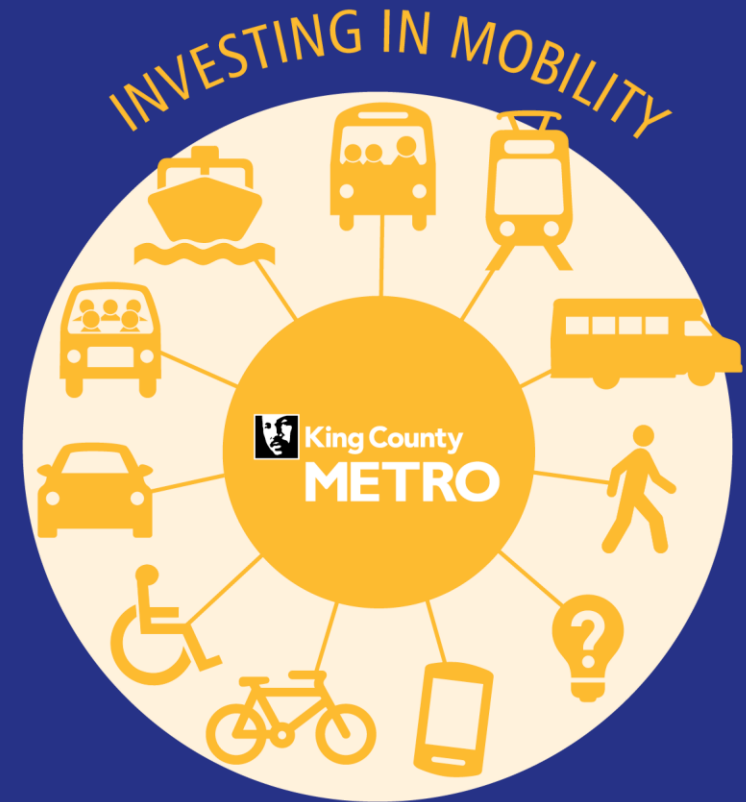


Service Guidelines and Metro Connects 2020 Update

Community Advocates
December 2020



Presentation Goals

- Review draft proposed changes and updates to Metro Connects “interim” and 2050 network maps
- Review potential scenarios for Service Guidelines approach to Service Growth (Priority 3)



Grounding in Metro's Mobility Framework

- Mobility is more than a service – it can have profound outcomes
- **By centering equity, climate, and safety in Metro's work, we can better advance key outcomes**
 - This is consistent with recommendations in adopted Mobility Framework, including:
 - provide additional transit service in areas with unmet need
 - support improvements to increase speed & reliability
 - Meet King County's climate goals by reducing car use
 - A focus on equity and leading with race aligns with King County's ESJ ordinance
- Though we're sharing technical information today, we ask you to consider those values and how the region can best deliver healthy communities, a thriving economy, and a sustainable environment as you review



Metro Connects

Today's Focus

- Review draft Metro Connects network updates
 - High-level summary of changes
 - Changes to address equity gaps
- Review draft RapidRide updates
 - Gather input on Metro's recommendation for a programmatic approach to RapidRide
 - Review Interim and 2050 networks



Updated Metro Connects Maps: Draft Interim Network

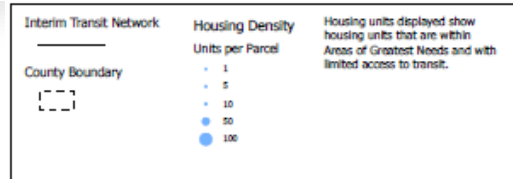
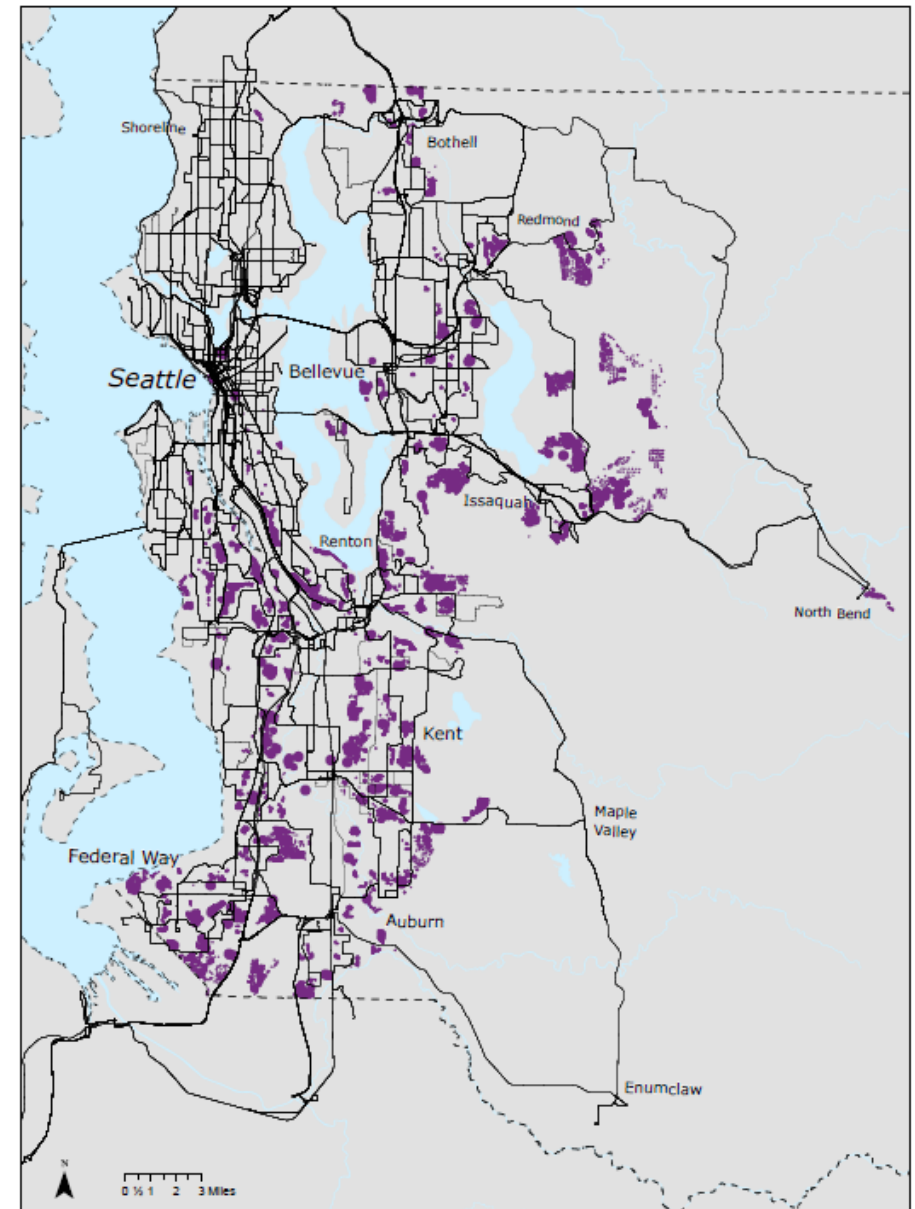
- Updated route alignments and frequencies to account for known changes (e.g., RKAAMP, Capitol Hill/UW Link, NEMP)
- Addressed targeted equity gaps
- Updated RapidRide network

