



Metropolitan King County Council Staff Report

Committee:	Metropolitan King County Council		
Agenda Item:	13	Analyst(s):	Mary Bourguignon
Proposed No.:	2026-0218	Meeting Date:	August 18, 2026

OVERVIEW

TOPIC: Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 would prevent the deletion of Metro's Route 372 under the Lynnwood Link Connections service changes approved by Ordinance 19751.

LEGISLATION SUMMARY

In March 2024, the Council approved Ordinance 19751, the **Lynnwood Link Connections** transit restructure, authorizing Metro to make changes to nearly two dozen bus routes to coordinate with the extension of Sound Transit's Link light rail to Lynnwood.

The proposed ordinance would amend Ordinance 19751 to prevent one of those authorized changes, the deletion of Route 372 at Metro's Fall 2026 service change beginning August 29, 2026. The proposed ordinance states that the Council finds that it is not prudent to delete Route 372 both because of the identified service growth need for the corridor served by Route 372 and also because full replacement service for Route 372 will not be in place until Sound Transit's Stride S3 (522) bus rapid transit line opens in 2028.

KEY ISSUES FROM THE ANALYSIS

- A. **The proposed ordinance would declare an emergency due to the timeline.** For Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 to be effective prior to Metro's Fall service change (August 29, 2026), it must bypass committee and be approved as an emergency.
- B. **The proposed legislation would reverse past policy direction.** Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 would reverse the authorization provided by Ordinance 19751 for Metro to delete Route 372 and would require instead that Route 372 be retained.
- C. **Operational and fiscal feasibility of the proposed legislation are unknown.** Metro has been preparing to implement the Fall 2026 service change, including scheduling operators and fleet, allocating budget, and updating physical signs and schedules. If Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 is adopted on August 18, 2026, it is not known how or if Metro would be able to provide operators, buses, and budget to continue service on Route 372 past August 29, 2026.

Lynnwood Link

Connections. In March 2024, in anticipation of the extension of Sound Transit's 1 Line light rail to Lynnwood City Center, the Council approved Ordinance 19751, a transit service restructure that authorized Metro to make changes to nearly two dozen bus routes. Figure 1 shows the restructure area.

Because of Metro's ongoing capacity issues, road construction in the project area, the uncertain timing of the 2 Line's opening across Lake Washington (needed to provide the full complement of trains for Lynnwood service), and the future opening of the Pinehurst light rail station, Ordinance 19751 allowed Metro to implement the transit restructure in phases, with changes to begin at the Fall 2024 service change.¹

Figure 1. Lynnwood Link Connections Transit Network



As directed, Metro began implementing Lynnwood Link Connections during the Fall 2024 service change. At the time, Metro estimated that the restructure, when fully implemented, would add 132,642 annual service hours to the restructure area by 2027. Following the opening of Sound Transit's 2 Line across Lake Washington in March 2026, and with the

¹ Metro typically makes two major service changes each year: in the Fall (typically scheduled just prior to the start of the school year) and in the Spring (typically scheduled in late March). Service changes that are not determined by Metro's General Manager to be required due to an emergency and that are above a defined administrative threshold (affect a route's weekly service hours by 25% or less, move the location of a bus stop by ½ mile or less, or only change route numbers) must be approved by the Council (K.C.C. 28.94.020).

opening of the Pinehurst Station planned for the third quarter of 2026, Metro has stated that it plans to implement all the remaining service changes authorized by Ordinance 19751 at its Fall 2026 service change, which will begin on August 29, 2026. Attachment 2 to this staff report lists the routes affected by Ordinance 19751 and shows when the authorized changes were (or are planned to be) made.

