

Metro Service Recovery Update King County Council Mobility and Environment Committee

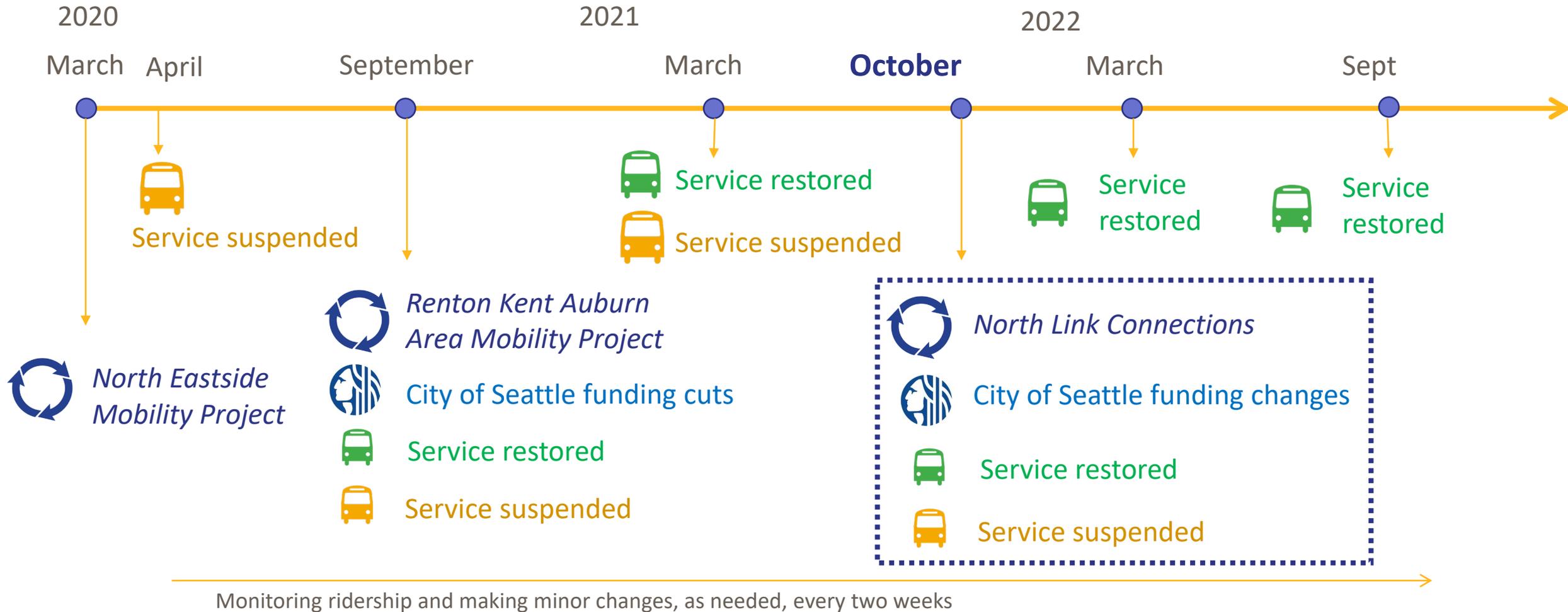
June 2021

Purpose

- Overview of Fall 2021 service changes
- Update on Fall 2021 service restoration plan
- Update on service recovery metrics



Background



What's happening in the Fall 2021 service change?

Service Restoration Planning



Restoring service

- Partial and full restoration of routes



Continued temporary suspensions

- Continued partial and full suspension of routes

North Link Connections



Permanent changes to service

- Changing the structure or pathway of a route
- Creating a new route
- Permanently investing in service
- Permanently deleting service

Seattle Transportation Benefit District funding changes



Permanent changes to service

- Permanently deleting service
- Converting suspensions to reductions
- Investing in service

How did we make decisions?

North Link Connections



- Multi-year engagement process and Mobility Board recommendation
- King County Council ordinance approval

Seattle Transportation
Benefit District



- Some reductions directed by the City of Seattle, in consultation with Metro
- Some reductions determined by Metro to fill gaps caused by reduced STBD funding and preserve all-day, frequent service
- King County Council approval not required

Service Restoration

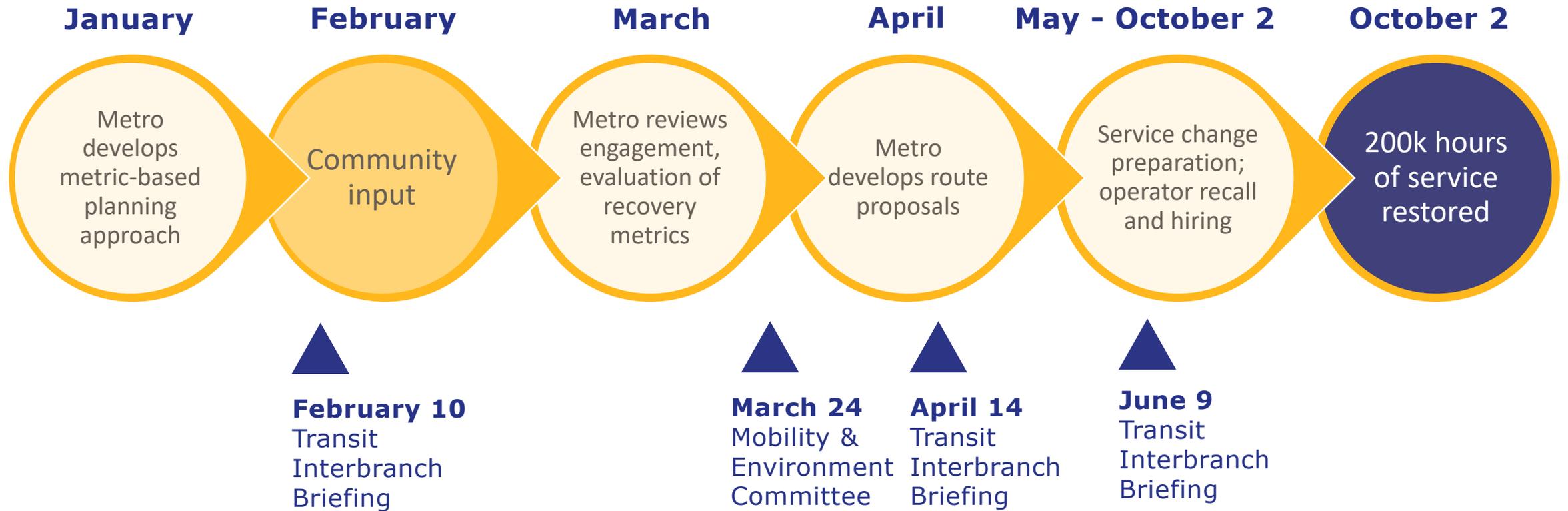


- Monitoring of service recovery metrics
- Feb. – Mar. 2021 engagement phase on needs and priorities
- King County Council approval not required