Updated Metro Connects Maps: Draft 2050 Network

- Incorporated known changes made to the Interim network
- Increased frequencies on select routes to account for growth from 2040 to 2050
 - e.g. 36% have 15-min off-peak headways compared to 24% in 2040 network
- Updated proposed RapidRide network

Equity Gap Improvements

- Map illustrates where access to transit service is limited for priority and other populations
- Though Metro could not address all gaps, made targeted changes based on stakeholder feedback
 - Focus on gaps near areas with higher ridership during COVID-19
 - Address clusters of gaps, where one improvement could solve multiple issues
- Routes changes to address equity gaps in areas including Skyway, SeaTac, and Kent East Hill
 - Increased assumed frequencies on three routes to meet new frequent standard
 - Added one route from the 2040 network to the Interim network to provide new connection



Metro Connects 2025
Equity Gap Analysis

Changes: Equity Gap Analysis

- Identified challenge of limited access and lack of frequent service
- Planned for more frequent service
- Added new planned route: Corridor 3062 moved from 2040 network to Interim network

Proposed Updated RapidRide Networks

- **Historically, Metro has not delivered new RapidRide lines as fast as Metro Connects assume**
- **Proposed network is smaller (16-23 total lines by 2050), with a range of lines linked to delivery pace**
 - Proposed interim network assumes 1 route every 2-3 years
 - Proposed 2050 network assumes 1 route every 2-2.5 years

Total new and modified RapidRide lines in addition to G, H, I, J by

Date	2025	Interim Network	2040/2050	Total Lines 2040/2050
Current Metro Connects	9	-	16	26
Updated Metro Connects	0	3-5*	9-13*	16-23

**Though R and K are unfunded, Metro assumes they will be the next two lines. This means 1-3 possible new and modified, unidentified lines in the interim network and 7-11 in the 2050 network*

Recommendation: Flexible/Programmatic Approach for Selecting RapidRide Lines

What is a programmatic approach to RapidRide?

- Identifies a pool of candidate lines for future RapidRide service rather than specific set of routes
- Selects specific routes closer to design/implementation based on updated analysis, more detailed planning, and stakeholder engagement

Why does Metro recommend this approach?

- Ensures decisions are made based on the best available information, recognizing the choices are not clear-cut, while anchoring to a delivery pace that is achievable given historical practices
- Provides flexibility, including the opportunity to more fully engage partners and communities where needed and to conduct additional analysis
- Responds to significant uncertainty related to future travel patterns, demographic changes, and funding

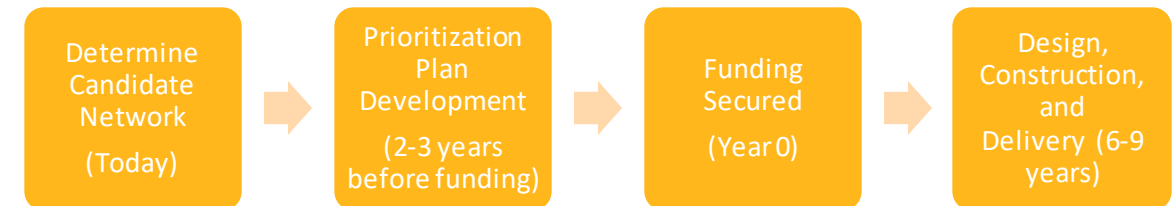
For Discussion: How Would This Process Work?

Develop Prioritization Plan

- Update planning and analysis
 - Update evaluation with more recent, future data
 - Conduct additional corridor studies where needed
- Engage stakeholders in prioritization plan development
 - RTC, Equity Cabinet, and others
 - Partner jurisdiction staff via corridor studies

Timeline

- Selection process tied to the County's biennial budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) development
- Construction and delivery finished 6-9 years after funding