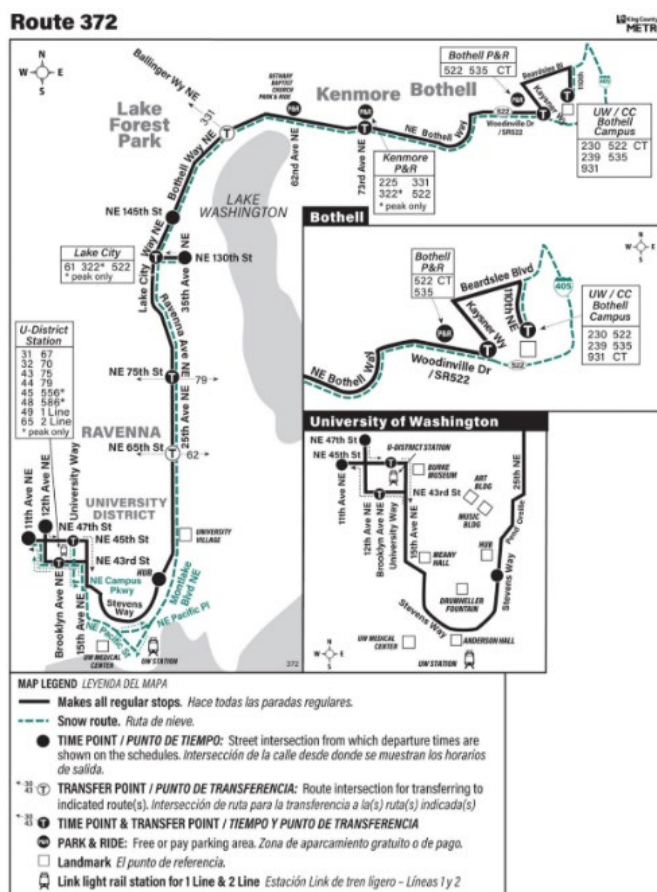
Route 372. Ordinance 19751 authorized Metro to delete Route 372, which currently travels between UW Bothell and U District Station via Lake Forest Park.

Figure 2 shows the current pathway of Route 372, as of August 18, 2026, prior to the deletion that was authorized by Ordinance 19751.

Ordinance 19751 stated that replacement service for Route 372 following its deletion would be provided by:

- Metro bus routes 72, 77, 322, 331
- Sound Transit's S3 (522) bus rapid transit line.

Figure 2. Route 372 as of August 18, 2026



Attachment A to Ordinance 19751 stated that Route 372 would be deleted “after Link 2 Line [is] in operation across Lake Washington between Downtown Seattle and Bellevue, and Sound Transit considers changes to ST Express Route 522, and construction along 145th St is substantially complete.” Following that guidance, Metro has stated that it plans to delete Route 372 at its Fall 2026 service change, which begins August 29, 2026.

In terms of the replacement service for Route 372 identified in Ordinance 19751:

- **Route 72** is a new route that will operate between Shoreline South Station and U District Station via Lake City. Metro has stated that service on this new route will begin at the Fall 2026 service change.

- **Route 77** is a new route that will operate between Bitter Lake and U District Station via the new Pinehurst Station. Metro has stated that service on this new route will begin at the Fall 2026 service change.
- **Route 322**, which operates during peak hours between Kenmore Park & Ride and First Hill via Northgate and Roosevelt Stations, was revised at the Fall 2024 service change to serve Northgate Station and South Lake Union via Mercer Street before serving First Hill via Eighth Avenue and Boren Avenue.
- **Route 331**, which serves Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Aurora Village, and Shoreline, was revised at the Fall 2024 service change to serve Mountlake Terrace Station. Metro states that Route 331 will be further revised at the Fall 2026 service change, as authorized by Ordinance 19751, to extend to UW Bothell. Service frequency on the route has been increased, and the span of service has been lengthened to operate between 5:30 AM and 12:00 AM on weekdays.
- **Sound Transit Express 522** currently operates between Woodinville Park & Ride and Roosevelt along Bothell Way and Lake City Way. Sound Transit indicates that it will change the southern terminus from Roosevelt Station to Shoreline South Station. Route 522 is meant to preview the upcoming Stride S3 (522) bus rapid transit line, which is currently under construction and planned to open in 2028.

The King County Metro Transit 2025 System Evaluation,² which evaluated each Metro bus route based on the policy direction and priorities in Metro's Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines,³ identified a service growth need for an additional 43,150 annual service hours for the corridor served by Route 372.

ANALYSIS

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Key Issue A. The proposed ordinance would declare an emergency due to the timeline.

As noted above, Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 would require Metro to retain Route 372, rather than deleting it as Metro is currently instructed to do under Ordinance 19751, and which Metro states it is planning to do as part of its Fall 2026 service change beginning August 29, 2026. Because the start of the Fall 2026 service change is 11 days from the date of this Council meeting, Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 must bypass committee and must be passed by the Council as an emergency ordinance if it is to be effective by the date of the Fall 2026 service change.⁴

² Motion 19643

³ Ordinance 19367

⁴ Every ordinance approved by the Council must be presented to the Executive within five days for consideration. The Executive has 10 days to sign, decline to sign, or veto the ordinance. Once either the Executive has approved the ordinance or 10 days have elapsed without veto or signature, or the Council has

Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 states that the Council finds that it is not prudent to delete Route 372 as currently authorized both because of the magnitude of the service growth need for Route 372 identified in the 2025 System Evaluation and also because full replacement service for Route 372 will not be in place until the opening of Sound Transit's Stride S3 (522) bus rapid transit line, which is currently expected to occur in 2028.