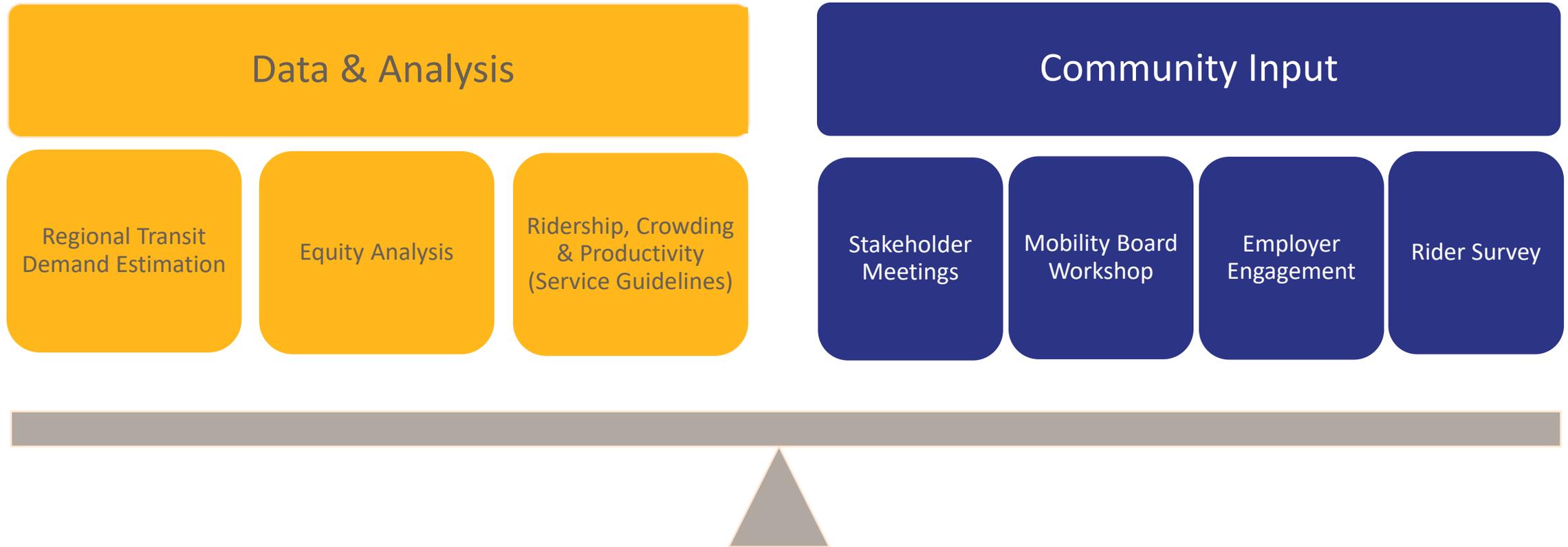
Service Restoration

Fall 2021 – Service Restoration Decision Timeline

2021



What has informed Fall 2021 changes?



Community Engagement



Questions

How should we prioritize service restorations?

How have service suspensions impacted your ability to travel?

Engagement Activities

- Mobility Board workshop
- Partner agency groups
- Community advisory groups
- Direct employer engagement, regional working groups, Challenge Seattle presentation
- Rider survey (February 8 – March 12)
- Outreach through social media, radio, bus stop signs, rider alerts



What we heard...

Equity must be prioritized in proposal development.



Operate enough service for a restoration to be usable.



Routes with no alternatives should be prioritized for restoration.



Address crowding issues first.



Telecommuting has dramatically changed travel and will likely continue. From employers and schools: expect hybrid model.



What's changing...

Restoring some peak-only service in South King County
Equity gaps identified through analysis including a new equity priority job measure
Prioritizing routes that address equity gaps

Restoring \geq 50% or 8 trips on applicable **peak only** routes
Restoring 100% of non-peak service on applicable **all-day** routes

