

May 24, 2019

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

Dear Councilmember Dembowski:

This letter transmits a status report in response to Motion 15252, which directed the King County Executive, working in coordination with the King County Council, to “initiate a regional planning effort during 2019 to address the implementation of METRO CONNECTS, King County Metro’s long-range transit service and capital plan, as well as the ongoing maintenance needs of King County’s transportation infrastructure.”

As required, the attached status report includes a summary of the regional planning work that is currently underway, including a list of potential funding sources; describes the coordination between this effort and the development of a framework for the equitable implementation of mobility as required by Motion 15253; and discusses the work underway to provide updated information to supplement METRO CONNECTS to adjust for increased population growth, increasing regional congestion, inflation and construction costs, regional mobility needs, and innovations in transportation.

Metro sees mobility as a basic human right that allows communities and individuals to access the opportunities needed to thrive and reach their full potential. We know disparities by race and place still exist in King County and threaten our collective prosperity. We also know climate change threatens our economy, environment, health, and safety. Meanwhile, the transportation industry is changing rapidly, with the emergence of many new mobility options and technologies. As a public agency, it is Metro’s duty to assure mobility reaches everyone in a sustainable, healthy, and equitable manner. To achieve this goal, we must work with regional leaders, stakeholders, and community members to ensure that there is adequate funding to deliver mobility options across the county, as articulated in Metro’s adopted policies and plans, including Metro’s long-range plan, METRO CONNECTS, which was adopted by the Council in January 2017.

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A number of factors have come together to make this year a timely opportunity to review regional mobility needs and potential funding strategies. These include the Council's adoption two years ago of METRO CONNECTS, a vision for Metro Transit's service and capital needs through 2040; Metro's work to develop a framework for the equitable implementation of mobility, as requested by Motion 15253; and the expiration at the end of 2020 of Seattle's voter-approved Proposition 1, which will fund nearly 390,000 annual bus service hours within Seattle by next year.

I have begun meeting with Councilmembers and our colleagues in jurisdictions around the county to explore options to address our region's mobility needs. These conversations will continue over the coming months. They will be enriched by input from community members and transit stakeholders, as well as guidance from an equity cabinet.

To ensure that this planning effort is based on up-to-date information, Metro has engaged a consultant team to prepare updated travel demand modeling and cost information, as well as to assist Metro staff in preparing the mobility framework.

The regional transit planning effort, in coordination with the development of the mobility framework, will advance the Strategic Plan for Equity and Social Justice by leading to recommended changes to Metro's adopted policies that will help Metro better advance equity and racial and social justice through our operations. These efforts will also support goals in the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, METRO CONNECTS, and the Strategic Climate Action Plan.

This report required an estimated 50 staff hours to prepare, costing \$2,500. The estimated printing costs are nominal.

If you have any questions, please contact John Resha, Assistant General Manager for Finance and Administration, at 206-477-0889, or via email at john.resha@kingcounty.gov.

Sincerely,

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers
ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
Rob Gannon, General Manager, Metro Transit Department
John Resha, Assistant General Manager, Finance and Administration, Metro