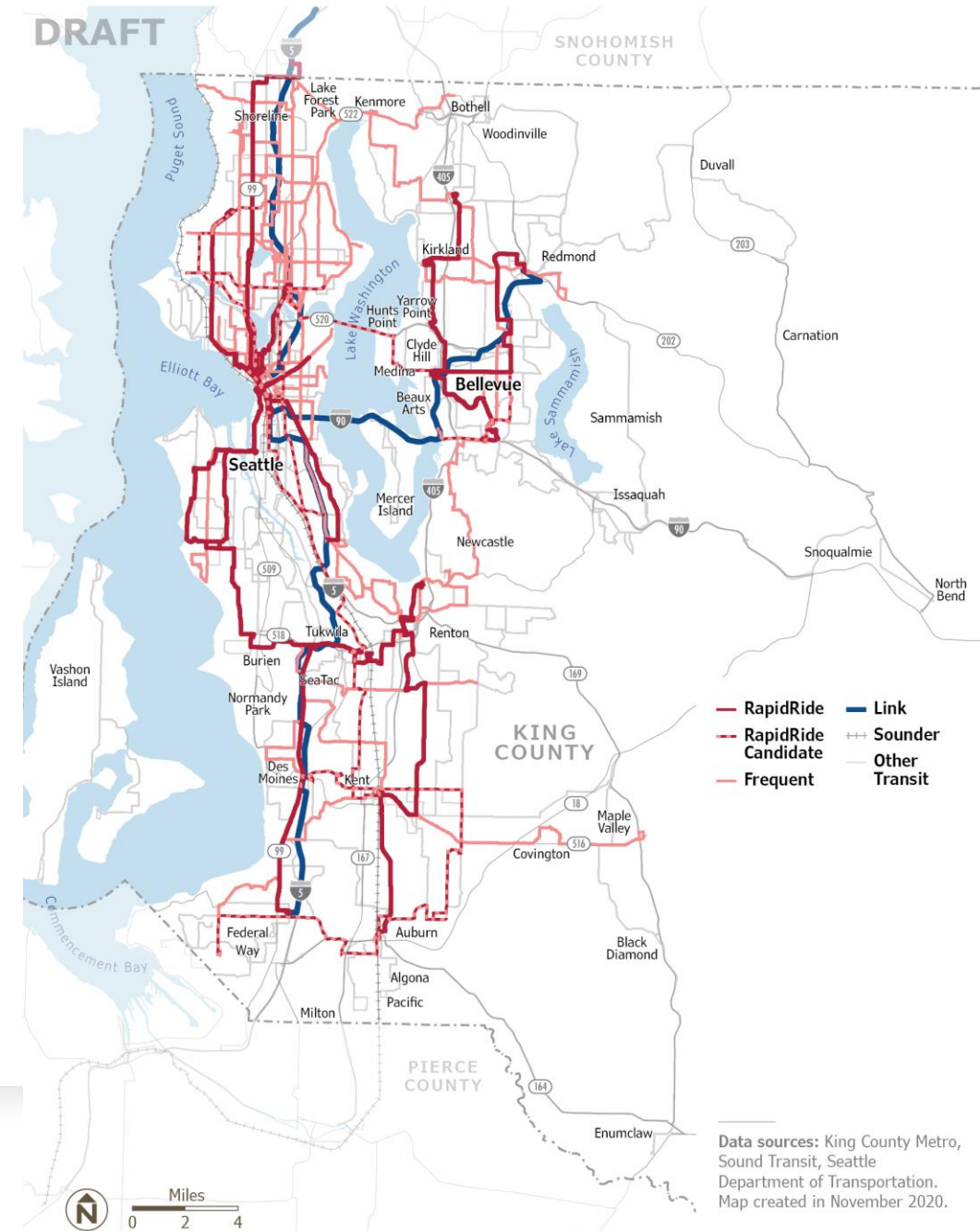


High-level guidance will live in Metro Connects and Strategic Plan

Updated Draft RapidRide Interim Network

- **11 candidate projects for 3-5 future projects**
 - G, H, I, and J assumed to be implemented by 2025
 - K and R assumed to be the next two lines implemented
 - Includes smaller projects, such as modifications
- **Programmatic approach would work to build this Interim network**
 - Allows lines to respond to new travel patterns as they become known
 - Prioritizes those that perform well
 - Builds connections to key centers and destinations
 - Allows flexibility to implement throughout county

Fig. 2: METRO CONNECTS Interim RapidRide Network [DRAFT]



Discussion: Metro Connects Changes

- 1. How do think the proposed process for making decisions for RapidRide aligns with the Mobility Framework recommendations? Are there changes you would suggest?**
- 2. Any other comments or questions?**

Service Guidelines

Today's Focus

- Discuss scenarios for potential approaches to prioritizing the order of service investments
- Consider which scenarios best advance Metro's core values
- Goal today is for discussion, not a decision – that can come next year



Defining What We Mean

Equity

- King County defines equity as a system of fairness, providing full and equal access to opportunities, power, and resources. King County is leading with racial justice because historical and racial inequities continue to affect all of us, and our region’s ability to thrive.”
- Metro is proposing to use five equity factors from Census data: race, income, disability, foreign born, and limited English-speaking populations

Productivity

- Potential productivity is defined in Priority 3 analysis by measuring the potential market for transit based on land use and growth. It measures the number of households, jobs, students, and park-and-rides along the corridor. Higher concentrations of people support higher potential use of transit.
- Route productivity is the defined in annual evaluations by using two measures of actual measured ridership—*rides per platform hour* and *passenger miles per platform mile*. These are standard metrics for transit efficiency that define how many customers a route serves and how full buses are along their route.

Geographic Value

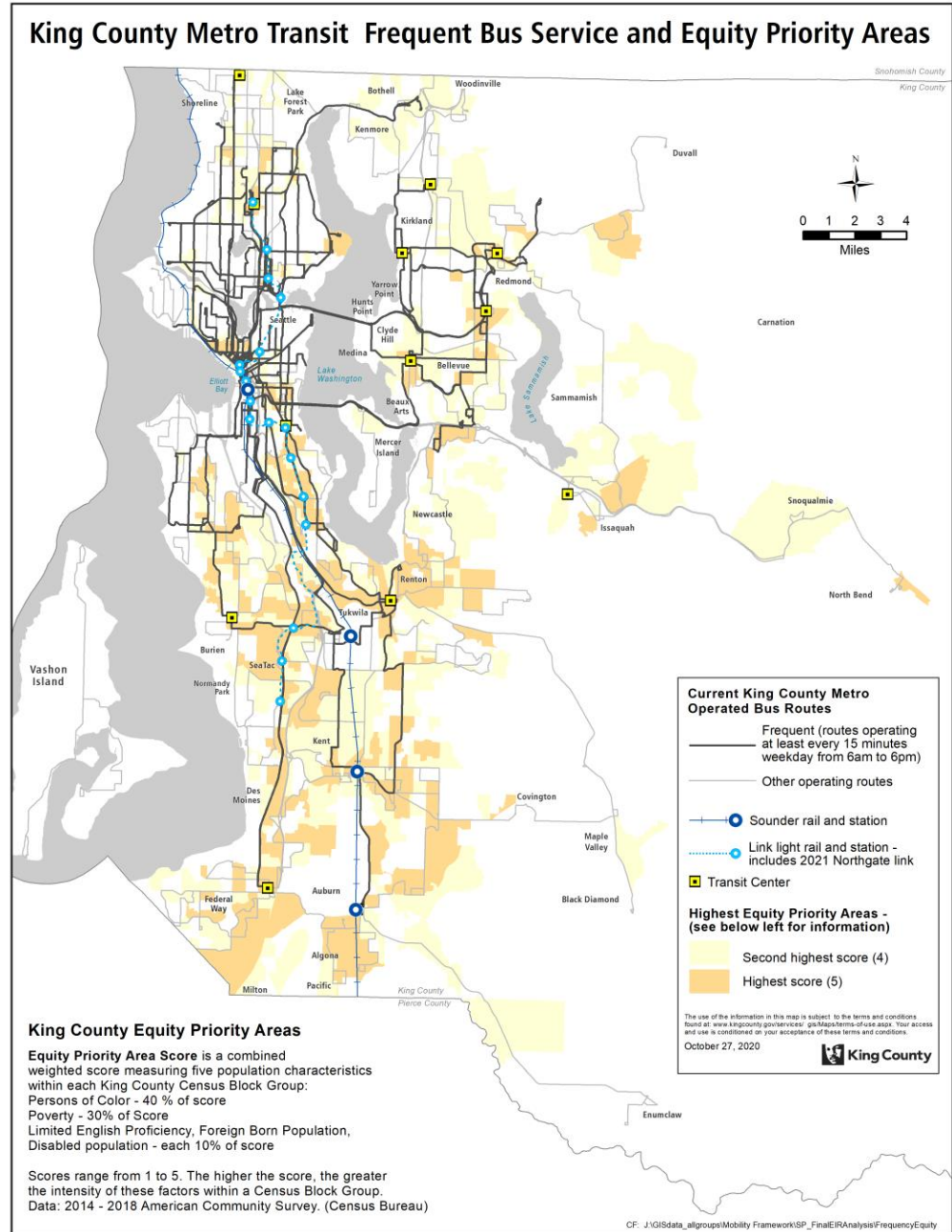
- Establishes the value a corridor provides by connecting to, from, and between PSRC-defined Regional Centers and Metro-defined transit activity centers throughout King County