Prioritizing routes with no other options

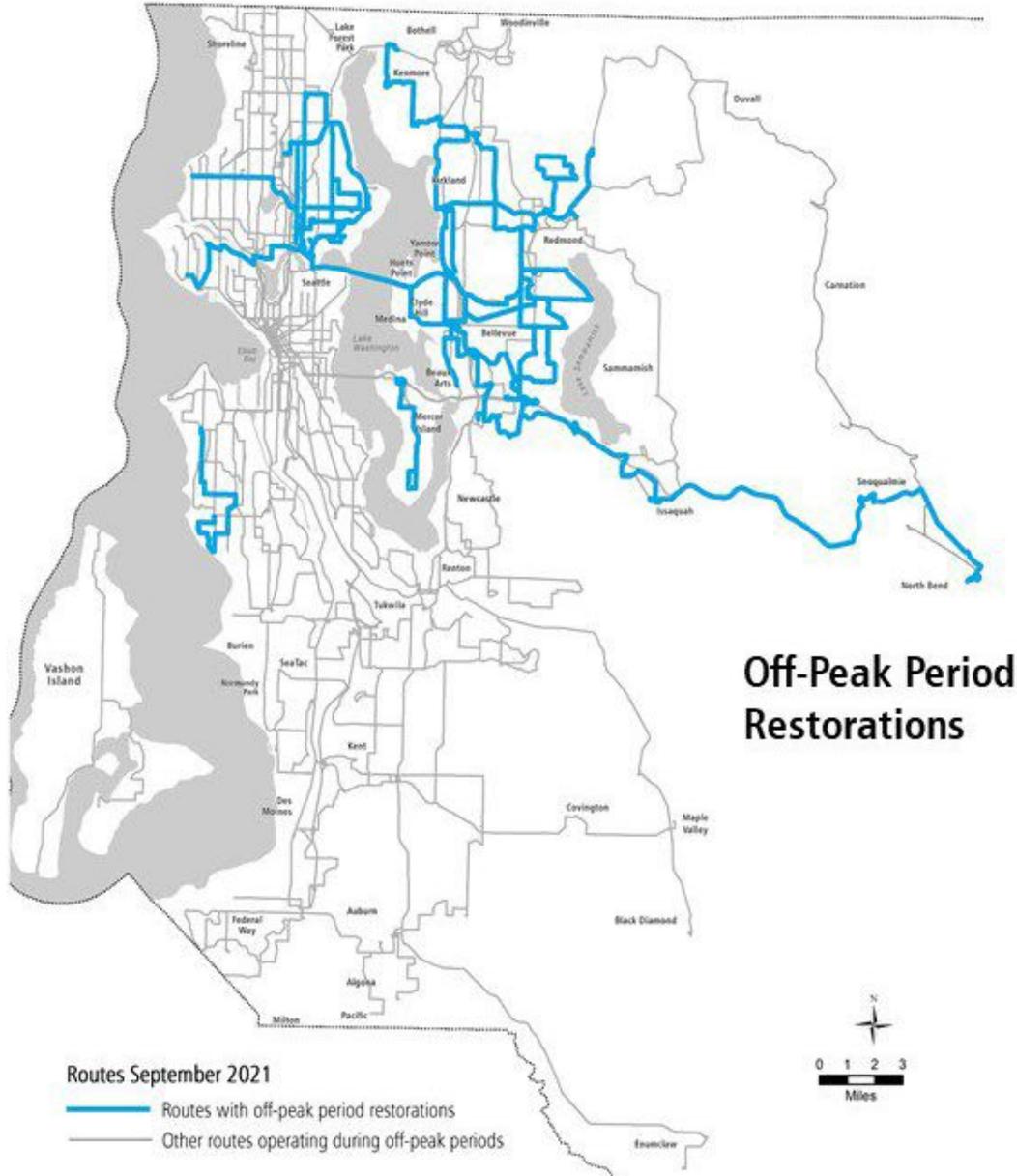
Lifting load limits
Prioritizing higher ridership routes
Providing supplemental service where needed

Prioritizing restoration of all-day service
Partial restoration on higher ridership peak only routes
Monitoring and adjusting

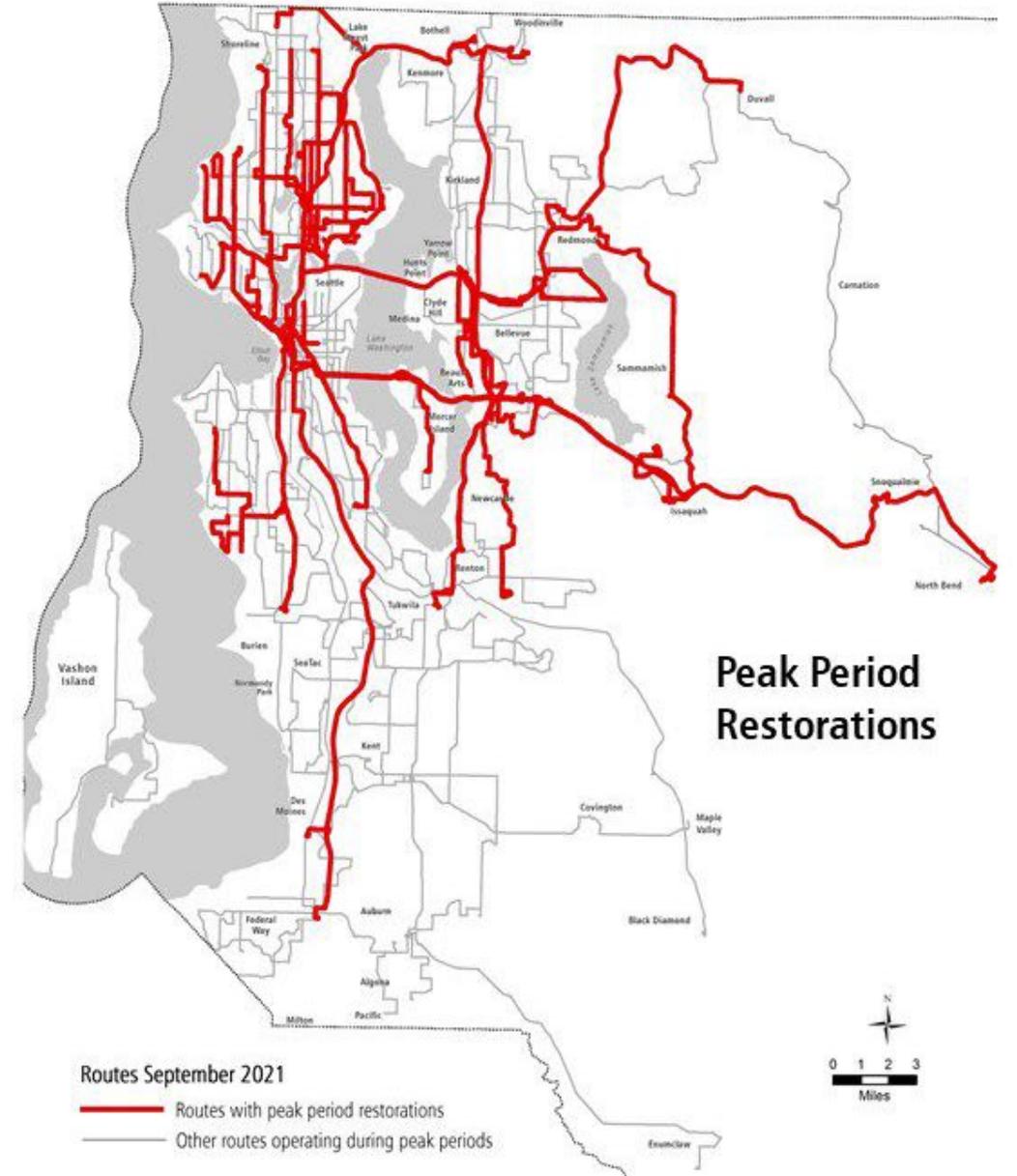
October 2021 restorations

- Metro will restore nearly half of the service hours suspended during the pandemic.
 - Service will be restored on 38 routes, including 21 that are currently suspended in full.
 - Additional service hours will be restored as part of the North Link Connections project

Off-peak Period



Peak Period



How many routes will have continued suspensions?

