



King County Regional Transit Safety Task Force

Briefing to King County Council – Committee of the Whole

The King County Regional Transit Safety Implementation Plan, developed by the Regional Transit Safety Task Force, delivers directly on the priorities outlined in King County Council Motion 16783, Section C. Kicked off in March 2025 in response to escalating operator assaults, visible drug use, and broader public safety pressures, the Task Force has engaged over 250 diverse stakeholders across the transit system of King County.

Over the course of five months the Task Force hosted a Kickoff Event to identify gaps & challenges, 14 working sessions to generate over 150 unique solutions to those challenges and a Solutions Summit now organized into an Implementation Plan that details initiatives and workstreams. The attached Implementation Plan provides details on the activities within the 6 identified initiatives.

Highlights from the Implementation Plan aligned to the requirements of Motion include:

-  **To eliminate delays and confusion during emergencies**, regional interagency coordination is strengthened through establishing a regional response infrastructure with formal MOUs, unified response protocols, standardized incident definitions, and a proposed Unified Regional Operations Center that connects Metro, Sound Transit, law enforcement, dispatchers, and local jurisdictions.
-  **To increase rider trust and accountability**, a regionwide Rider Code of Conduct campaign introduces standardized signage and aligned enforcement protocols under K.C.C. 28.96 and local laws.
-  **To provide visible presence and quicker interventions at high-incident locations**, on-the-ground safety is enhanced with increased staffing of diverse responders, site-based pilots, expanded real-time data sharing, and outreach and reporting tools that shorten response times and improve perceptions of safety.
-  **To reduce daily risks faced by frontline staff**, operator safety is reinforced through installation of physical barriers across the bus fleet, paired with new training, post-incident support, and supervisor backup.
-  **To ensure vulnerable riders are met with alternative responses instead of enforcement-first approaches**, task force priorities expand to include behavioral health crisis response, youth-centered safety strategies, and support for unhoused riders.

Task Force Publications

Insights from the Kickoff: A synthesis of the challenges, proposed solutions, and promising practices identified during and after the March 20 event and survey.

Solutions in Review: A summary of the initial actionable priorities that emerged from the solution development process.

Proposed Funding from King County Council

Most workstreams can move forward with investments already included in budgets. However, several major commitments will require new, dedicated funding from Council. The items listed below highlight the activities where Council's investment will directly determine the pace and scale of implementation.



King County Proposed Investments

		Priority	Estimate	Recurring/ One-Time Costs
Regional Coordination & Alignment				
Regional Alignment of Incidence Response				
Interagency Response Infrastructure	Establish regional response infrastructure with MOUs and unified protocols across Metro, Sound Transit, police, fire, EMS, and local jurisdictions, defining roles and escalation standards for all incidents, including low-level events.	High Priority	\$\$\$	One-Time
Centralized Safety Data Platform	Build a centralized platform that integrates incident reports and 911 data across all transit agencies, standardizes entry, provides real-time access, and enables cross-jurisdictional, location-specific safety response.	High Priority	\$\$\$	One-Time
Regionwide Code of Conduct Alignment				
Regional Code of Conduct Campaign	Develop and launch a unified Code of Conduct campaign across all regional transit agencies, including standardized signage and public education.	High Priority	\$\$\$	One-Time
Site-Specific Safety Strategies				
Priority Area Identification	Use existing technologies and heat maps to proactively identify safety priority zones and target resources accordingly. Include all frontline workers (operators, supervisors, maintenance, facilities, operators) in the data reporting process.	High Priority	\$\$\$	One-Time
Site-Based Safety Pilot Expansion	Expand successful safety pilots like those at 3rd & Main and Burien Transit Center to other identified priority zones.	High Priority	\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Location-Specific Incident Reporting	Improve data collection systems to capture incident details at specific stops, stations, and intersections rather than only along routes to enable more precise location-based analysis and response.		\$\$\$\$\$	One-Time
Alternative Response and Regional Response Infrastructure				
Outreach Team Hours and Coverage	Expand outreach services beyond daytime shifts (e.g Burien Transit Center) to include nights, weekends, and additional high-need locations. Operators and officers noted frequent incidents during overnight hours without available behavioral health support.	High Priority	\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Co-Response Models	Increase deployments where behavioral health professionals accompany law enforcement or transit security to certain incidents. This supports de-escalation and better outcomes in high-risk situations.		\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Pre-Booking Diversions	Expand pre-booking diversions partnership to increase referrals and service connections for frequent offenders with behavioral health or substance issues.		\$\$	Recurring
Regional Outreach Data Infrastructure	Create a centralized regional database to track outreach interactions and outcomes, using data to secure resources, identify service gaps, and guide outreach and housing team deployment.		\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Regional Coalition	Establish a formal regional coordination framework through MOUs and regular convenings that align transit agencies, outreach providers, housing agencies, and behavioral health services.		\$\$\$	One-Time
Alternative Response and Regional Response Infrastructure				
Outreach Transport Vehicle Resources	Acquire and deploy designated vehicles (e.g., retrofitted buses or vans) for outreach and placement activities, providing safe, dedicated transport to shelters, housing sites, and safe spaces for riders in crisis.		\$\$\$\$\$	One-Time
Outreach Teams Mobility	Transition behavioral health outreach teams from being stationed only at hubs like Burien Transit Center to being mobile across the system. Equip them with vehicles to reach high priority locations and high-risk lines. expand hours & locations; vehicle		\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Regional Responder & Outreach Staffing				
Transit Security Staffing				
Transit Resource Officer Unit	Expand Transit Resource Officer Unit - Transit Police Outreach Unit and contracted security provider outreach teams to increase coverage, including after-hours and weekend response.		\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring

