



King County Transit Advisory Commission  
February 18, 2020  
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
201 S. Jackson St.  
General Manager's Conference Room

6 p.m.           **Welcome, Consent Agenda, and Announcements** (Peter Rubin)

- Consent agenda
  - Priority Subjects Update
    - Budget/Funding
    - Need + Speed
    - Access Transit
      - Six-month oversight report (due April-July)
  - Upcoming legislation at Council
    - Income-based fares being heard at Mobility & Environment on Wednesday (2/12): 2020-0022
      - Consider TAC action
    - Mobility Framework also being heard at Mobility and Environment on 2/12 (referred to M&E, #2019-0464)
      - TAC's letter of support sent to KCC members on Friday, 2/7. Letter of support was sent in November to Regional Transit Committee previously.
  - Announcements
    - Neighborhood pop-up – replaced ORCA To-Go, provides customer service on ORCA cards; recurring events across King County and you can book it for events or places in your community using the form on the website.

6:10 p.m.       **North Highline Subarea Plan** (Jacqueline Reid, Department of Local Services)

- Land use within North Highline
- Collecting feedback for equity impact review

*[TAC action: provide feedback on recommendations/plan]*



6:40 p.m.      **Tort Claims Process** (Sean Catanese, Office of Risk Management Services)

- Claim form update

*[TAC action: provide feedback on form]*

7:10 p.m.      **Equitable Transit Oriented Communities Policy** (Chris Arkills, Government Relations and Cindy Chen, Community Relations)

- Equitable TOC Policy – draft
- Additional engagement needed

*[TAC action: provide feedback on policy direction]*

7:45 p.m.      **Adjourn** (Peter Rubin)



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**Commission members in attendance:** Pete Rubin (chair), Cheryl Harrison, Bobby Wooten, Jacob Struiksma (vice chair) Lin Robinson, David Johnson, Angela Theriault, Judy Stenberg

**King County staff:** Michelle Huynh (Metro, Community Relations), Cindy Chen (Metro, Community Relations), Jacqueline Reid (Dept. of Local Services), Sean Catanese (Dept. of Risk Management), Chris Arkills (Metro, Government Relations)

**Current TAC chair Pete Rubin opened the meeting.**

The group approved the consent agenda which consisted of meeting minutes from January's meeting.

**Dept. of Local Services – Update on North Highline Subarea Plan**

Jaqueline Reid from the newly formed King County Department of Local Services (DLS) gave a presentation about DLS, the subarea planning process and discussed the North Highline subarea planning process in more detail with the commission.

DLS formed in 2019 to serve unincorporated parts of King County in urban and rural areas. Subarea plans for each community service area (unincorporated areas of King County) are a part of the King County Comprehensive Plan, but focus on a specific area. Through extensive public involvement with the community, DLS helps identify important land use issue, receives public feedback on draft proposals and ensure that the plan reflects the residents' vision for their community. The plans are then submitted to the King County Council for adoption. Snoqualmie Valley will be the next CSA to begin a subarea planning process.

Jacqueline gave an overview of the North Highline Subarea Plan, which will guide development in North Highline over the next 20 years. It will focus on zoning, long-term land use, and issues like housing, commercial and industrial areas, and community character. The subarea planning process will have its first public review draft in March/April of this year, and is expected to be transmitted to King County Council in June.

North Highline is immediately south of the Seattle boundary at Roxbury and is a large 2.7 square mile area with 20,000 people. The commercial area of North Highline is White Center. The median income is not keeping up with the rapidly increasing rate of home prices.

King County's ESJ strategy – required to look at everything through an equity lens. Determinants of equity are the things everyone needs access to to be able to thrive – like transportation



The subarea plan timeline is a one-year process from July 2019 to June 2020 involving extensive outreach to the community, including over 30 meetings with community groups. In phase two, DLS will issue a public review draft of the plan and would then expect to transmit to the King County Council in June. King County Council would then have a year to review the plan and DLS begins the next subarea plan.

Big issues in the community for residents include:

- Lack of sidewalks
- Making White Center more pedestrian friendly
- Need more housing opportunities that are affordable

Proposals include:

- Increasing housing density near transit lines by changing the zoning. This would increase density for duplexes, townhouses, etc. that are zoned closest to transit and commercial areas
- Better streetscape conducive for transit riders
- Changing some zoning from industrial to commercial, with some requirement for affordable units of housing
- Idea is to provide more opportunities for housing that can be more affordable by increasing the options. This is important to the residents. Options provide for aging in place and other benefits, and potentially reduce prices by having more options.

Questions and feedback from the commission members:

- Lin (serves on the Equity Cabinet) noted that the Equity Cabinet would be interested to be engaged on the subarea plans.
- Recommendation to include transit lines in the maps and materials used to talk about land use and density.
- The planning process is designed to take a year in order to ensure that there is plenty of community engagement throughout the process.
- Pete expressed concern for Vashon Island, also an unincorporated area, because the community is reliant on the county for all its services. But it has been difficult to get the attention of the county and the county has not sought community input.
- Glad that the county is looking at underserved areas to find more opportunities for housing. It is important to not destroy the character of a neighborhood, and ask the community what they want; there should also be more transit and pedestrian-friendly roads to reduce fatalities.
- There is not enough density; there should be more density proposed, and all of it should be higher density if you want transit to really be effective.
  - Jacqueline responded that density increases as it gets closer to the core transit/commercial areas. Some community members were concerned about the community's character, and if all of the density is increased, then it would change the character of the neighborhood which is residential.