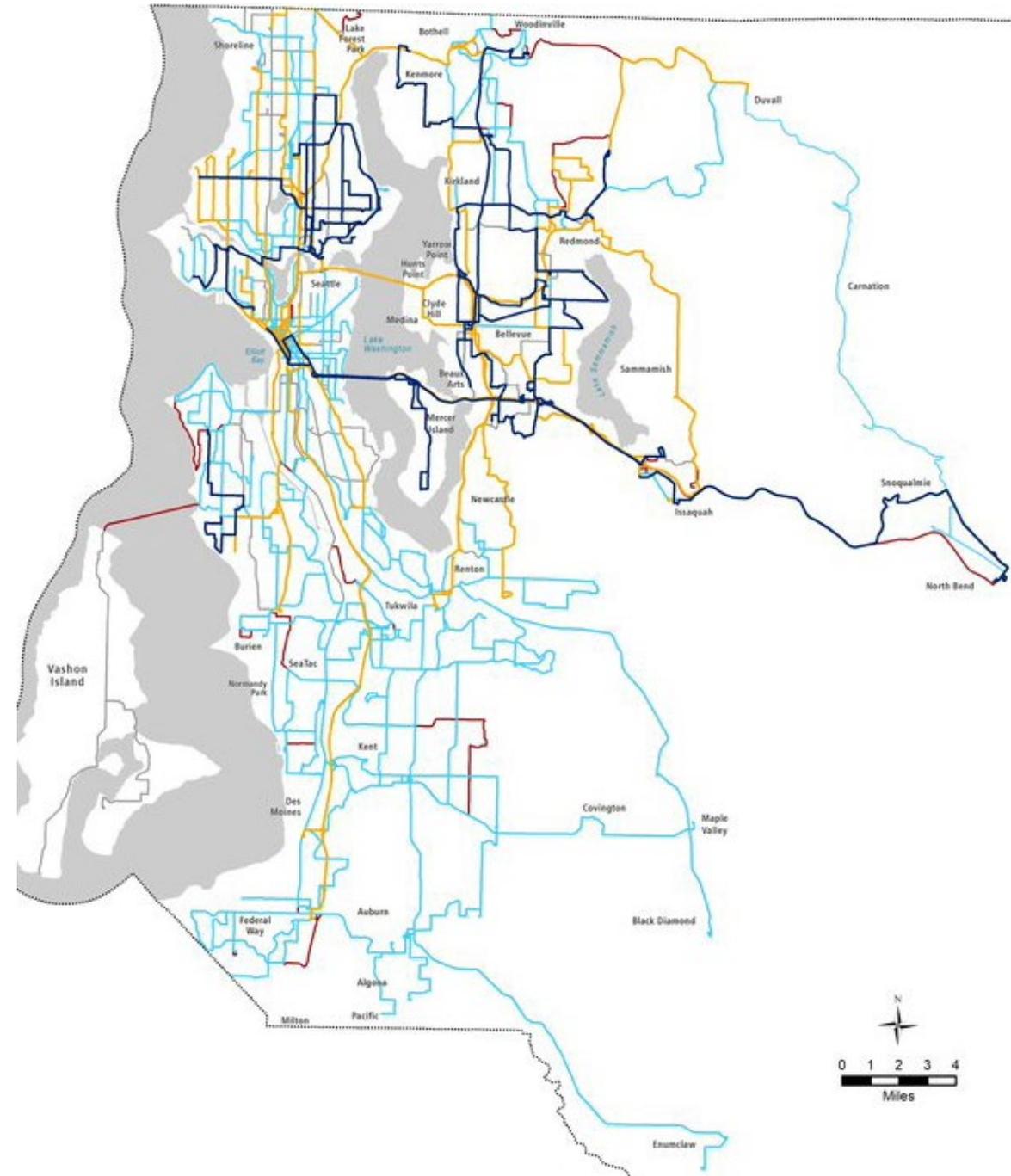
- 19 routes remain fully suspended
- 49 routes have reduced service levels
 - 26 of these routes have some service restored in September

Routes with planned restorations

- Fully restored
- Partially restored

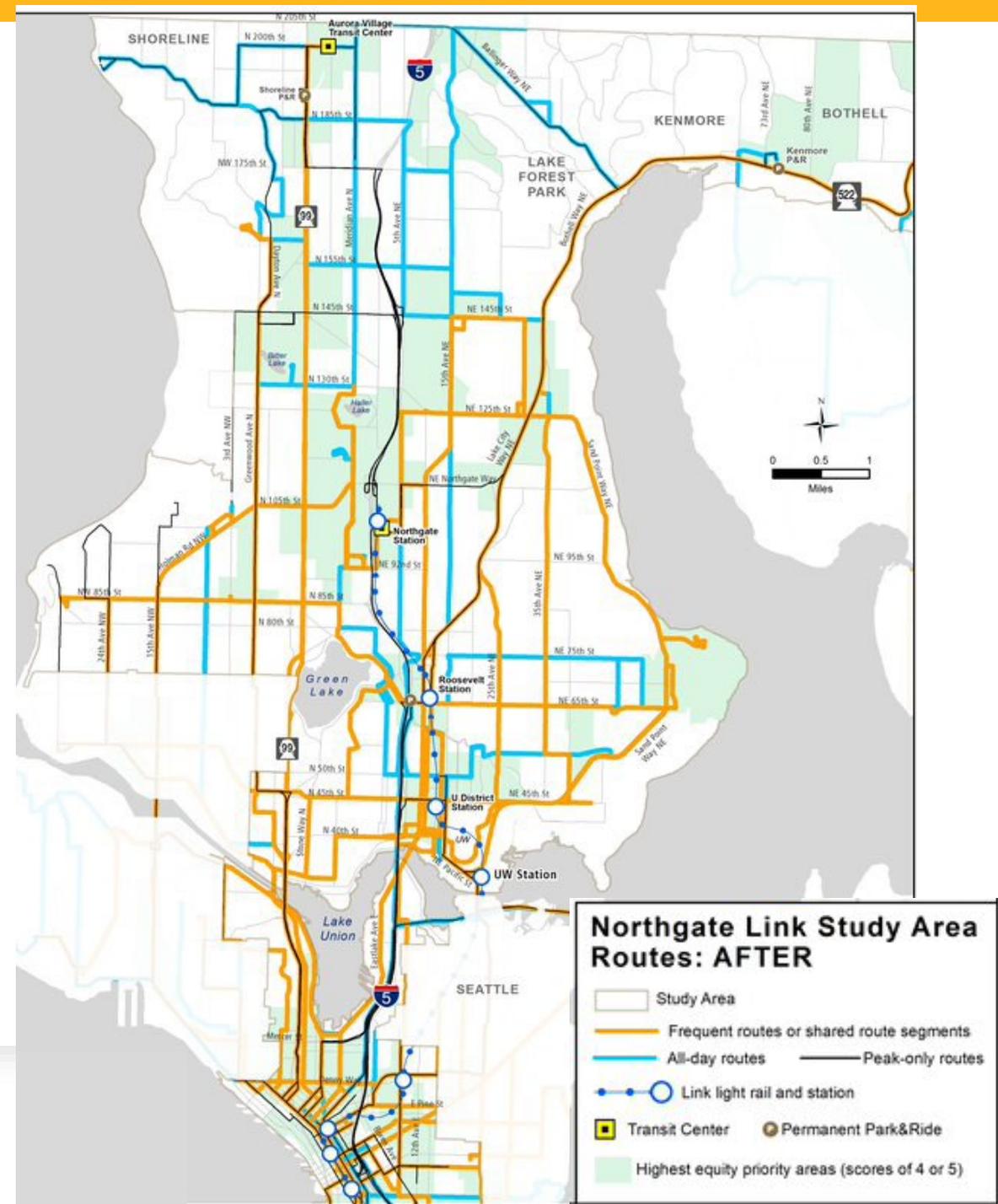
Currently operating routes with no planned restorations