Low- & medium-income jobs

- The Longitudinal Employment Household Dynamics (LEHD) considers a job with a monthly wage of less than \$1,250 a low-wage job and jobs with monthly wages between \$1,251 and \$3,330 to be medium-wage jobs

Current Network and Equity Priority Areas

- Metro and Sound Transit currently operate a substantial network of frequent transit service in King County, though some communities are better served than others
- Service Guidelines define what investments Metro would make next to narrow the gaps between existing service and identified needs (for all service types, not just frequent)
- Updating the Service Guidelines makes Metro more responsive to the areas of unmet need and moves towards Metro Connects
- Clear areas of opportunity to grow the service network to serve priority populations



Scenario Development and Analysis

- **All scenarios...**
 - Maintain 3-factor approach: productivity, equity, and geographic value
 - Incorporate changes to emphasize equity: 5 equity priority populations, low-/medium-income jobs
 - Measure needs for all existing routes plus selected Metro Connects corridors
- **The scenarios explore different...**
 - Prioritization order using criteria scores with equity or productivity as top priority
- **Given King County and Metro's commitment and the Mobility Framework's direction to advance equity and address climate change, Metro recommends focusing discussion on the equity and productivity-first scenarios**



Scenario Analysis Findings

- Incorporating Metro Connects interim network increases overall need for additional service
 - Service Growth need increases from about 400,000 hours to more than 1.5 million hours
- Metro explored more scenarios than shown in this presentation
 - Because of the increase in need, changing the weighting of factors becomes less important in setting target service levels (sample maps shown here)
- **Priority order using corridor scores is the most important factor** in determining the service growth investments that Metro makes next

Metro Connects Means Countywide Need Grows

- Metro Connects network and service levels vastly increases the service need throughout the county
- There are many implementation options if new resources and funding are available
- These options are aiming for long-term growth, so they build on our existing network
- COVID-19 has resulted in near-term emergency changes that were driven by factors other than the guidelines (e.g. collapse of peak commute) but in the long-term these policies will describe how our system grows

Key Takeaways from Updated Scenarios

- **The Mobility Framework directs Metro to center equity and climate change.**
 - The equity-first scenario brings service to populations without existing access and reflects ridership patterns seen during COVID-19. It addresses climate change while investing where needs are greatest first.
 - The productivity-first scenario follows existing service, demand, and land use, best impacting climate change by making service in those areas even more productive.

