



King County

Department of Transportation
Metro Transit Division
General Manager's Office
201 S. Jackson Street
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July 27, 2018

Honorable Chair McDermott, members of the Council, and others:

Thank you for considering me for this important position. I want to thank you for the support you all have extended to me during my time as the General Manager of the Transit Division. All of you have been patient, but you also made clear the demands our customers place on the agency. I look forward to working with the Council to assure we always keep our customers' needs at the forefront of our planning and our implementation.

My thanks goes, as well, to Executive Constantine. It is a great honor to lead Metro Transit, but it is an equal honor to be part of the extended leadership team at King County. I am committed to meeting the Executive's expectations and reaching the high standards he has set.

To Department of Transportation Director, Harold Taniguchi: thank you for your leadership. You have always been generous with your time, your encouragement and your thoughtful counsel. I have successfully navigated many narrow and potentially hazardous paths by way of your timely advice. I will continue to rely on your mentoring.

And to the many friends and close colleagues I have around King County and especially within Metro; thank you. The people of the agency have helped me understand where our challenges lie, and what it takes for us to be successful. I am not here today without all of them and the tremendous work they do every day to make Metro a vibrant part of the community.

I want to say just a few words about what being General Manager means to me.

As I stated earlier, it is truly a great honor to lead such a fine transit agency. I hope that these things will continue to guide my path as a leader: (1) hard work, (2) patience to listen first before taking action, (3) remembering always that we are a service organization made strong by nearly 5,000 employees, (4) and that relationships and partnerships do in fact matter.

We are fortunate to have many wayfinding points that guide our efforts and set our direction. Our business plan for the biennium shapes our budget and sets a course for the near term. Our 6-year capital plan provides the early milestones of our

journey, and Metro Connects, the truly visionary document created by contributions from stakeholders, jurisdictions and many dedicated staff, shows us all where we should be heading. And in addition to these core planning documents, we are flanked by the guidance of the County's Strategic Climate Action Plan and Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, as well as Metro's own strategic plan and service guidelines. Altogether, this framework will position us to increase transit service by 70%, removing as many as 300,000 vehicles from the roadway and ensuring that an even greater proportion of low income and minority populations have access to frequent, reliable service.

We are an organization with a clear and compelling vision. Through the leadership of the Executive and the Council, we know where we are headed. My task as a leader, our imperative as an agency, is pragmatic, effective, coordinated execution.

So, from day one, and each day thereafter, our charge is this: (1) keep our system safe, and make it even safer for our employees and customers; (2) deliver great service today while also working relentlessly (3) to improve reliability and extend our capacity for tomorrow; and (4) to make Metro an outstanding place to work.

During my time with King County, I have interacted with many people at all levels – operators and mechanics, service workers and shelter cleaners, electricians and linemen, supervisors and chiefs, planners and managers. They all share a devotion to making Metro a great transit agency. I see my job as helping make that possible. Which is to say, I see my role as leading an organization of dedicated professionals working to provide the best possible service to the public.

We will be dedicated to becoming an industry-leading safety organization so that our customers, in turn, can feel safe, no matter the time or location they choose to access Metro service.

We will improve our on-time performance and the overall reliability of our network. Whether through corridor improvements working with our partners at SDOT, expanding service to new areas working with surrounding jurisdictions, or even more effective integration with our colleagues at Sound Transit; we will optimize our current service while we build the capacity to do even more for the region.

I believe Metro is a great place to work, and now I want to ensure that all of my colleagues feel the same, and that each and every one feels safe and respected. We need to devote more resources to training – for operators and mechanics and for up and coming leaders, supervisors and managers. We have outstanding talent that we should develop and we need to continue to attract the region's best and brightest. More than any other concept, I believe that our path to service excellence lies in the trust we build with our workforce.

And that is the same trust we must build with our customers. I challenge my colleagues to always remember, we serve our neighbors, and our families; we transport our friends and help them get where they need to be. Yes, we provide mobility for the region, but Metro is an essential part of the community that connects people to opportunity, and knits together our growing cities. We help sustain the

connections; people to place, place to people; that make us more than routes and stops on a map. Metro Transit must itself continue to be a community, 5,000 strong, serving the larger community.

Again, my sincere thanks to all of you for considering me for this position. I am both overwhelmed and invigorated by the support I have received. I am confident that our agency – our community of people dedicated to providing outstanding service to customers – is equal to the challenges ahead. I look forward to working with you as a partner and colleague, and serving as your General Manager of Metro Transit.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Gannon", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rob Gannon