- Will continue operating at full service levels
- Will continue operating at reduced service levels
- Suspended routes where there is no other service



North Link Connections: Restorations & Suspensions

- All-day routes in North Link network will operate with full service
- Peak-only routes will operate with partial service

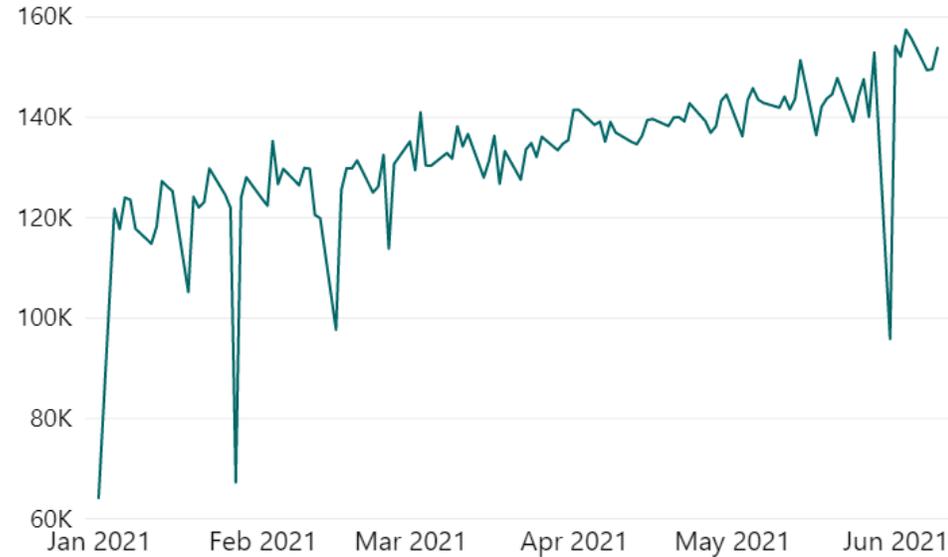


Update on Service Recovery Metrics

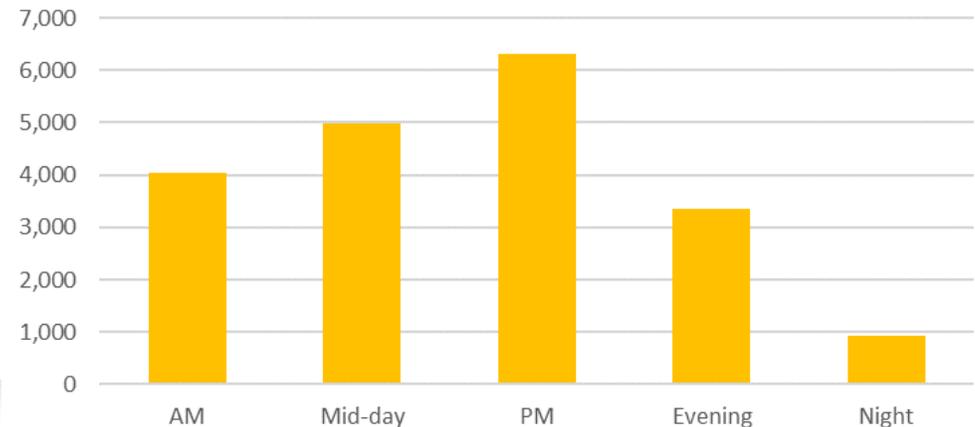
Ridership

- Ridership has steadily increased since the start of 2021
- The increase has been broad-based with no route or set of routes driving the change
- Gains have been throughout the day
 - PM (3-7pm) has increased the most
 - Evening has (7-10pm) increased the fastest