Public Review draft – next time to come back and capture input.

### King County Office of Risk Management – Claim Form

King County Risk Management’s Sean Catanese gave an overview of the tort claim process for King County. People can file a tort claim when they believe King County is responsible for damage or injury to them. Over half of the claims filed every year involve Metro Transit and the most common example is a vehicle accident. The Risk Management team is working to manage and improve the way that claims are coming into the office. They are engaging with several different county commissions to get feedback on the process and form, in order to ensure that they are considering the barriers for historically underserved populations.

The process was previously based on mail and physical papers.

The modernization of the process includes:

- Email address: [fileclaim@kingcounty.gov](mailto:fileclaim@kingcounty.gov)
- Online portal for submitting claims
- Additional translations of the form in 11 languages
- Simplified the form to have plain language and greater clarity

Questions and feedback from members:

- Plan to extend languages that the form will be available in?
  - o Yes, previously the form was only available in 6 languages; it will be expanded in 5 more languages for a total of 11 languages. The languages were based on the King County Equity and Social Justice Plan, but would be open to expanding as needed.
- One member filled out a form but never got a response from the county.
  - o Sean looked up this member’s claim, but they filed a complaint with Metro Customer Care, rather than the County office of Risk Management; these are different and distinct processes. He explained this is one of the key reasons for the new process to make these different processes work together. They have worked with Metro’s Customer Care team to make sure Metro knows where to direct people to fill out a claim.
- One member requested to test this with a screen reader.
  - o Risk Management is working with KCIT and the user experience team, and is working to make the form easier and more accessible. **Will send the portal to the group to test.**
- RM is measuring retrospectively to see what claims are being paid and not being paid, as well as where the claimants are coming from. This would help RM understand whether there is an equity issue for those who don’t file claims; ideally, we would map it and see it light up randomly. But RM wants to identify whether there are barriers preventing people in certain areas from filing claims. Demographics are not collected on the form.
- RM will be able to correlate claims with any incident reports filed by Metro employees.



- Investigations can include a number of ways to find out all the information available to the investigator, including ORCA card data, camera footage on the bus, talking to the claimant or witnesses.

### **Metro's Equitable Transit-Oriented Communities Policy**

Chris Arkills (Metro Transit, Government relations) gave an overview of Metro's draft transit-oriented communities policy, also commonly known as a transit-oriented development policy. The policy aims to address the need for transit-oriented communities that by design, allows people to drive less and access transit more through mixed uses, building density, urban design, elevating vulnerable users and ensuring that investments provide equitable benefits that serve local, disadvantaged and underrepresented communities.

Metro drafted the policy based on best practices from peer agencies like LA Metro, Sound Transit, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and the Twin Cities Metropolitan Council. Some of the highlights from those processes included:

- LA Metro sets a portfolio goal to use 35% of their property for housing
- Sound Transit embeds Transit-Oriented Development into their process
- BART values financial sustainability of new developments to capture the value of those investments
- Twin Cities advances equity by increasing multimodal access

The policy is a response to the Mobility Framework's Land Use recommendations, some of which specifically ask Metro to develop station areas and ROW guidelines, people friendly street designs, reduce car use and reach climate goals.

The Metro policy will be sent to the King County Council first, but would fit within an upcoming Equitable Transit Oriented Development policy. Metro has long done transit-oriented development, but on a case-by-case basis without a strategic policy. This policy will have clear roles for internal and external audiences, and balance clear policy direction with a balance of specificity and flexibility. This policy is the what, not the how – the specifics of how Metro would implement the policy would come later, after the policy is adopted.

The policy is structured with Metro's two roles in mind, as both a transit provider and a property owner. There are five main goal areas, and several strategies for each goal area.

1. Improve regional mobility
2. Prioritize Affordability
3. Consider Transit-Supportive land Use
4. Advance regional sustainability practices
5. Seek equitable outcomes on Metro-owned property and in communities served by transit

**TAC members did not have much time to comment or discuss the policy and decided to make time at the next TAC meeting on March 17 to discuss the policy in more depth.**



**Members' initial feedback, to be continued in the discussion at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting:**

- Want to see more bus lanes
- Density is missing from this policy. People are moving to low density area because there isn't enough housing (and density) available in places with frequent transit.
- Want to hear more about scaling development and density.
- Want to look at how we put transit at existing properties.
- Policy should still be flexible.
- Density is difficult because the infrastructure of cities like Seattle don't like density.

Metrics were also touched on briefly. There should be measurable goals. There is also an inherent tension between balancing service and housing.

**Questions to discuss at the next meeting:**

- Does this policy go far enough?
- What's missing?
- How should we measure success?

**Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.**