

King County Transit Advisory Commission

October 20, 2020

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Teleconference:

Here is the link to join the meeting via computer: <https://zoom.us/j/99209077607>

Here is dial in information: 1 (253) 215-8782, Meeting ID: 992 0907 7607

6:00 p.m. **Welcome, Consent Agenda, and Announcements**

- Consent agenda
 - Meeting minutes – September 18
 - Priority subjects update
 - Budget/funding
 - Public in invited to provide comment on Wednesday, October 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. (estimated). More info here: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/budget.aspx>.
 - Need + Speed
 - Access Transit
 - Upcoming legislation at Council – No updates
- Chair Report
- Announcements
 - Budget process update. Info above on public comment opportunities.
- Ice breaker

6:30 p.m. **Service Guidelines and Metro Connects 2020 Update**

Presenters: Kim Kinnison, Transportation Planner; Tessa McClellan, Government Relations Administrator; Erik Rundell, Transportation Planner; and, Brian Van Abbema, Transportation Planner

Presentation on updates to Metro's policies.

[TAC action: provide feedback on updates]

7:30 p.m. **TAC Applications**

Presenters: Cindy Chen, Community Engagement Planner and Michelle Huynh, Community Engagement Planner

Summary of applicants and recommendation for new members.

[TAC action: decide to vote on new members and/or request follow up]

8:00 p.m. **Adjourn**



Transit Advisory Commission

Oct. 20, 2020

6-8 p.m.

Zoom

TAC attendees (7): David Johnson, Cheryl Harrison, Aaron Morrow, Jacob Struiksma, Lin Robinson, Bobby Wooten, Angela Theriault

Metro Staff: Michelle Huynh (Community Relations), Cindy Chen (Community Relations), Erik Rundell, Kim Kinnison, Tessa McClellan, Tristan Cook

The chair opened the meeting. Consent agenda approved (September minutes)

2021-2022 Budget Update:

DeAnna Martin, Partnerships and Engagement Manager, gave an update on the 2021-2022 proposed budget, which the Executive submitted to the County Council in late September. The Council is having several roundtables, including a roundtable on Oct. 21 about transit and mobility.

Several highlights and key decisions in the budget include:

- Continuing to work on electrification of buses
- RapidRide program is moving forward with fewer lines; the I-Line (Renton to Auburn), H-line (West Seattle) and G-line (Madison) will proceed.
- As we restore service, our budget is looking to use our guiding policies like ridership, crowding and learning that people who are using the service are using it now with the reduced levels and where we see continued ridership on all-day routes.
- Began implementation of the very low-income program subsidized annual pass. Starting to get access to an annual pass. Faced with challenges to the budget, Metro is not backing out on this work.
- Reimagining safety and fare enforcement

Questions and comments from TAC:

- Q: How does the I-976 initiative Supreme Court ruling affect the budget?
 - The Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD) gets its funding from car tabs and will be affected. Metro receives money through state grants (access to transit, capital work) and those will remain, but the state will make decisions about funding.
- Comment: Metro should look for other sources of funding. Metro should be more aggressive with larger employers to subsidize transit service in the community. Large employers don't make it easy for employees to use Metro. Metro should also work towards free transportation for everyone.



- A: 25% revenue comes from fares, and 60% is from employer accounts who buy ORCA. Metro's continuing to work with employers. Transit advocacy groups are looking at different funding sources, including some at the state level. We're also waiting for additional federal stimulus funding will come through.
- With council not asked to approve service changes, how are the changes being considered for public accountability?
 - Council will still decide on permanent restructure changes (such as East Link and North Link which both have multi-year engagement processes). We'll continue to learn about COVID's impact on the system and the next two years will primarily be short-term changes at the service change twice a year to add/reduce service via our existing policies. This includes addressing crowding and prioritizing communities that have need rather than a peak route that serves an employer that is telecommuting.

TAC members and members of the public are invited to provide comment on Wednesday, October 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. More info here: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/budget.aspx>

Service Guidelines and Metro Connects 2020 Update

Presenters: Kim Kinnison, Transportation Planner; Tessa McClellan, Government Relations Administrator; Erik Rundell, Transportation Planner; Tristan Cook, Community Engagement Planner

Kim Kinnison (Transportation Planner) gave an overview of the Service Guidelines priorities, specifically discussing priority 3 which is target service growth. The current process for identifying target service growth needs includes how we use analysis target service growth needs and use analysis to prioritize needs into potential service investments. The proposed changes identified would update the existing service guidelines to include an equity score with more factors. In November, we'll bring maps showing prioritized investment scenarios. What other types of information do you want to support the discussion of weighting and prioritization?

Questions and comments from TAC:

Q: Why is equity listed last (slide 4) on the criteria? Wouldn't that benefit people with more wealth?

- Geographic value would be classified first based on previous iteration/development. That's one of the things we're looking to change.

Q: Does productivity mean fare recovery?

- Productivity means boardings per hour.
- Priority 3 are the productivity measures (specifically the number of households, jobs, park and rides, etc.) to look at potential productivity for the route. These are assigned a score to help us decide where to invest.