Metro Bus Weekday Boardings

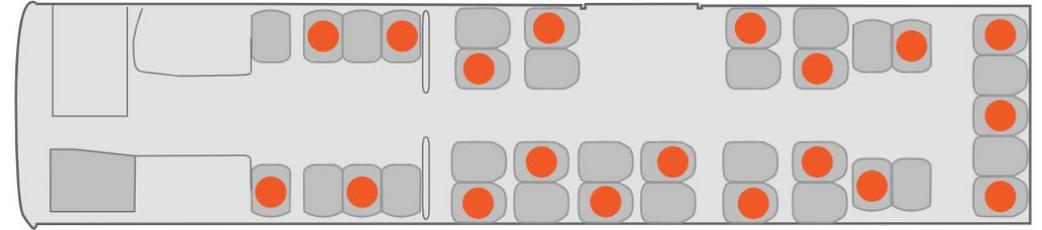


Change in Average Daily Boardings, January-April 2021

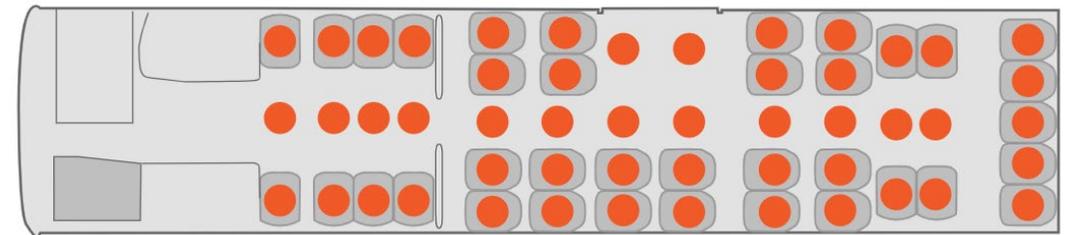


Crowding: Bus capacity changes

- Metro has passenger load limits in place to promote physical distancing.
- Over time and in tandem with King County's progression through the Governor's phases of recovery, Metro has increased the number of people allowed to be safely on board.
 - On April 17, load limits increased to 40% of pre-COVID capacity (50% of seated capacity)
- A return to full capacity operations in the coming months is essential to the success of transit.



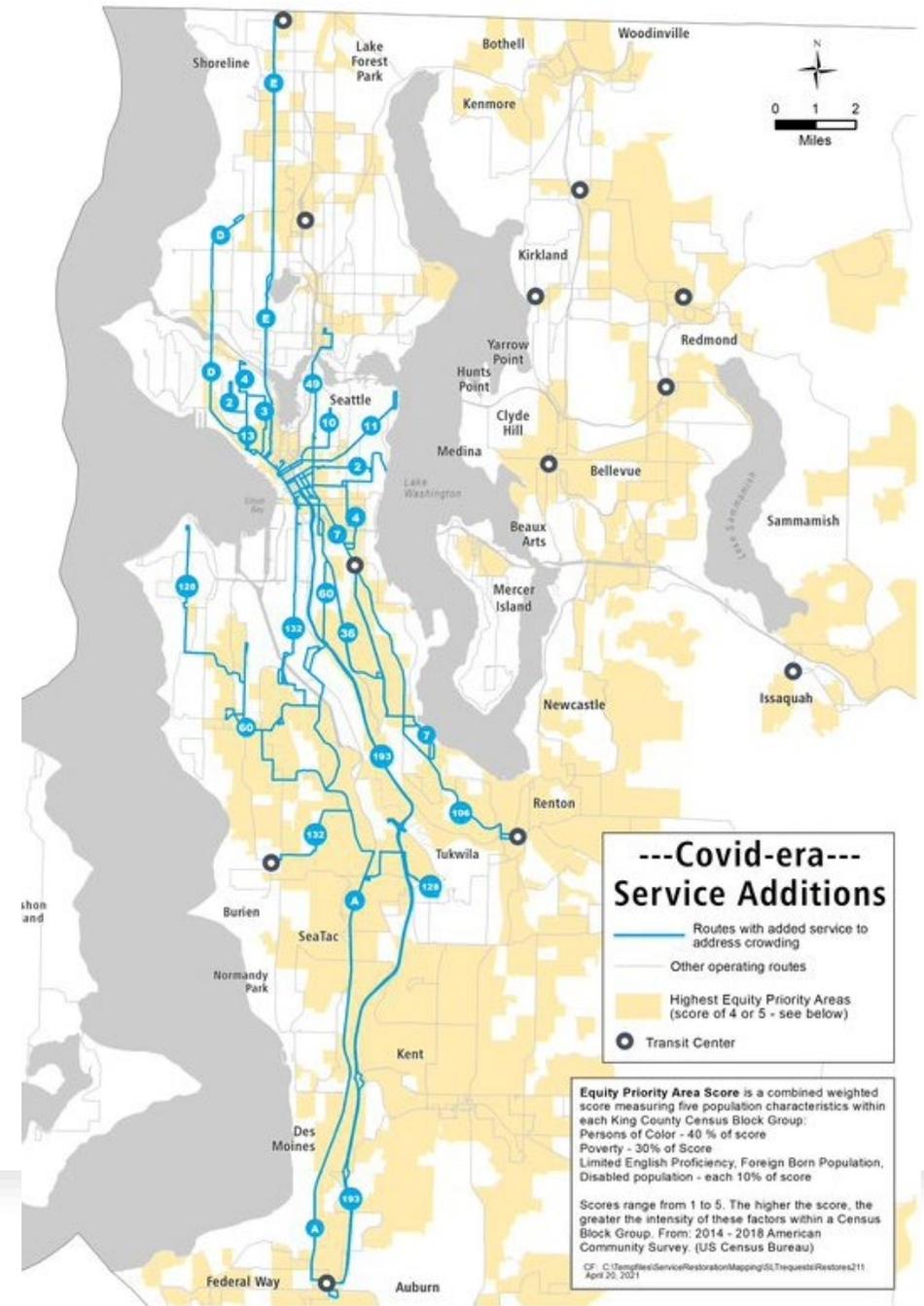
Every other seat filled 40' Bus
19 Riders
39% of Crowding Threshold



Crowding Threshold 40' Bus
51 Riders
100% of Crowding Threshold

Crowding: Busiest routes will continue to have additional service

- Service was added during Covid on the busiest routes
- Adds will be maintained to ensure those routes can accommodate returning riders
- Supplemental service may be added to provide additional capacity

