

**King County Metro** Mobility Framework

**Recommendations Summary**

October 2019



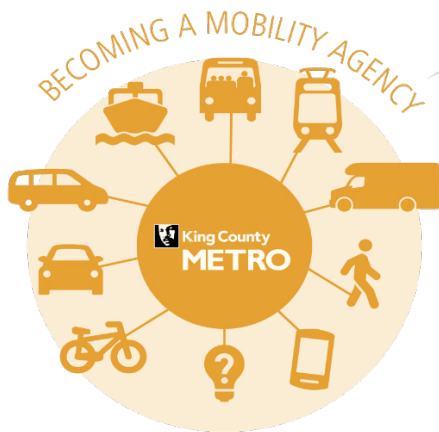
King County  
**METRO**

*Moving forward together*



# King County Metro Mobility Framework Recommendations Summary

## Introduction



King County Metro’s Mobility Framework envisions a regional network of traditional and new transportation services that gets people where they want to go, when they want to get there, while contributing to healthy communities, a thriving economy, and a sustainable environment.

The Mobility Framework was community-led and co-created with the **King County Metro Mobility Equity Cabinet**, a group of 23 community leaders representing riders countywide, including but not limited to low-income people, black, indigenous, and people of color, immigrants and refugees, limited-English speaking communities, and people with disabilities.

The Mobility Framework responds to Motion 15253, which asked Metro to develop a regional mobility framework to ensure that innovations in mobility put people first, use public space equitably and efficiently, and are coordinated with transit policies and regional funding strategies. It also responds to Motion 15252, which asked Metro to provide updated information to supplement METRO CONNECTS, Metro’s adopted long-range plan, and to work with regional leaders and community members to develop a plan to implement METRO CONNECTS.

The Framework also responds to several other significant changes in our region that have implications for Metro’s service to the people of King County:

- **The county’s growing and diversifying population**, and the persistent inequities that exist despite our region’s economic success, which requires a renewed focus on the unmet mobility needs of black, indigenous, and people of color, low-income people, immigrants and refugees, limited-English speaking communities, and people with disabilities;
- **Increasing housing prices and the associated transportation challenges that result from displacement**, when households must move farther from work, school, and other destinations, to places that are often less dense and therefore less well-served by transit;
- **The worsening climate crisis** and the need to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from car travel, promote climate resiliency, and improve health outcomes; and

- **The need to integrate traditional, fixed-route transit with rapidly evolving new mobility services** to help people move quickly and seamlessly throughout the region.

In responding to these challenges, the Mobility Framework articulates a vision for a regional mobility system that builds on Metro’s existing network of transit services to become more **innovative, integrated, equitable, and sustainable**. The Mobility Framework includes 10 Guiding Principles and Recommendations in five thematic areas.

The Equity Cabinet spent much of 2019 working with Metro staff to review adopted policies, and to study King County’s changing demographics, travel trends and needs, best practices, and emerging mobility technologies. The Framework was also informed by extensive outreach and engagement with local elected officials, stakeholder organizations, and community members.

## Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles offer overarching guidance for how Metro and partners can work together to achieve a regional mobility system that is innovative, integrated, equitable, and sustainable. They were developed in partnership with the Equity Cabinet and with input from elected officials, regional partners, and community stakeholders. These Guiding Principles will guide updates to Metro’s Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, which will be updated during 2020.

- Invest where needs are greatest
- Address the climate crisis and environmental justice
- Innovative equitable and sustainably
- Ensure safety
- Encourage dense, affordable housing in urban areas near transit
- Improve access to mobility
- Provide fast, reliable, integrated mobility services
- Support our workforce
- Align our investments with equity, sustainability, and financial responsibility
- Engage deliberately and transparently

Following the development of the Guiding Principles, the Equity Cabinet developed Recommendations in five thematic areas that consolidated the Guiding Principles: **investments, surrounding land use, innovation, workforce, and engagement**. Input from elected officials, community stakeholders, regional partners, and the general principles informed these recommendations.

## Recommendations

The Recommendations below are meant to **build on and strengthen** Metro’s existing network of transit services.

They address Metro’s role as a provider of fixed-route public transit and community-based mobility services; as an employer and contractor; as a partner to jurisdictions around the region; as a co-provider of services with private mobility companies; and as part of a local government that prioritizes equity and sustainability. They provide guidance for ways Metro can **add to and to build on** its existing, regional network of mobility services with the goal of achieving a mobility network that is innovative, integrated, equitable, and sustainable.

The recommendations span from visionary to long overdue and are essential to the future of the regional mobility system. Metro looks forward to working with local municipalities, organized labor, partner transit agencies, community-based organizations, and/or private mobility providers to fund and implement these recommendations.