* Tier 1 (\$0–49K): \$, Tier 2 (\$50K–249K): \$\$, Tier 3 (\$250K–999K): \$\$\$, Tier 4 (\$1M–4.9M): \$\$\$\$\$, or Tier 5 (\$5M+): \$\$\$\$\$\$



		Priority	Estimate	Recurring/ One-Time Costs
Non-Enforcement Crisis Staffing				
KC Outreach Groups	Expand County-led and partner outreach teams to provide broader non-enforcement coverage on transit, including after-hours. Focus on connecting unhoused riders to housing, behavioral health, and essential services with faster, more coordinated support.		\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Long-Term Case Management	Secure funding and partnerships to expand long-term case management program. This ensures ongoing support after the initial crisis response to reduce repeat incidents on transit.		\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Co-Response Models	Increase deployments where behavioral health professionals accompany law enforcement or transit security to certain incidents.		\$\$\$	Recurring
Field Staffing & Support				
Field Operations and Backend Resources				
First Line Supervisor Staffing Increase	Increase field supervisor staffing to improve incident response capability, reduce response times, and avoid coverage gaps, especially during security incidents requiring multiple supervisors.	High Priority	TBD	Recurring
Field Safety Review Staffing	Assess current staffing dedicated to field safety reviews, design assessments, and security monitoring, and determine whether additional resources are needed to support a more proactive and sustained focus on built environment safety.		\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$	Recurring
Resource Support for Implementation and Technology	Allocate additional resources to support Safety & Security technology and analytics roles and prioritize backend system improvements, where support is most urgently needed to ensure successful implementation and functionality.		\$\$\$	Recurring
Transit Employee & Rider Reporting				
Operator Incident Reporting				
On-Vehicle Operator Reporting Tools	Deploy operator tools for quick, safe in-service incident reporting, including DDU buttons, tablets, and potential future integration of mobile apps		\$\$	One-Time
Rider Reporting Education				
Rider Reporting Education Campaign	Launch a coordinated campaign using digital ads, social media, signage, operator announcements, and vehicle materials to raise awareness of reporting options and what riders can expect after reporting."		\$\$\$	One-Time
Rider Reporting Access				
Create Unified Reporting App	Design, develop, and launch a unified regional app or digital tool that allows riders to report issues silently and in real time using photos, location data, and QR codes displayed on vehicles and in stations.		\$\$\$\$	One-Time
Safe Transit Envrionments				
Community Activation & Stewardship				
Community-Led Transit Space Activation	Offer modest grants and partnerships to community groups to organize clean-up, beautification, and stewardship activities at stations and stops, fostering community ownership and improving perceived and actual safety.		\$\$\$	Recurring
Bus Partitions Installation				
Operator Protection Infrastructure	Retrofit existing buses with operator partitions and complete installation of protective barriers on new buses to reduce operator exposure to assaults and threatening behaviors, based on rising assault trends and peer system best practices.	High Priority	\$\$\$\$\$	One-Time
Site-Specific Design Improvements for High-Incident Zones				
Recurring Station and Stop Safety Inspections	Implement structured, recurring station and stop safety inspections to proactively identify and resolve maintenance and security issues, ensuring consistent upkeep and rapid response to emerging risks.		\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Recurring

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