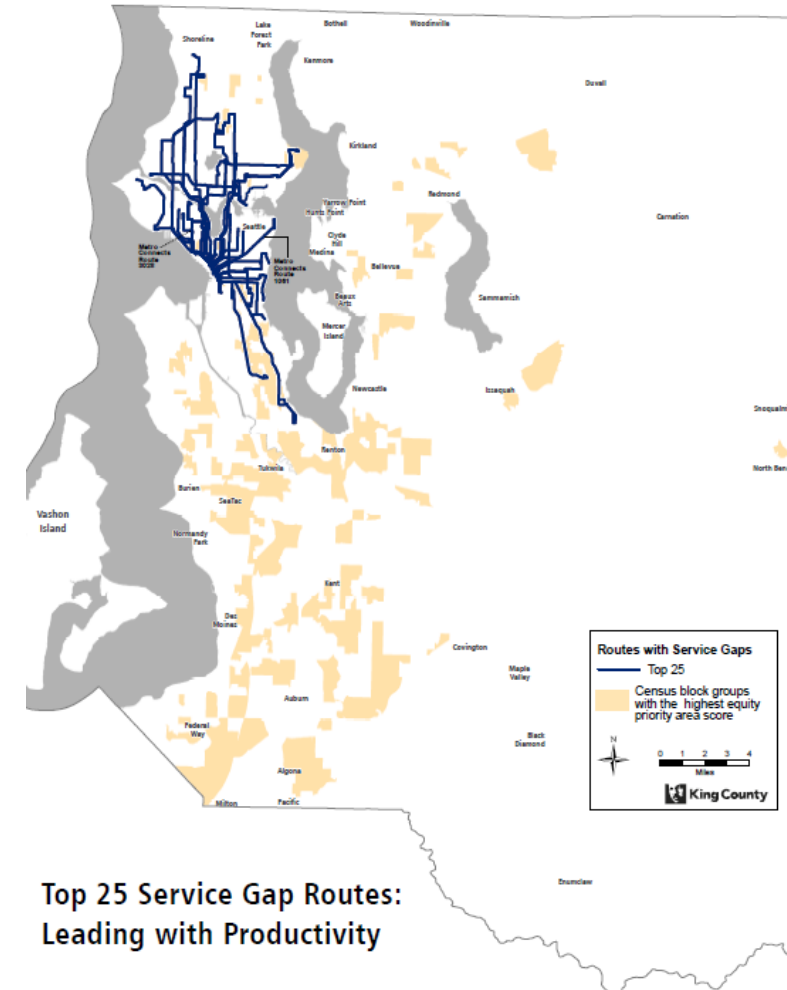
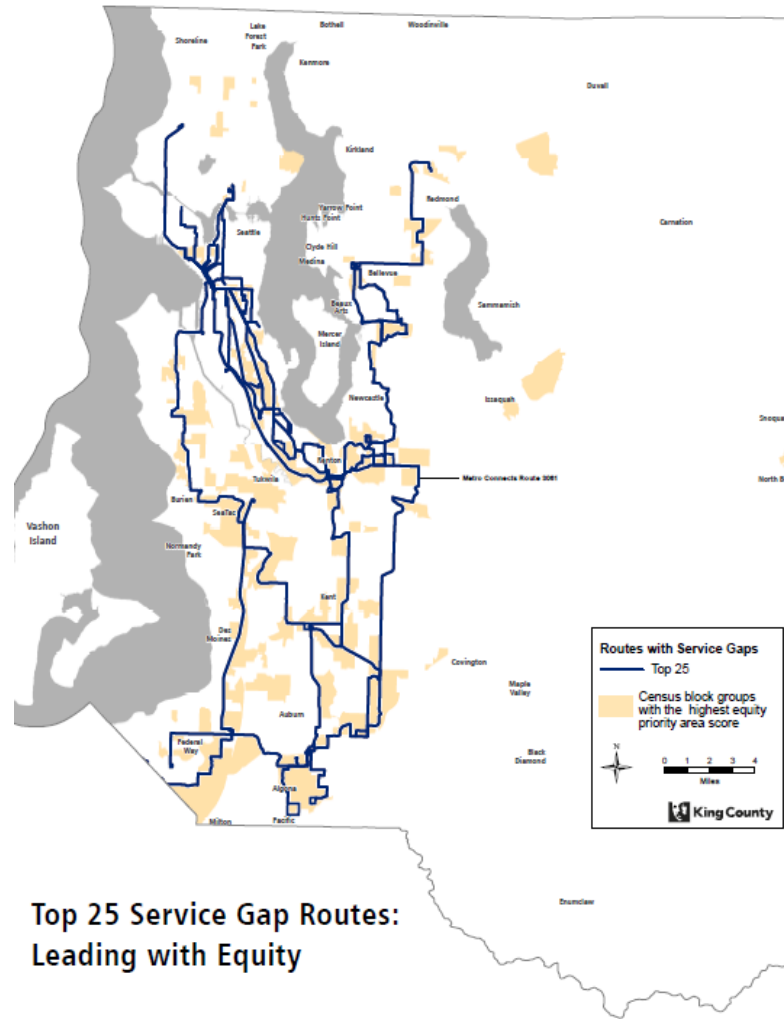
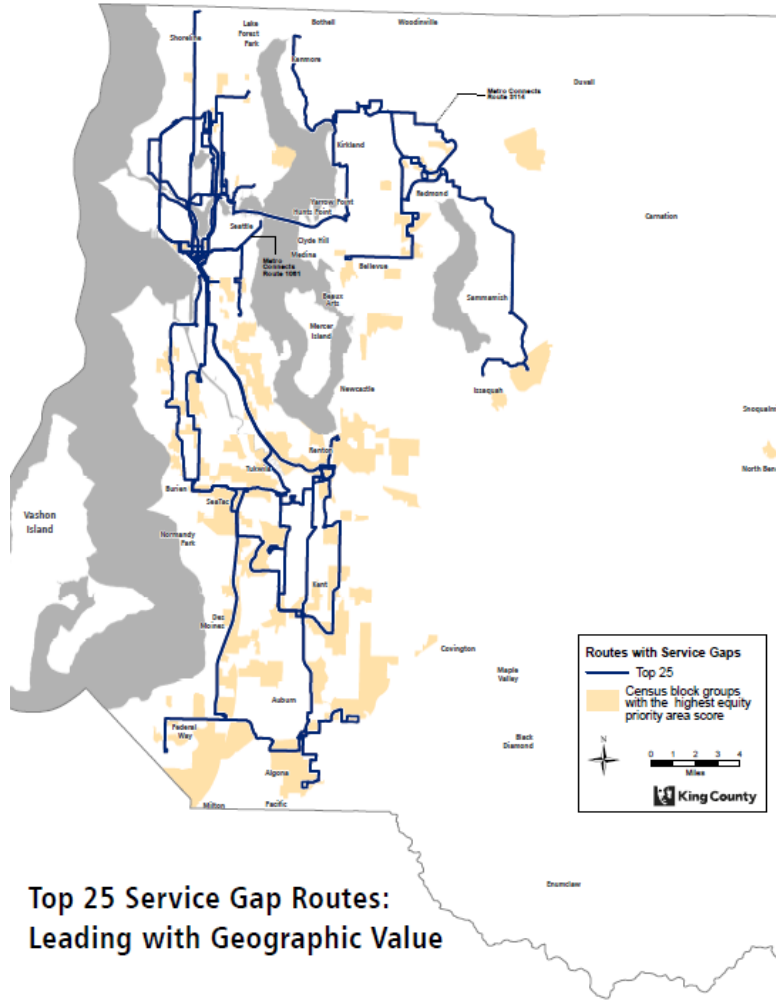


