King County
Auditor's Office

# Transit Audit Program
# 2026 Biennial Report

ADVANCING TRANSIT PERFORMANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND EQUITY

The King County Auditor's Office's Transit Audit Program helps ensure county residents have access to equitable, efficient, and effective transit service. During this performance period, June 2024 to June 2026, we accomplished that by publishing audits of the Vanpool program and Capital Division, and we focused on following up on audit recommendations, doubling the number we followed up on compared to the last reporting period. This included reviewing steps Metro Transit took to reduce collision and injury risk, improve real-time information, and increase engagement for paratransit.

## Key Audit Results in 2024 and 2025

Our Transit Audit Program resulted in:

- **Improvements to reduce risks for the county and Vanpool riders.** Mobility Services aligned its personal use policy with accepted best practices, reduced program costs, eliminated unnecessary risks, and reduced inequitable treatment of program participants.
- **Additional analysis and training focused on reducing risks of accidents and injuries involving buses.** Metro Transit identified data to support collision and injury prevention efforts. It also piloted an operator training series, including a safety refresher. These actions help ensure Metro Transit does informative analysis and implements training to help reduce risks.

## Maximizing Effectiveness

Our 2023 audit of Metro Transit's delivery of capital projects resulted in 19 recommendations to support Metro Transit in meeting ambitious goals requiring capital work. The division used the results of the audit and its internal analysis to improve capital processes. This includes steps to better monitor projects and staff capacity and adjust priorities to help ensure Metro Transit achieves its goals. The division also implemented ways for management to follow up on issues raised by project teams and trends in lessons learned. These steps and others in response to audit recommendations help Metro Transit ensure it is proactive in prioritizing its resources and addressing the causes of schedule delays, resulting in a more reliable system for riders.

## Key Results

Our recommendations have led to Metro Transit implementing many significant recommendations since June 2024. Examples of positive outcomes from our recommendations include:

Public experiences reduced risks of accidents and injuries involving buses

Linguistically diverse communities engaged to improve Access Paratransit

Residents have more transparency about capital program plans

Vanpool users experience reduced risks

**86%**
TOOK ACTION

## Action Toward Implementation

Following up on our recommendations increases transparency and accountability and creates momentum for positive change. Since 2024, we followed up on 45 audit recommendations. We track recommendations until they are complete.

## Ongoing Engagement Maximizes Change

To better ensure positive outcomes for the transit-riding public, our office maintains regular communication with Metro Transit staff both for individual audits and for the Transit program. For example, Transit Audit Program staff hold regular check-ins with Metro Transit leadership to help generate impactful audit topics, ensure effective audit and follow up timing, and promote ongoing coordination necessary to maximize improvements from audit work.

## Publications

Our office completed two performance audits and followed up on recommendations from six audits. All are available on the on the King County Auditor's website.

**Audit reports:**

- *Zero Emissions: Metro Transit Working to Mitigate Risks to County's Ambitious 2035 Goal*
- *Vanpool: Improved Monitoring Could Help Achieve Strategic Goals and Reduce Program Risk*

**Follow-up reports:**

- Access Paratransit
- Bus Collision and Injury Prevention
- Metro Transit Capital Delivery
- Transit Asset Management
- Transit Reliability
- Vanpool Strategy and Risk Management

## 2024–2026 Transit Audit Team

**Kymber Waltmunson** • King County Auditor

**Ben Thompson** • Audit Director, Transit Audit Manager

**Cindy Drake** • Supervising Auditor, Capital Projects Analyst

**Elise Garvey** • Principal Auditor, Transit Program Lead

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