



# RAPIDRIDE



## Property owners and Metro projects

RapidRide projects happen over a long period in three phases — planning, design and construction. Find out how we work with potentially affected property owners during each phase of the project and what to expect regarding your property.



**PLANNING**



**DESIGN**



**CONSTRUCTION**

Questions?

[transitproperty@kingcounty.gov](mailto:transitproperty@kingcounty.gov)

[kingcounty.gov/rapidride](http://kingcounty.gov/rapidride)



King County

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## Planning

### ? How could the planning phase affect my property?

When Metro is planning a project, you might see Metro staff or contractors out in the public, doing surveys, taking photos, or sometimes conducting tests on soil or groundwater. We gather information during this phase to help inform the project development and design, by finding out where utilities are located, where property lines and easements fall, and what the land is like. Some of the activities include visual inspections of property, taking photographs of property and buildings, taking measurements, reviewing public records, and developing sketches. Most of the work during this phase happens on public property, in the street right-of-way, and under permits from your city wherever needed.

If our team decides we need to access your property to gather some of this information we will send the property owner a letter explaining why we would like to access your property and asking you to sign a Right of Entry ("ROE"). An ROE is a simple agreement that both the property owner and Metro sign, giving our team access to your property for the specific purposes we told you we needed (i.e. photographing, or measuring trees, or taking soil samples). We work with the property owner to determine the best time for access and how to minimize disruption to the property owner and any tenants or customers. If our work disturbs anything (for example, digging up soil), we restore the property back to the way it was.

### ? When will I know if my property is needed for the project?

As projects move through the planning phase and preliminary engineering, the team creates and updates a list of properties we might need to impact for the project. The project team does not contact property owners to ask for use of your property until we know for sure what exactly we need. For planning activities like the fieldwork described above, that happens early in the project. But for construction use or permanent impacts, the team usually starts identifying those impacts once the design reaches the 60% level.

### ? What happens if Metro identifies my property as potentially impacted?

Metro follows specific policies and procedures that describe how we will work with property owners throughout this process. Metro follows federal guidelines whenever acquiring property for projects, specifically the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, as well as state law and King County Code. The rules and regulations are designed to make sure that impacted property owners and tenants are treated fairly, that we work to minimize negative impacts and hardships due to the project, and maintain good communication with all parties involved.

Projects like RapidRide can impact properties in several different ways. Impacts might be temporary, direct impacts on a specific property, such as when your property might be needed to construct improvements in the right-of-way. For example, if the project must rebuild a sidewalk in front of your house, and your property line starts right at the back of sidewalk, we might need to ask you to use a few feet of your yard for a set amount of time in order to place the forms and pour the concrete for the sidewalk. We would make sure your lawn was restored after the work is finished. Other times the project impacts may be permanent, such as when the sidewalk is not wide enough to build a new bus stop and still allow the legally required clearance for accessibility, under the Americans with Disabilities Act. In those cases, we would speak to you about purchasing a small portion of your property to expand the right-of-way so we could build our improvements.

If your property is identified as impacted by the project, either for construction purposes or long-term, you will receive a letter from King County or its right-of-way consultant notifying you and asking you to meet with our team to discuss.



## DESIGN

### ? How could the design phase affect my property?

During the design phase, Metro will continue performing soil condition, ground water testing, and other more in-depth field work like surveys and locating utilities. As with the planning phase, most of this work will take place in the public right-of-way, but if our team requires access to your property we will send a letter along with a voluntary Right of Entry request. We will work to minimize disruptions to your property, to any tenants and other occupants during this work; and when the work is finished, we will restore any affected property to its prior condition.

### ? Metro identified my property for acquisition. Now what?

Once Metro identifies a private property will be impacted by the project, we will take several steps.

- Have a licensed surveyor draw up an exhibit showing the impacted property area, along with a legal description.
- Hire an independent appraiser to value the property. The appraiser will contact you, the property owner, and offer you the opportunity to attend the appraisal with them.
- Metro will either review the appraisal ourselves, or sometimes hire an independent appraisal reviewer to make sure the proper steps were followed when appraising your property and the opinion of value is accurate. Metro will then use the appraisal to determine the amount of "just compensation," which is the dollar value the property owner is entitled to receive for the impacted property.
- Metro or its consultant representative will send you a written offer for your property and request to meet with you to discuss the offer. You will then have time to consider and respond to the offer.
- Metro's goal is to obtain all properties needed for any project through a negotiated settlement with the property owner, so after meeting, discussing, and negotiating with you, we would then conclude the property purchase and pay the value of the property.

### ? What services can I expect if my property is affected?

For RapidRide projects, most often Metro's project will only impact a small area of your property and we usually do not need to acquire your entire property. You are entitled to accompany the appraiser when they are performing the appraisal of your property, and Metro will pay up to \$750.00 for you to have the offer and/or appraisal reviewed by an expert – your own appraiser, for example, or an attorney.

In rare cases, Metro's project may impact a property enough that we need to acquire the entire property and displace the current use. Residential and business owners or tenants who would be displaced by Metro's impacts on your property are entitled to relocation assistance – advice and monetary assistance. If Metro believes you might be displaced by our project's impacts on your property, we will inform you and bring a qualified relocation advisor, who will help determine your needs and explain what benefits can be provided to assist you. The relocation advisor will also help provide inventories of current replacement housing or business properties and assist you with filing any claims needed to receive the benefits you are entitled to.



## Construction

### ? How could the construction phase affect my property?

Major construction can be disruptive, which is why Metro is committed to being a good neighbor. Throughout the construction phase, there are dedicated Community Engagement staff available to answer questions and address needs, as well as a monitored construction hotline service.

Project contractors follow standard requirements when working in your neighborhood and community, including:

- Maintaining a safe, clean and secure worksite.
- Maintaining access to homes and businesses.
- Minimizing noise and lighting impacts.
- Minimizing parking impacts from construction equipment and vehicles.

Metro will continue the acquisition process based on the properties and access required by the construction timeline. Property needed for the project may be acquired in stages to accommodate the project schedule. Metro will work with property owners and tenants throughout construction to minimize potential impacts to property access.



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