The proposed ordinance states that emergency action is necessary to ensure it is effective before the date of the Fall 2026 service change to prevent the deletion of Route 372. 🏠

Key Issue B. The proposed legislation would reverse past policy direction. Ordinance 19751 approved a “major” service change⁵ affecting multiple bus routes. Metro developed that service change through the federal, county, labor, and operational processes described below. Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 would reverse one element of that previously approved service change shortly before implementation. Specific processes that guided the development, approval, and implementation of Ordinance 19751 included:

- **Federal law.** Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,⁶ Metro must prepare an analysis of each major service change demonstrating that the proposed service change would not result in a disproportionate burden on low-income populations or a disparate impact on minority populations. Metro prepared a Title VI analysis for the Lynnwood Link Connections transit restructure, which was included as part of the transmittal packet with Ordinance 19751.⁷
- **King County Code.** The Code defines the types of service changes (emergency and administrative) that Metro's General Manager is authorized to make without Council approval, and states that all other service changes (considered “major” changes) are subject to approval by the Council.⁸ The Lynnwood Link Connections service restructure was considered a major service change and it was reviewed and approved by Council as required by the Code.

overridden a veto by six votes, the ordinance is **enacted**. An ordinance's **effective date** is 10 days after enactment unless the ordinance specifies a later date as the effective date. An ordinance adopted as an emergency, which requires six affirmative votes, is both enacted and effective when the Council adopts it (King County Charter §230).

⁵ Under K.C.C. 28.94.020, Metro's General Manager has the authority to make service changes during an emergency (such as a snowstorm) or to make minor administrative changes (such as moving a bus stop to avoid a construction project). All other changes are considered “major” service changes and require approval by the Council.

⁶ Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, including people with limited English proficiency. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires all transit agencies that receive federal funding to report every three years on how they have complied with Title VI. In addition, transit agencies must prepare a Title VI equity analysis for any major service change and for all fare changes.

⁷ Title VI analysis for the Lynnwood Link Connections transit service change ([link](#)).

⁸ K.C.C. 28.94.020

Specifically, following transmittal in February 2024 of the Executive’s proposed Lynnwood Link Connections service change ordinance, the Council’s Transportation, Economy, and Environment (TrEE) Committee discussed the proposal at its February 20, 2024, and March 19, 2024, meetings, amending the proposed ordinance and passing it out of committee on March 19, 2024. The Council further amended the legislation and passed it on March 26, 2024.

- **Adopted County policy.** Metro’s adopted Strategic Plan and Service Guidelines⁹ set criteria for adding, reducing, and restructuring service. A service restructure, such as Lynnwood Link Connections, is a coordinated set of changes to multiple routes and services within a large area. For restructures, the Service Guidelines direct Metro’s planning, equity analysis, and community engagement. Metro followed these policies when developing the Lynnwood Link Connections restructure.¹⁰

Specifically, after developing an initial plan for the restructure area in coordination with Sound Transit in 2021, Metro coordinated a three-phase community engagement process between early 2022 and Summer 2023, which included a community-based Mobility Board and a jurisdictional and agency Partner Review Board, as well as broader engagement with several iterations of a proposal for restructured bus service in the area. Metro’s proposal was then reviewed by the Executive, who transmitted it to the Council for review in February 2024.

- **Collective bargaining agreement (CBA).** The existing CBA between King County and ATU Local 587¹¹ defines the timeline and processes for the “operators picks” through which bus operators select their schedules at two picks each year, at least 20 weeks apart, for the assignments operators will take for the upcoming Spring or Fall service change. The pick process is organized by seniority and determines the operating base to which each operator will report, as well as each operator’s schedule, including workdays, routes, runs, and other assignments.
- **Operational procedures.** Prior to each service change, Metro staff update physical and web-based route schedules, update physical bus stop signs, and post information at affected bus stops about upcoming changes to bus service.¹² Metro also reaches out to potentially affected riders through a combination of media releases, outreach to community-based organizations and local elected officials, and signs or staff at affected bus stops, typically beginning about a month before

⁹ Ordinance 19367

¹⁰ Metro prepared both an equity analysis ([link](#)) and a public engagement report for the Lynnwood Link Connections transit service change ([link](#)).