Importance of Additional Funding

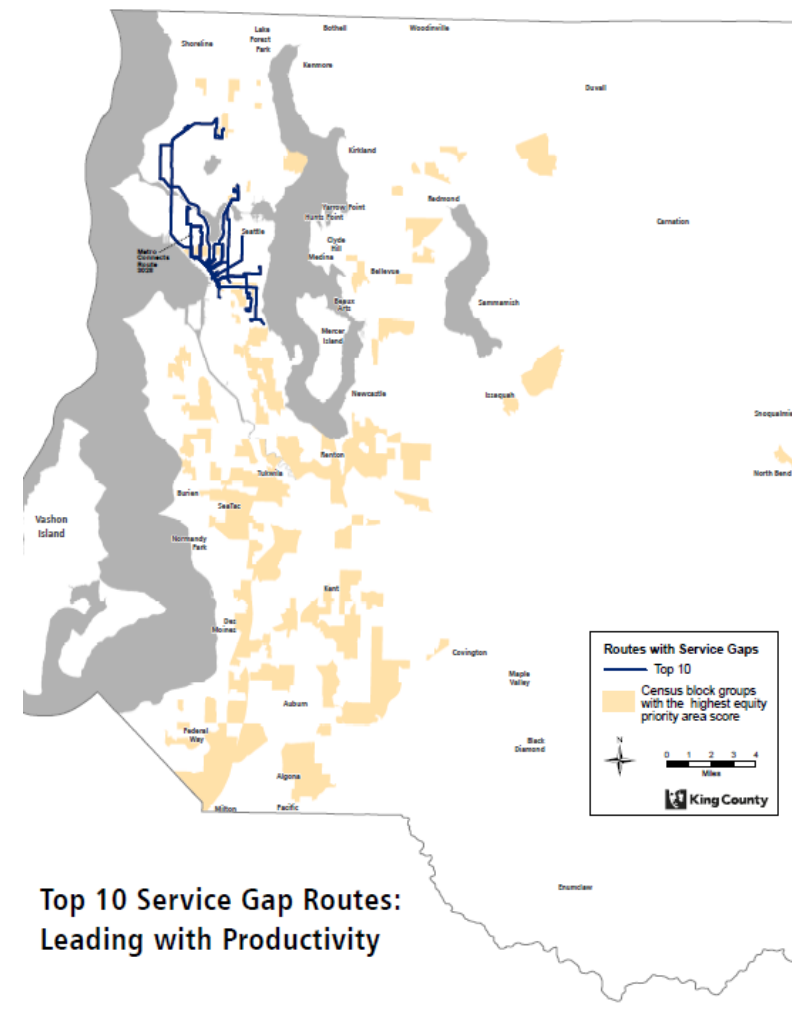
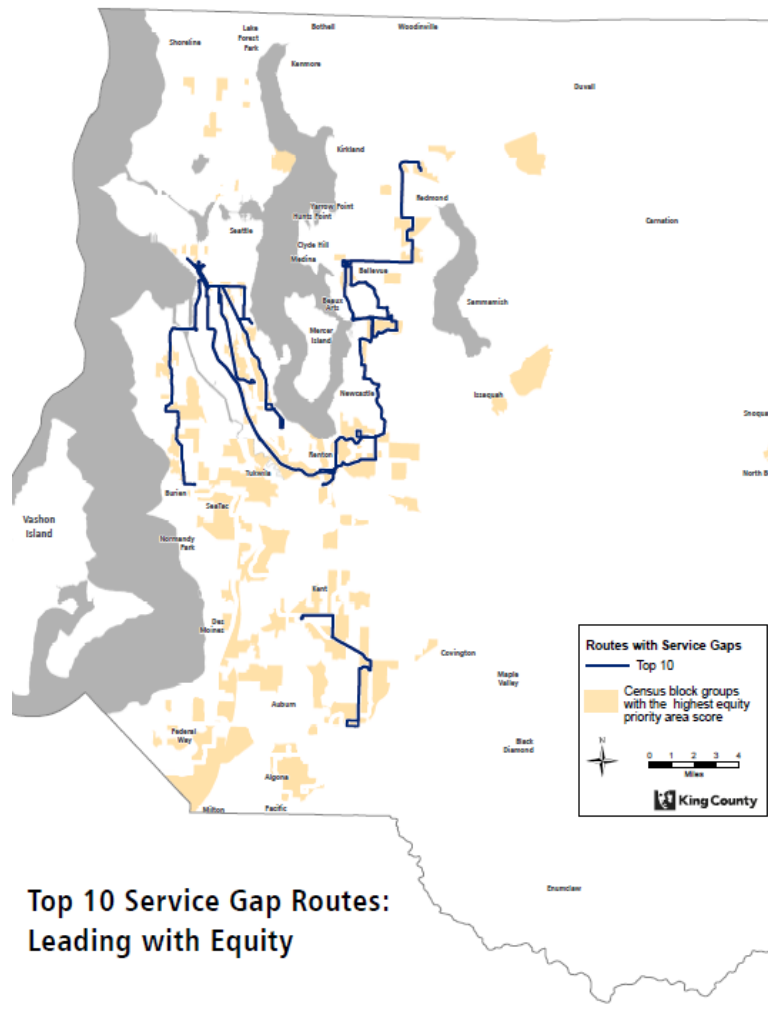
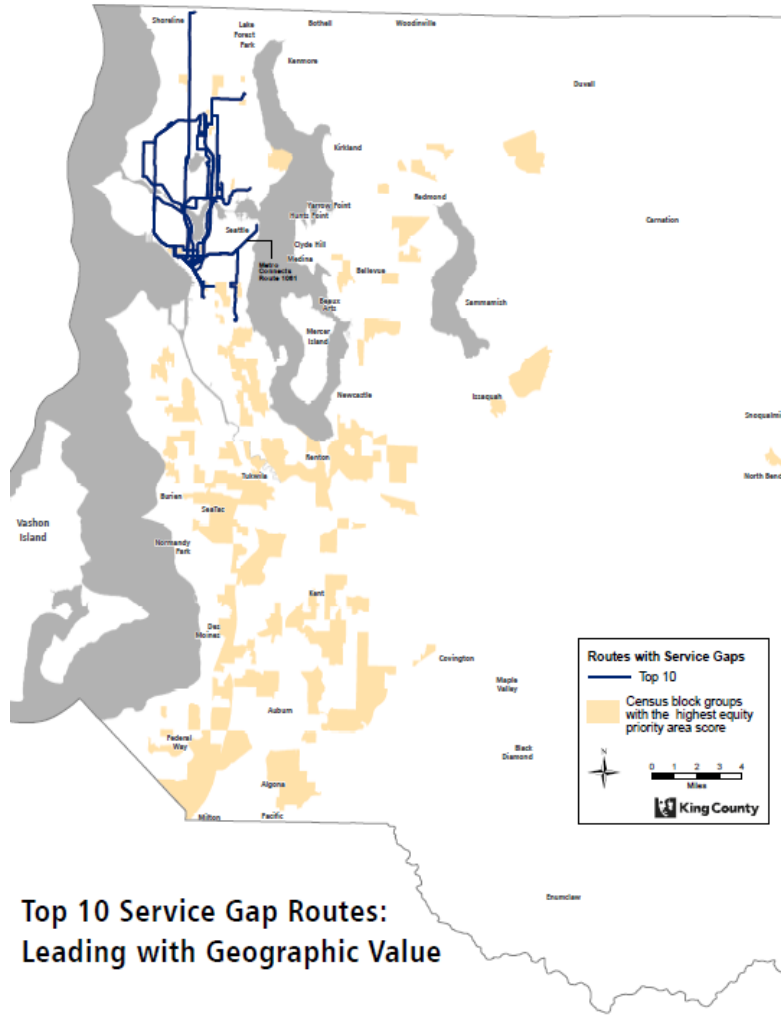
- Metro can better grow the system and invest in routes further down the Service Guidelines growth priority list with more funding
- **A regional solution to funding Metro Connects would help ensure more investment in routes further down the priority list**



