proactively identifies hazards and vulnerabilities to reduce incidents that have the potential to threaten the safety and security of its employees and its customers. Where decisions, actions, and hazards may lead to harm to employees or customers, resources will be prioritized to mitigate the same. Metro takes a risk averse to risk concerned approach to safety and security related risks, depending on specific circumstances.

Strategy

Public transportation is vitally important to the Puget Sound region, providing connections to jobs, schools, and other destinations. It enables people with limited mobility options to travel, enhances regional economic vitality, and provides an alternative to single-occupant driving helping to address climate change and move toward a more sustainable transportation system. Metro's transportation services, technology, infrastructure, and customers' needs are changing faster than ever. Metro's strategies are pursued with understanding that innovation, and sometimes failure, are necessary components of long-term success. Metro is committed to learning from experienced risks and using those experiences to improve, while ensuring our strategy framework is built on our foundation of safety, sustainability, and equity. Metro takes a risk seeking or risk tolerant approach to strategic risks, depending on specific circumstances.

Finance

Metro has an obligation to exercise sound financial management and build its long-term sustainability while investing its resources in the achievement of the region's mobility goals. Metro's financial resources are provided through the public's trust, and Metro must use those funds productively and effectively to maximize the delivery of services and capital investments contemplated in the METRO CONNECTS long-range vision, including the exploration, integration, and development of innovations in mobility and project delivery. With these factors in mind, Metro's approach to financial risks adjusts between a risk tolerant and risk neutral approach depending on specific circumstances.

Reputation

The trust, confidence, and support of the public we serve are vital to Metro's success. We seek community engagement to ensure customers are informed about our plans and performance and are an integral part of the decision-making process. This is especially important as Metro plans for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Metro strives to sustain a culture of customer service and deliver services that are responsive to community needs. Accordingly, Metro takes a risk concerned or risk neutral approach to reputational risks, adjusting between these approaches depending on specific circumstances.

Operations

Metro's core mission and vision is to provide safe, efficient, and reliable public transportation. Metro's procedures, systems, business practices, and policies must continuously improve to meet our residents' needs in a diverse, complex, and changing environment. Therefore, Metro takes an approach that is at a minimum risk neutral, but which leans to risk tolerant approach to operational risks.

Workforce

Metro works to develop and sustain a vibrant, talented, engaged, and empowered workforce that is accountable at all levels. This workforce reflects the communities we serve, and each individual shares responsibility for the wellbeing of the organization and its employees. In order to develop this workforce, Metro takes an approach which at a minimum is risk tolerant but leans toward risk seeking depending on the circumstances.

Compliance

Metro respects and upholds the statutes, regulations, financial instruments, agreements, and policies which govern our operations. We may develop operations and practices before regulatory frameworks to guide them are available. In areas where strict compliance may conflict with other priorities, Metro will engage the authority involved to satisfy the needs of all parties. Metro generally takes a risk concerned to risk neutral approach to compliance risks.