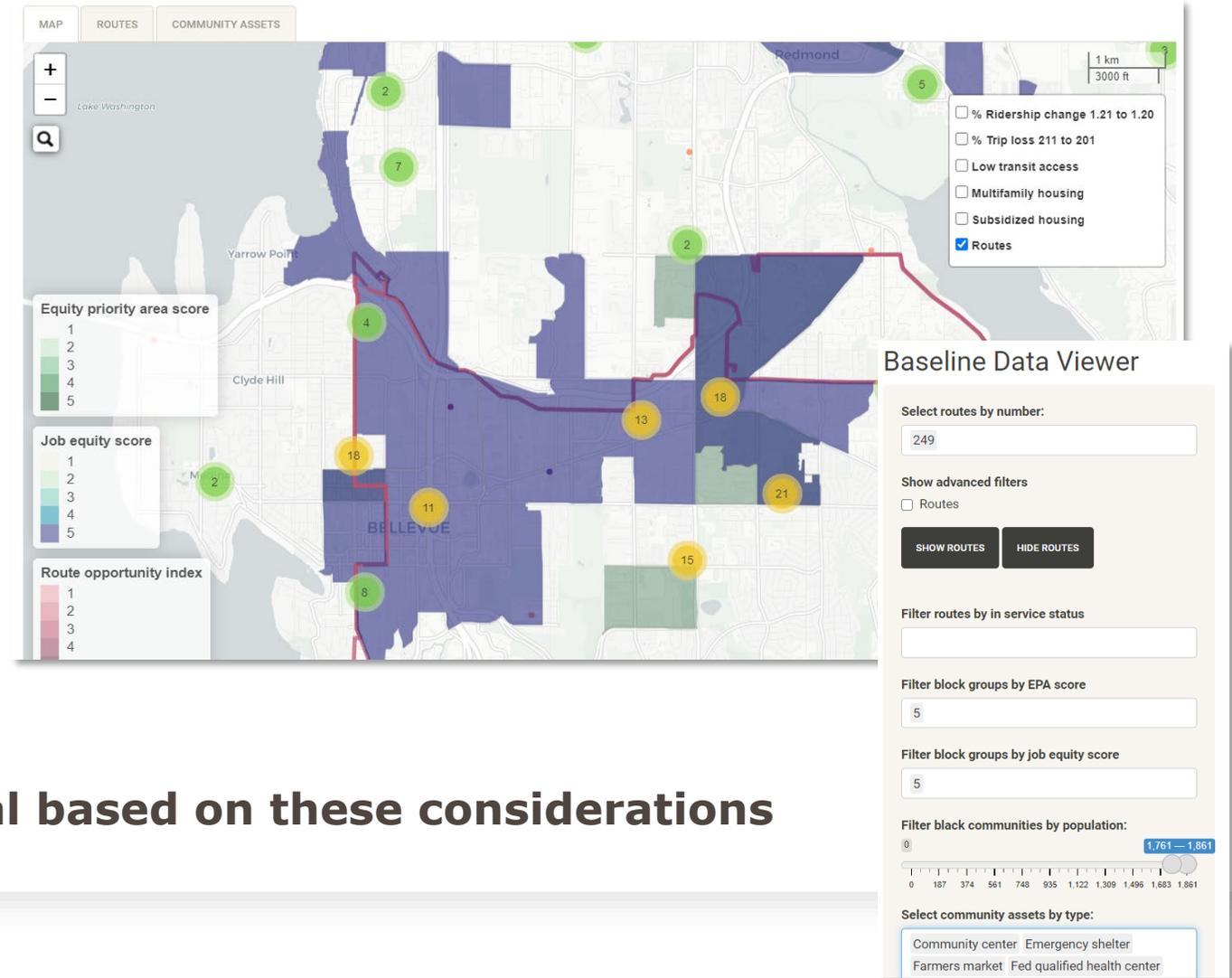


Equity: How are we prioritizing equity?

Analysis to identify equity priority routes for restoration

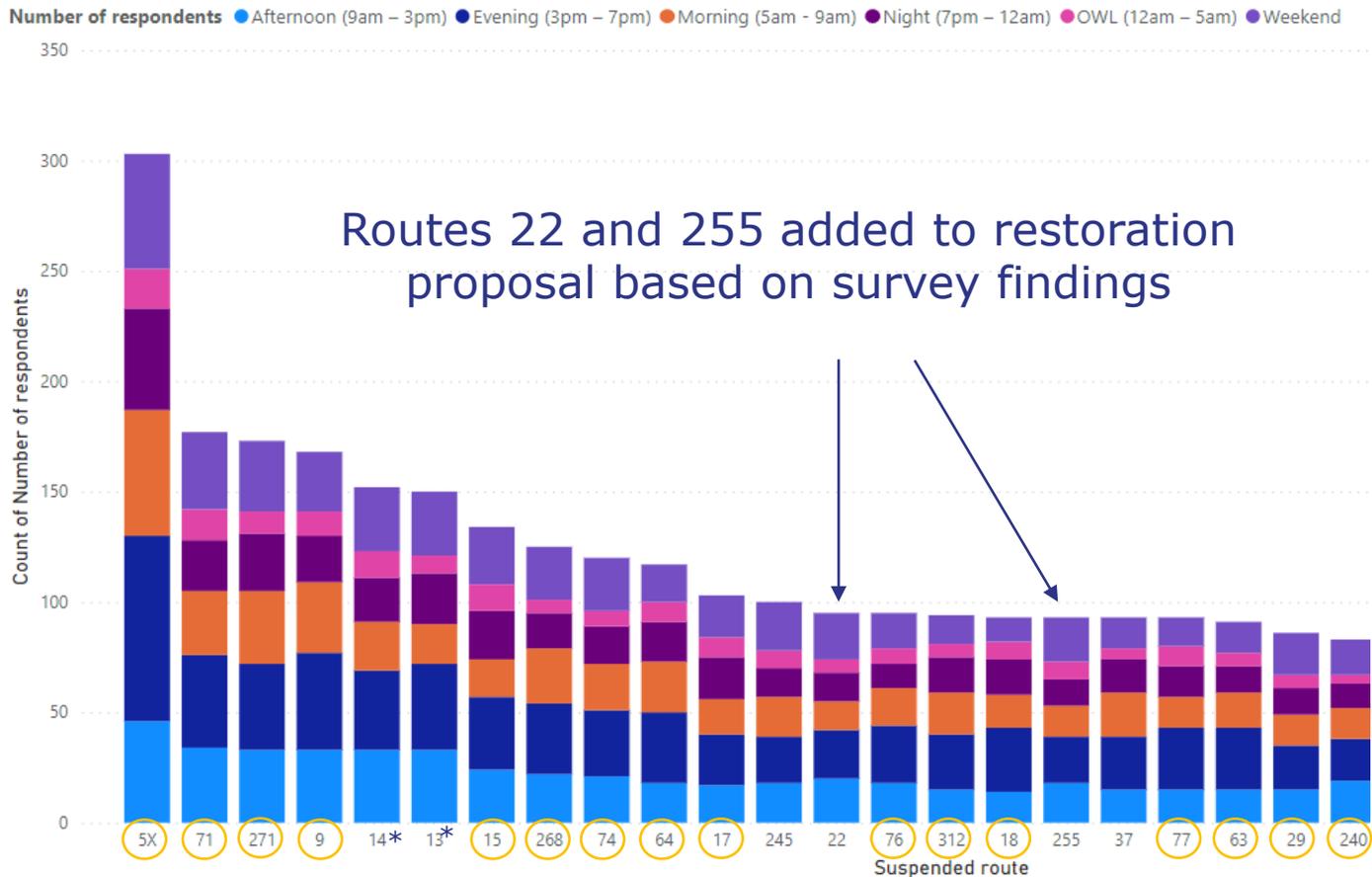
- Routes with high Opportunity Scores
- Routes that restore access to community amenities
- Routes that restore access to equity priority employment areas
- Routes that restore access to equity priority residential areas
- Routes that address gaps identified in survey feedback

7 routes were added to the proposal based on these considerations



Equity: How was survey feedback incorporated into decision-making?