¹¹ Ordinance 19668

¹² Many of these procedures are covered in Metro’s Route Facilities Guidelines ([link](#)).

the relevant service change. For the Fall 2026 service change, Metro and the Executive began this final phase of publicity and outreach on August 3, 2026.¹³

The Lynnwood Link Connections transit service change proposal approved through Ordinance 19751 was developed and has been implemented to date following these policies and procedures. Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 would reverse part of the policy direction Metro was given through Ordinance 19751 and would require Metro to make a change to the Fall 2026 service change without following the other planning, policy, equity, engagement, labor, and facilities procedures that are typically followed under federal, County, and labor policies prior to proposing, approving, or implementing a major¹⁴ service change.

Attachment A to Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 states that Route 372 may be reviewed for possible service revisions or deletion via a future service change ordinance after the Stride S3 Line is opened. 🏠

Key Issue C. Operational and fiscal feasibility of the proposed legislation are unknown. As noted above, Metro has been preparing to implement the Fall 2026 service change, including scheduling operators and fleet, allocating budget, updating physical signs and schedules, and alerting potentially affected riders under the policies and procedures described above. If Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 is adopted on August 18, 2026, it is not known whether Metro would be able to reverse those actions or whether Metro would be able to provide operators, buses, and budget to continue service on Route 372 past August 29, 2026, which is 11 days from the date of this Council meeting. As of this writing, Metro has not been asked to provide an estimate of the cost or feasibility of providing continued service on Route 372 past August 29, 2026. 🏠

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 and its attachment
2. Ordinance 19751 (Lynnwood Link Connections) Timing of Bus Route Changes

¹³ Executive Zahilay, “King County Metro announces major service expansion across King County,” August 3, 2026 ([link](#)). Metro Matters, “Nine new routes, more than 3,000 additional weekly trips and stronger Link light rail connections begin Aug. 29,” August 3, 2026 ([link](#))

¹⁴ Note that although Proposed Ordinance 2026-0218 would be adopted as an emergency ordinance due to the timing of the Fall 2026 service change, the required retention of Route 372 would be classified as a “major” service change rather than an “emergency” service change under K.C.C. 28.94.020. That is because the authority to determine that an emergency exists that requires “any change to established routes, schedules or classes of service” is vested under the Code with Metro’s General Manager.

Ordinance 19751 (Lynnwood Link Connections) Timing of Bus Route Changes

✓ = New route | ~ = Revised route | ✗ = Deleted route

Route	Pathway (<i>Former pathway for deleted routes</i>)	Date
16 ✗	<i>Bitter Lake to South Lake Union</i>	Fall 2024
20 ✗	<i>Lake City to U District</i>	Fall 2024
28 ~	Broadview to Downtown Seattle	Fall 2024
61 ✓	Lake City to Greenwood via Northgate Station	Fall 2024
64 ✗	<i>Lake City to South Lake Union</i>	Fall 2024
65 ~	Shoreline S/148 th Station to U District via UW Station	Fall 2024, Fall 2026 (on reroute due to construction)
73 ✗	<i>North 145th Street to US Station</i>	Fall 2024
301 ✗	<i>Aurora Village TC to Northgate Station</i>	Fall 2024
302 ✗	<i>Richmond Beach to First Hill via Northgate Station</i>	Fall 2024
303 ~	Aurora Village TC to First Hill via Northgate Station	Fall 2024
304 ✗	<i>Shoreline P&R to Northgate Station</i>	Fall 2024
320 ✗	<i>Kenmore P&R to South Lake Union via Northgate Station</i>	Fall 2024
322 ~	Kenmore P&R to First Hill via Northgate, Roosevelt Stations	Fall 2024
330 ✗	<i>Shoreline College to Lake City (NE 125th St)</i>	Fall 2024
331 ~	Shoreline College to UW Bothell via MLT Station	Fall 2024, Fall 2026
333 ✓	MLT Stn to Shoreline S/148 th Station via Shoreline College	Fall 2024 (on reroute due to construction)
345 ~	Shoreline S/148 th Stn to Northgate Station via Bitter Lake	Fall 2024
346 ~	Aurora Village TC to Shoreline S/148 th Station	Fall 2024
347 ✗	<i>MLT Station to Northgate Station</i>	Fall 2024
348 ~	Richmond Beach to Northgate Station via Shoreline N/185th	Fall 2024
365 ✓	Shoreline N/185 th Station to Northgate Station via Haller Lake	Fall 2024 (on reroute due to construction)
45 ~	Greenwood to U District Station	Fall 2026
72 ✓	Shoreline S/148 th Station to U District Station via Lake City	Fall 2026
77 ✓	Bitter Lake to U District Station via Pinehurst Station	Fall 2026
372 ✗	<i>UW Bothell to U District Station via Lake Forest Park</i>	Fall 2026