### Investments

- **Provide additional transit service in areas with unmet need**, defined as areas with high density; a high proportion of low-income people, people of color, people with disabilities, and members of limited-English speaking communities; and limited mid-day and evening service. Adapt Metro’s adopted policies to meet this need and to ensure regular and ongoing evaluation of the needs of these areas. \$
- **Support investments to increase safety**, including bus safety features, a safety app or other technology, and amenities such as lighting, real-time arrival signs, and informational campaigns. \$
- **Support improvements to increase speed and reliability** to make transit investments most successful and to provide incentives for local jurisdictions to prioritize use of the right-of-way for transit and access to transit. ★\$

#### Key

★ Indicates that Metro must partner to implement this recommendation.

\$ Indicates need for additional funding.



### Surrounding Land Use

- **Increase dense, mixed use zoning and affordable housing in urban areas near transit, while working to minimize displacement of priority populations** through the Growth Management Planning Council, by developing a King County Transit-oriented Development policy, and by updating Metro’s adopted policies to provide incentives for jurisdictions that provide increased density and/or affordable housing. ★\$

- **Develop station area and right-of-way guidelines** that prioritize transit use and access for people who walk, bike, or roll to the station. ★\$
- **Develop people-friendly street design near transit**, including traffic-calming measures and ways to make bus stops safe for all ages, genders, and abilities. ★\$
- **Meet King County’s climate goals by reducing car use, developing green infrastructure, promoting climate justice** and prioritizing ways to make transit convenient and accessible. \$



## Innovation

- **Change Metro’s adopted policies to assert the role of innovation, address new mobility services, and support innovative, equitable, sustainable mobility** to ensure they supplement transit services and work first for priority populations.
- **Develop new mobility guidelines for how Metro partners with private providers** that incentivize an equity and climate focus.
- **Facilitate integrated payment and planning** to help customers plan and pay for multimodal trips, in partnership with ORCA agencies and private providers. ★\$
- **Enhance communications and engagement** to raise awareness of mobility innovations.
- **Convene and support jurisdictions** in developing a regional framework for innovative mobility partnerships. ★



## Workforce

- **Strategically partner with the labor community** to build new “communities of ridership” and benefit Metro employees, priority populations and the environment. ★\$
- **Use future transportation innovations to target new riders as potential employees.**
- **Use strategic and culturally specific communication methods** to build sustainable community relationships.
- **Build infrastructure to provide pathways to mobility-related employment**, including a “school without a school,” an equity in mobility summer internship program, an approach to assist with costs associated with workforce development and employment pathways, and community-based mobility career hubs. ★\$
- **Use strategic workforce planning** to meet current and future workforce needs. ★\$
- **Purposefully foster a sustainable learning culture within Metro.**
- **Require the centering of equity in all contracts and subcontracts.**



## Engagement

- **Strengthen communication and marketing efforts** to ensure that priority populations are aware of existing mobility services, innovative new pilots, service changes, affordability programs, and other efforts.
- **Build lasting relationships in communities** and compensate community members for their time and expertise.
- **Use a coordinated cross-departmental approach to engagement**, including a continuing King County Equity Cabinet.
- **Develop an equity-centered engagement framework** by co-creating with the community and measuring equity and sustainability over time.
- **Develop a community liaison program** to hire people to act as a conduit to the community.
- **Identify metrics to measure success and continually improve**, and regularly report on engagement metrics.

## Next Steps

The Mobility Framework, designed by an Equity Cabinet of community leaders, will guide updates to Metro’s adopted policies, including Metro’s Strategic Plan, long-range plan (METRO CONNECTS), and Service Guidelines, as well as the Transportation Goal Area of the Strategic Climate Action Plan. The Mobility Framework’s recommendations will also guide the development of Metro’s 2021-2022 biennial budget proposal and ongoing regional planning efforts to fund and implement METRO CONNECTS.

As required by Motion 15252, the update to METRO CONNECTS will include updated information to adjust for population and employment growth, increasing regional congestion, inflation and construction costs, regional mobility needs and innovations in transportation.

Work to update Metro’s policy documents (specifically, the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, Service Guidelines, and METRO CONNECTS) will begin during the first half of 2020 to align with the recommendations of the Mobility Framework and to provide detailed implementation guidance for how the Mobility Framework’s recommendations can be realized. Updates to these policy documents will benefit from input from Equity Cabinet members, elected leaders, stakeholder organizations, and communities.

Metro looks forward to working closely with elected leaders, stakeholder groups, and community members to fund and implement these recommendations and move forward together toward a regional mobility system that is innovative, integrated, equitable, and sustainable.