Q: Maps are not accessible for those of us who are visually impaired, so we will need a document that is written out to explain all of this. Even when we had meetings in person, there weren't raised lines or other markings. Transportation doesn't provide maps in accessible formats.

- We'll work with the team to make sure our maps are accessible for the November meeting.



Q: There needs to be a balanced formula. Geographic distribution and performance and optimal performance are important. The populations who pay for what we offer must get service. You'll have to manage performance and geography not just equity.

- We will continue involving geography and performance.

Q: How is demand response transportation, specifically Access Paratransit, going to be folded into this methodology and discussion? For many people, this is their only way of traveling. Access Paratransit should be part of the conversation in these long-range plans too because it's an essential service.

- These changes in the SG are for fixed route. Access is really important and will be described in the long-term update for Metro Connects. This methodology is focused on a different type of service than Access.

Q: It's important that Access riders also take fixed route. People should be able to take whatever type of transit they need. That's another reason to say it's all connected. There are many BIPOC people with disabilities.

- The way we define equity does include disability, which expands our consideration of equity and allows us to prioritize the gaps that exist for people with disabilities. The goal of better serving people with disabilities is reflected in these changes.

Q: What does BIPOC stand for?

- Black, indigenous, people of color.

Metro Connects Update

Erik Rundell gave an overview of the process used to update the Metro Connects 2025 and 2040 network which includes three main changes to the existing plan. The first is to the implementation timeline (2025 to "Interim" and 2040 to 2050). This is to link it to key milestones like light rail expansion and any updates to the network from our restructures due to Link expansion. Other changes are to identify the equity gaps in the network and evaluate the RapidRide network.

The Equity Gap Analysis will evaluate the network with added equity factors including race, income, language, immigrant/refugee and disability status. It will use an updated accessibility analysis based on the Mobility Framework.

Q: What about transit service late at night and in the early morning?

- Both times and mid-day service are being considered.

Q: How are you factoring in employment changes and planned growth in central areas? For example, several major employers are expanding in Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond.

- This is being factored in, but it's hard to know what changes will be long-term. The Metro Connects network sets the broad vision for what service and frequency will be, but service guidelines control the interim changes.

Q: What about areas with no sidewalks or safe way to walk to get to transit?

- One of the barriers in the equity gaps is lack of connectivity to the service network and sidewalks. This wouldn't be something we can address through Metro Connects but we would



look to policies and approaches to partnering with cities to get additional funding for sidewalk and shelter improvements in coordination with service additions.

Q: 2050 is very far away. What kind of flexibility is built into the planning in case of a major change (like an economic recession, large employer relocates, etc.) in the region? Even within just 5 to 10 years there can be really big changes.

- Metro Connects is our vision for the type of service and locations we want but it has already been five years since our initial version. We'll continue to update it every five years or so and recalibrate.

Comment: Within the city, there are still lots of unserved areas with limited service. We've talked about equity, disability status and income, but I am thinking about seniors who are aging and those who can't walk a quarter mile.

Q: I'm concerned about sprawl. Some of the priority populations in far East King County. For environmental reasons, don't we want to encourage more density and less sprawl? But if we are trying to help priority areas, how do we balance climate considerations with transit when you may not be encouraging sprawl by trying to serve where needs are greatest?

- Increasing housing costs are pushing people out of Seattle and Bellevue. Unfortunately, those areas have lower land use density and sparser transit network. People are being displaced and we are clarifying the types of land use that best support transit service and want to encourage cities on the best type of land use.

Q: When will the Madison RapidRide G Line be complete?

- The Madison G line is one of the three that's planned and is funded through the city of Seattle and the Federal Transportation Administration. They should begin service in 2024. That's planned.

Q: Excited that the Madison line because I frequent that route. When we talk about medical facilities, encourage you to think about making the reader boards and audio buttons more accessible for deafblind individuals.

- The box doesn't tell you anything except the route and schedule but the audio button should tell you more information. The RapidRide team has a kit of parts and would probably want to test it out with you.

Q: The spectrum of people with disabilities is varied. Some people who are blind can rely on auditory cues, but deafblind individuals don't always have auditory or visual cues.

- Will follow up. Michelle will follow up w/ RR team kit of parts.

Q: I'd like to see you all think about more right-of-way and potential to see what you can do in a corridor. What you see in terms of right-of-way in some corridors is not sufficient.

- Considering this and looking at the compatibility of the corridor/roadway.

Q: People are getting pushed out farther and farther due to gentrification. How can the network adjust quickly to priority population displacement?

- This is where the Metro Connects links up with Service Guidelines. Metro Connects sets our targeted service levels, but we review them annually and will use the Service Guidelines to set them beyond the Metro Connects level to account for what is happening now. The biggest factor is funding.



Cindy and Michelle gave a quick update about TAC applications.

One TAC member noted they were excited and reinvigorated to review the applications and see what passion people have for transit.

TAC members agreed to write a letter to the King County Council about the budget. The group reconvened on Monday, Oct. 26 to send a letter to Council on Oct. 27 before their budget hearing on Oct. 28.