Top 25 Routes



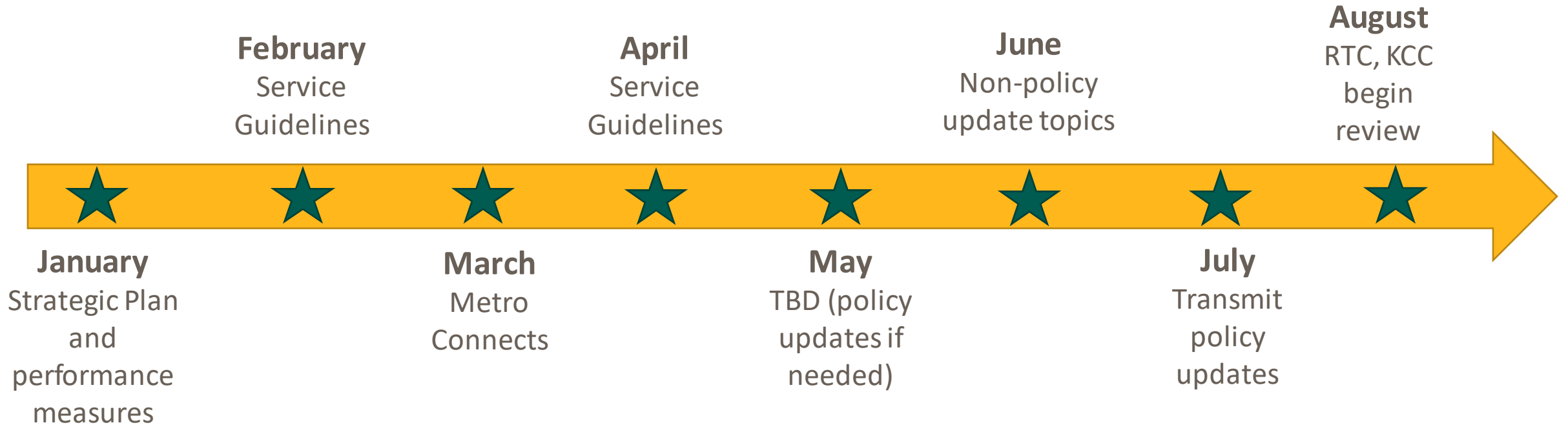
Top 10 Routes



Discussion: Service Guidelines Changes

- 1. What comments or questions do you have about the different prioritization approaches?**
- 2. Which scenario do you think best aligns with the Mobility Framework and Metro's core values of equity, sustainability, and safety?**

