



## King County

### **Dow Constantine**

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July 23, 2021

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

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits a proposed Ordinance that would, if enacted, approve updated versions of King County Metro Transit's policy documents: Strategic Plan for Public Transportation (2021-2031), the Service Guidelines, and Metro Connects. The enclosed updated documents respond to Motion 15252 calling for updated information to supplement Metro Connects, Motion 15253 calling for Metro to develop a regional mobility framework, and Motion 15618 calling for the process to update the strategic plan, the service guidelines, and Metro Connects. These related policy documents are transmitted to the Council attached to one proposed Ordinance. The enclosed technical reports, Engagement Summary, Summary of Changes, and Equity Impact Review are submitted as supplementary materials.

Approval of this legislation would support Metro's ability to achieve the goals outlined in Metro Connects, Metro's Long Range Plan and implement service and capital projects in alignment with the mission, vision, values, and goals articulated in Metro's Strategic Plan. The documents work together to guide Metro in creating a regional, innovative, and integrated mobility network that is safe, equitable, and sustainable.

The Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines were originally adopted together in 2011 via Ordinance 17143 and updated in 2016 through Ordinance 18301. Metro Connects was adopted in 2017 via Ordinance 18449. Each document contains crucial and interconnected elements of Metro's policy guidance as follows:

- The Strategic Plan describes Metro's high-level mission, vision, goals, and performance measures.
- Metro Connects builds on that vision in a long-range service and capital plan.
- The Service Guidelines describe priorities and considerations for service implementation, in alignment with Metro Connects and the Strategic Plan.

As directed by Motion 15618, Metro worked in coordination with the Council and other key stakeholders to update its adopted policies and associated reporting requirements in 2020 and 2021. The proposed updates incorporate input from the Regional Transit Committee, the King County Council Mobility and Environment Committee, and regional partners such as the Sound Cities Association, transit riders, employers, local communities, and priority populations (as defined by the Mobility Framework), as well as Metro's Transportation Equity Cabinet. The Mobility Framework defines priority populations as: people who are Black, Indigenous, and of color; have low and no-income, are immigrants and refugees, have disabilities, or are linguistically diverse.

As part of its outreach and engagement activities, Metro conducted monthly workshops with stakeholder groups throughout 2020 and 2021, including regional partners and employers. In early-to-mid 2020, Metro sought input from stakeholders on the scope of the potential updates. In mid-to-late 2020, Metro gathered feedback to inform key policy proposals for each document. Finally, in early 2021, Metro presented proposed policy changes to stakeholders to show how feedback was incorporated and confirm that the proposed updates accurately reflect input and are consistent with the Mobility Framework. Metro regularly consulted with other key stakeholders on key aspects of the proposed policy updates including regional employers, community advocacy organizations, and groups like the King County Transit Advisory Commission.

Common themes arose from the stakeholder engagement, including support for the incorporation of the Mobility Framework and an increased emphasis on values like equity and sustainability, specifically how climate change and equity are addressed through Metro business practices, planning, and operations. Metro also heard a need for clarity on how it will work with partners and communities to deliver the vision for regional mobility described in Metro Connects. This input resulted in the following changes across each of the three documents:

- Increased emphasis on advancing equity, confronting climate change, and delivering Metro Connects.
- Incorporation of Mobility Framework guiding principles and recommendations, as appropriate for each policy document.
- Acknowledgement of changes at Metro since the policies' previous adoption (e.g. incorporation of policy guidance for the passenger ferry service that Metro now operates.)

Metro updated each policy document in response to technical work and community input received since the last update. For example, the proposal includes the replacement of the Strategic Plan Progress Report with an interactive, web-based dashboard that will give communities and policymakers more up-to-date data in a more interactive way. Other proposed changes include targeted revisions to the Metro Connects service networks reflecting planning done since 2017. In response to input from elected officials and stakeholders, Metro is also updating policy language to provide more clarity on how it will work with partners and communities to deliver Metro Connects. Several updates specific to the Service Guidelines are included, such as adding clear evaluation metrics for flexible services and describing the conditions in which such a service would transition from pilot to permanent service.

The Honorable Claudia Balducci

July 23, 2021


Page 3

The updated proposed policy documents further the King County Strategic Plan mobility goal to deliver a safe, reliable, and seamless network of transportation options to get people and goods where they need to go, when they need to get there. The proposed updates further the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan's transportation, land use, and equity goals by helping reduce countywide and county operational greenhouse gas emissions and by investing where needs are greatest. The proposed policy updates further the King County Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Strategic Plan goals by promoting policy guidance that incorporates ESJ analysis in decision-making, operations, and service delivery.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance. The proposed updates to Metro's Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, Service Guidelines, and Metro Connects will help King County develop a regional mobility network that contributes to healthy communities, a thriving economy, and a sustainable environment.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Rachel Wilch, Policy and Equity Impact Analyst, Metro Transit Department, at 206-477-5417.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers  
ATTN: Janine Weihe, Interim Chief of Staff, King County Council  
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council  
Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive  
Karan Gill, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive  
Dwight Dively, Performance, Strategy and Budget Director, Office of the Executive  
Terry White, General Manager, Metro Transit Department