

Investing Where Needs Are Greatest

Metro is committed to work with community members, elected officials, and partners through our Mobility Framework to:



1. Determine where needs are greatest

Priority populations—which include Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, people with low incomes, limited- or non-English speaking communities, and immigrants and refugees—face historic and ongoing disadvantages due to systemic issues built around power and decision-making. Mobility options—and the opportunities they confer—are not equitably spread.

Metro's priorities here and within the [Service Guidelines](#) include addressing equity, productivity, and geographic value.



2. Identify obstacles

The root causes and the specific problems faced by specific groups will be ascertained and explored. These challenges will likely be cyclical in nature—with the effect reinforcing the cause. (Conversely, “Investing Where Needs Are Greatest” seek to invest upstream to operate at a structural and systems level, ultimately preventing crises and problems from occurring.)



3. Define goals, update approaches, and develop solutions

To achieve positive mobility and quality of life outcomes, we will define measurable, time-specific targets. The changes necessary to reach those objectives will be included in Metro's guiding policies, such as our Service Guidelines and Metro Connects. In turn, these policies—still in tandem with community members, elected officials, and partners—will guide solutions that bring mobility to where needs are greatest in the ways that are the most impactful.

The needs of priority populations are not homogenous—even within groups, and nor will the approaches and solutions required. Also, the goals, approaches, and solutions may be inclusive of the shifting realities between the COVID-19 response, the recovery, and a future state.



4. Deliver service

Metro's resulting service will likely feature changes, improvements, and innovations to its traditional service (e.g., bus, Link light rail, streetcar, water taxi), its first- and last-mile solutions (Crossroads Connect, Vanpool, Via to Transit, etc.), and its innovative programs (Access paratransit).



5. Track outcomes and refine as needed

Data—and ongoing continued engagement with communities, elected officials, and partners—will allow for measuring progress, fine tuning or adapting as needed, and regularly reexamining each step of this approach.

Why must this be intentional?

The historic, systemic, and cyclical inequities facing priority populations have resulted in their underrepresentation in past and existing decision-making processes. Progress can only be made by instead working directly with priority populations through a “Investing Where Needs Are Greatest” approach.

Why can't this wait?

While our region also faces budgetary shortfalls, an economic recession, and a pandemic, priority populations are disproportionately affected by all three—as well as by a national reckoning on racial injustice. There has never been a more urgent time—both immediately and longer term—to lead with equity.

How is Metro ensuring it is best positioned to advance this work?

Metro is guided by King County's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, we follow the guidance of our Equity Cabinet and Mobility Framework to prioritize service to areas of highest need, and we are dedicated to dismantling racism. Internally, Metro is investing in our employees to create a strong, racially-diverse workforce and workplace at all levels.

The Service Guidelines are subject to approval by the Regional Transit Committee and the King County Council.



Moving forward together