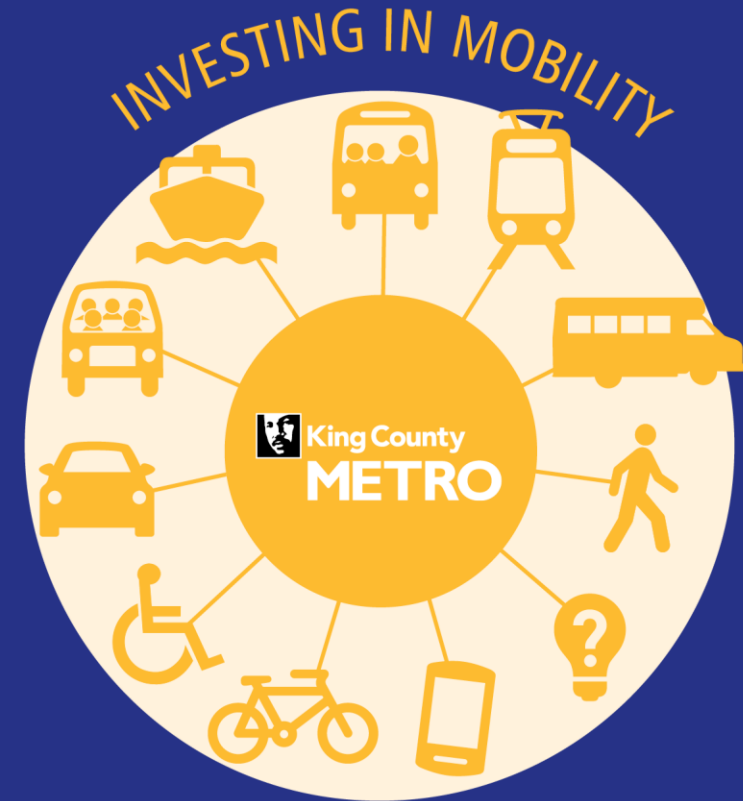
Looking Ahead to 2021

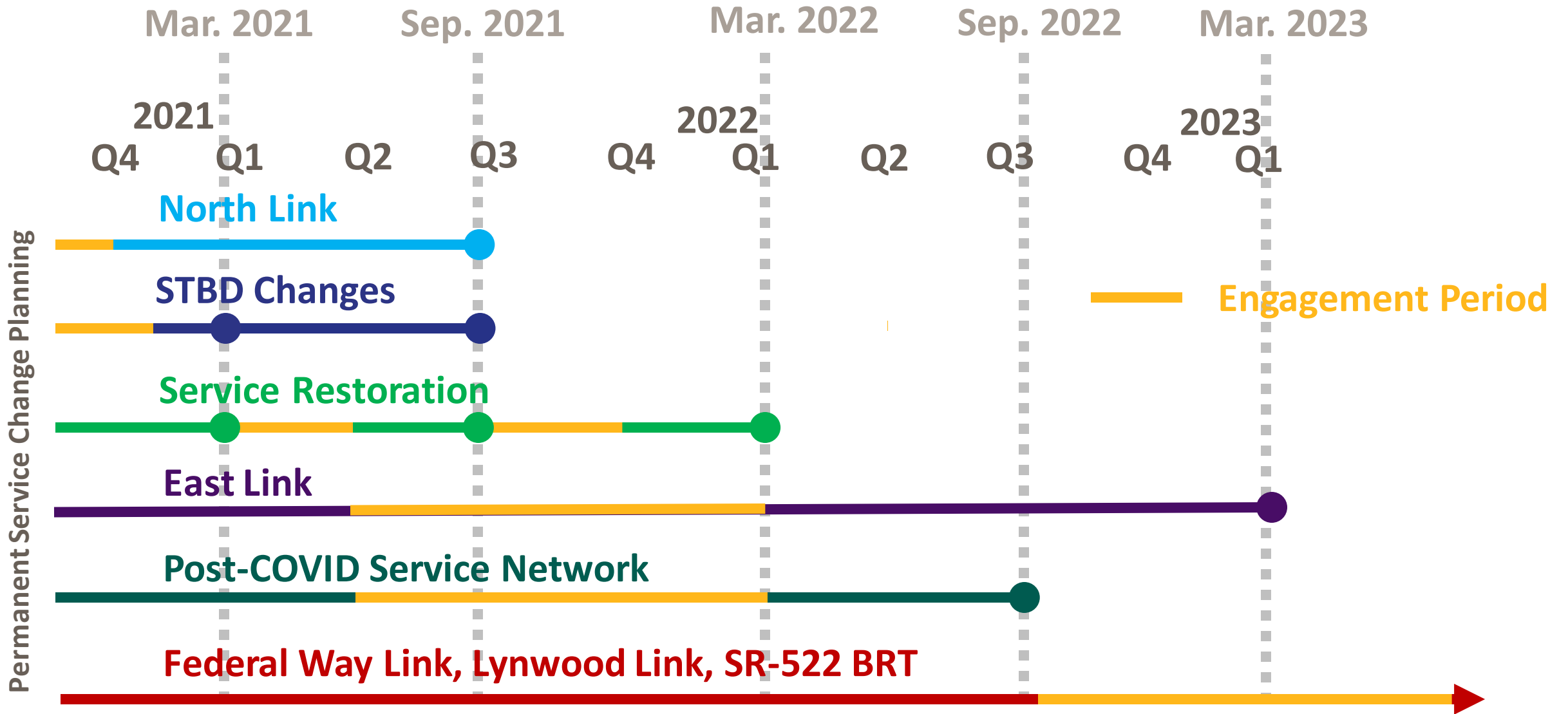


Closing and Questions

Metro's Service Restoration and Budget Updates

November/December policy updates stakeholder workshops





Service Restoration Process

Biannual service changes will gradually restore service between now and September 2022

Service Restoration Indicators*

Service Indicators

Ridership	percent of pre-pandemic ridership retained
Crowding	number of trips above the COVID load limit, and percentage of load limit capacity. This metric will change as load limits change.
Social Equity	Policy updates route opportunity score
Jobs	Information on qualitative and quantitative factors including ORCA passholders, and current and forecasted status for large employers' worksites in regional job centers
Productivity	pre-pandemic (Fall 2019 service change) and current rides per platform hour, from the most recent month for which data is available.

Regional Demand Indicators

Governor's Safe Start Phases	which phase we are currently in
Back to school	status of in-person classes at major colleges, universities, and area school districts
Back to work	status of largest employer work sites throughout the county

Restoration for flexible services and Access Paratransit

Dart and Flexible Services

- For suspended service, restoration decisions tied to restoration decisions for fixed route in the same area, along with equity indicators.
- Ceasing relaxed Vanpool formation size requirement

Access Paratransit

- Ceasing lower barriers for Access qualification
- Tied to restoration of other services, Governor's Safe Start phases, and demand for Access trips overall



Service Restoration Community Feedback & Engagement

Restoration indicators will be supplemented with feedback from customers and community stakeholders

- Tracking comments received from riders through customer information
- Engaging jurisdictions and business partners
- Community engagement in targeted areas where service is suspended, to understand existing and anticipated mobility needs



Questions and Discussion

- Do you think these indicators will provide a reasonable measure of where service recovery needs are the greatest?
- Are there other indicators that we should be considering?
- Do you have any concerns about these indicators?
- Do you have suggestions for engaging priority populations to understand existing and future mobility needs?

March 2021 Service Changes

Investment in service on crowded routes

- Due to the need to address crowding issues, there will only be crowding-based service investments in March 2021
- A Line, Routes 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13, 36, 49, 50, 60, 106, 128, 132, and 193

Suspension of low-performing trips on commuter routes

- Routes with current ridership at 80%- 90% less than pre-COVID ridership
- Suspension of one or more low-performing morning or afternoon peak commute trips
- Trip suspensions on routes 21X, 55, 56, 102, 111, 212, 218, 301, and 311
- Suspensions provide resources to better address acute crowding needs with minimal customer impact.

All currently suspended routes will remain suspended and there will be no new route suspensions.

2021 and 2022 Engagement

Mar. 2021

Sep. 2021

Mar. 2022

Sep. 2022

Mar. 2023

Q4

Q1

Q2

Q3

Q4

Q1

Q2

Q3

Q4

Q1

Service Change Planning

Service Restoration

East Link

Post-COVID Service Network

Engagement Period

2021 and 2022 Service Recovery Engagement

- **Comprehensive, equity-focused engagement approach**
 - Form Mobility Boards with transit riders including priority populations for East, North, and South King County
 - Form Partner Review Boards with representatives from jurisdictions, employers, institutions, community organizations for East, North, and South King County
 - Contract with community-based organizations for equitable public engagement
 - Online formats with in-person when Safe Start plan allows
- **Engagement goals**
 - Countywide - seek public input to shape:
 - Post-COVID permanent service change (anticipated September 2022)
 - Interim service changes in September 2021 and March 2022
 - Eastside - seek public input to shape transit service integration with Link light rail stations opening March 2023

COVID Impact on Budget

Revenue Outlook

- \$1B reduced sales tax revenue 2021-2028 projected
- \$1B+ loss of fare and other revenues with slow return of ridership (2021 estimated to be 25% lower than 2019)

Budget Approach

- Preserve service levels as long as possible
- Reduce non-service costs
- 30% reduction in our Capital investments
- Prioritize investments where needs are greatest

Long Term Impacts

- Without new funding, face significant shortfalls in 2025-2026



Metro's Proposed Two-year Budget

- County Executive transmitted budget on Sept 22nd
- King County Council approved the budget on November 17th
- More information on the Metro Matters Blog
 - <https://kingcountymetro.blog/2020/11/18/king-county-metro-2021-22-budget-adopted-delivering-reliable-transit-service-to-the-region/>



Highlights of Proposed Budget

- Commitment to rebuild service, focusing on routes that retained strong ridership; implementation of several RapidRide lines (Delridge, Madison, Renton/Kent/Auburn) and Sound Transit Link light rail integration
- Co-create with community to reimagine safety on board Metro's services reviewing and making changes to enforcement-type practices to achieve by 2022
- New Flexible Services in Skyway
- Purchase of 40 battery electric buses and new charging infrastructure at South Base; build charging infrastructure for additional 260 battery electric buses by 2028.
- Community Engagement resources that invest in community partnerships and improve access and participation among priority populations

Impacts of I-976

Transit impacts of Oct 15 ruling that I-976 is unconstitutional:

- I-976 would have eliminated around \$60 million a year in local transit and road funds, including almost \$23 million that the City of Seattle uses to support transit service in the city.
- An estimated \$4B in cuts to transit, road, and ferry service throughout the state are now preserved.
- Voter-approved fees and bonds for Sound Transit projects are preserved



Impacts of STBD Renewal

City of Seattle voters approved Prop 1 to fund the Seattle Transportation Benefit District anticipated to provide \$39 million annually over the next six years to fund transit, capital projects and transit access. Funds are pledged to:

- Maintain 2,800 to 3,100 weekly trips on Metro
- Invest in West Seattle and Duwamish Valley to address bridge closure and COVID recovery
- Sustain Seattle's low-income fare program