Suspended service identified as a desired restoration by priority populations



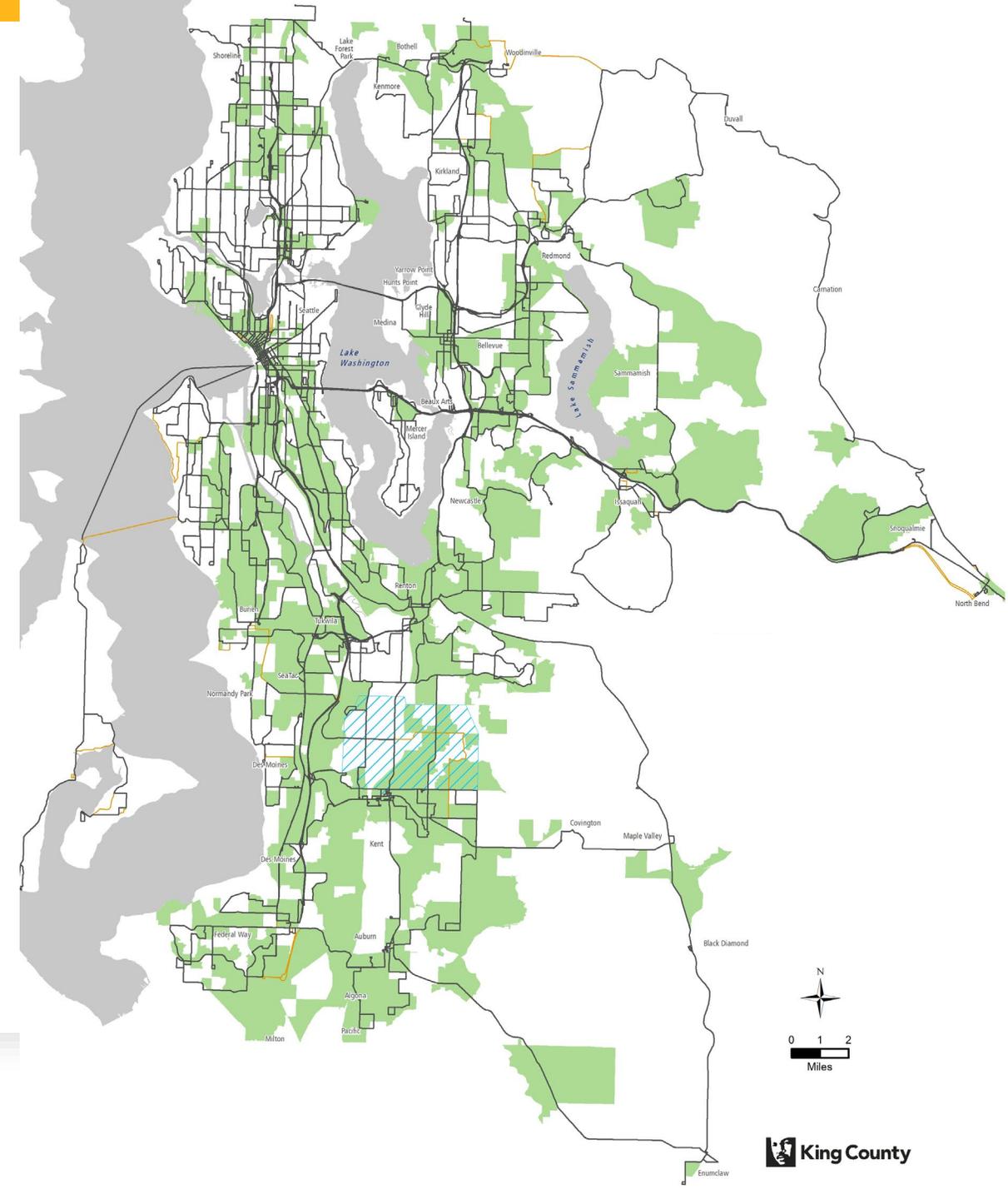
- 1) The top routes prioritized for restoration by people of color below the area median income were identified.
- 2) Many of the priority population routes were already in the preliminary concept.
- 3) If routes were not already in the preliminary concept, they were selectively incorporated.

○ Incorporated into preliminary concept before survey findings

*Routes 13 and 14 have SDOT, not Metro, suspensions – feedback shared with SDOT

Equity & October 2021 Service Network

-  Equity Priority Areas (scores of 4 and 5)
-  Metro routes operating October 2021
-  Suspended Metro routes with no other service - October 2021
-  Kent Industrial Valley Flexible Service Area (new)



Employers: Return to school, return to work planning

- More employers announcing return to work dates for July or September.
- Most large employers still planning for return to on-site work, typically with a gradual increase in occupancy rates in the coming months.
- Majority of Custom Passport employers still planning for a hybrid work environment.
- Among large employers, ridership increased for the first time in March and again in April.
- Area Passport (small business under 500 employees) customers beginning to renew contacts following COVID-era suspension, and some new employers have joined program

Productivity

- Many partially or fully suspended routes have productivity below 25% threshold and are top candidates for reduction based on the Service Guidelines and pre-Covid route performance:
 - 6 of 17 partially suspended all-day routes
 - 5 of 9 fully suspended all-day routes
 - 1 of 4 partially suspended peak-only routes
 - 20 of 41 fully suspended peak-only routes
- Higher productivity routes and time periods prioritized for restoration in October 2021



2020 System Evaluation



Questions?