



King County

Department of Transportation

13013

**Director's Office 2009 Business Case
Budget Proviso Response
April 30, 2009**

Executive summary

The foremost purpose of the King County Department of Transportation (KCDOT) Director's Office is to support the delivery of transportation services by the department's Transit, Road Services, Airport, Fleet Administration and Marine divisions.

The Director's Office operates under a business model that centralizes critically important work in support of the divisions. This work includes the following:

- Leadership and administration
- Public information/media relations
- Community relations
- Regional transportation planning, grants and transit-oriented development
- Emergency preparedness
- Information technology
- Human resources
- Budget and finance.

Central provision of services by the Director's Office largely eliminates redundancy of services that cut across all divisions and is effective in advancing the divisions' missions. Director's Office staff members have extensive experience and skills as well as institutional knowledge of the divisions and the county; their work gets results. Leadership from the Director's Office has established the department as a central player in regional forums where decisions are made about transportation policy, projects and funding. Grant services have helped the divisions obtain millions of dollars to purchase buses, build roads and bridges, upgrade airport runways, and undertake ferry projects. Community outreach has paved the way for smooth implementation of transit service changes and road construction projects. Media relations work has resulted in information about the department's transportation services being widely available in the news media and on the web. These and many other accomplishments for the divisions are detailed in the full report.

Provision of centralized services by the Director's Office is also cost-effective for the divisions. The divisions do not need to maintain their own full-time staffs or hire consultants to perform work done by the Director's Office. The department overall achieves economies of scale because the Director's Office uses single business systems, such as databases, for all divisions. The Director's Office provides the capacity to carry out existing and new functions that are

mandated by the county or by state or federal law, including the county's human resources and information technology service delivery management programs.

The Director's Office service delivery model yields other benefits as well. Central county staff members who are responsible for transportation issues, human resources, information technology, media relations, emergency preparedness and other functions have single points of contact in the Director's Office for all the divisions, enhancing communication and accountability. Coordination by the Director's Office ensures consistency in application of county policies and in responses to county reporting requirements. Director's Office leadership promotes cross-divisional cooperation and innovation—for example, the divisions collaborate on emergency response planning and exercising the plans. The Director's Office represents the county, department and divisions in many external forums concerning transportation policy, funding and coordination. These and more benefits are described in the full proviso response.

Although the Director's Office provides services to the divisions efficiently, the budget shortfalls facing the county and the department are prompting the office to search for more cost-effective ways to work. The Director's Office is systematically evaluating the way it operates—a process set in motion in 2008 and recently reinforced by the council's budget proviso. As a result of this ongoing assessment, the Director's Office is now consolidating community relations and public affairs/media relations services. This fosters development of new approaches to work, such as using online communication tools in place of printing and mailing materials, when appropriate for public communications. The Director's Office also is putting in place business systems that streamline administrative work, further cross-training staff members and developing cost-neutral options for staff support of the subarea transportation boards.

These and more steps will be necessary in light of the budget realities facing the county and KCDOT. Further efficiencies will be identified as part of the 2010-2011 budget process. While the vision, mission and goals of the department for 2010 remain unchanged from 2009, the current economic downturn heavily impacts how we do business. Simply put, we have diminishing revenues to support our service delivery. As we contemplate reductions or shifts, we are reminded that citizens and business are dependent on the services we provide.

As decisions are being formulated, we embrace the strong interest of our community and the evolving methods of exchanging information with them. Public forums, web sites and blogs are among the tools we will be using to engage in meaningful dialogues about our future.

On the national level, the aggressive movement by the federal government to stimulate the economy by injecting funding into the region has created opportunities, some of which include new lines of business. Strategically, we will seek seed funding for these new areas while likely downsizing some existing programming.

The Director's Office's work, results, and plans for future support to the divisions are described in detail in the report that follows. The Director's Office will continue to work with the divisions to regularly review the divisions' business needs and the cost effectiveness of maintaining services in the Director's Office.

Introduction

The King County Council adopted the 2008-2009 budget for the King County Department of Transportation (KCDOT) Director's Office with a proviso stating that \$50,000 should be restricted until the Executive transmits a business case for the Director's Office. The proviso further stated that the business case should demonstrate how the Director's Office activities support and advance the mission of the divisions within the Department of Transportation.

This business case responds to the proviso. The Director's Office developed this response with substantial input from division leaders. The KCDOT director and deputy director met with division directors to discuss how the Director's Office does and does not support their division's service delivery and objectives. These meetings also became opportunities to identify emerging issues and needs as well as budget constraints and possible ways to achieve efficiencies as the Director's Office and the divisions work together. These discussions will allow the Director's Office to make adjustments to better support the divisions as their needs change in the future.

Description of the KCDOT business model

The Department of Transportation is organized into five divisions—Transit, Road Services, Airport, Fleet Administration, and Marine—and the Director's Office.

The KCDOT Director's Office provides transportation policy planning for the county and advances the missions and goals of the department and its divisions by providing leadership, oversight, coordination and direct services. KCDOT has a departmental mission and overall goals, and the divisions have developed individual mission statements and goals pertaining to their unique service areas.

The Director's Office operates under a business model that centralizes critically important work in support of the divisions. This work is in the following areas:

- Leadership and administration
- Public information/media relations
- Community relations
- Regional transportation planning, grants and transit-oriented development
- Emergency preparedness
- Information technology
- Human resources
- Budget and finance

Functions of the Director's Office

The Director's Office performs the following functions:

Leadership and administration

The KCDOT director, deputy director and managers in the Director's Office work with the divisions to formulate shared goals and organize collaborative work on transportation service

delivery, grant applications, transportation planning and policy development, human resource management, legislation, emergency planning and other matters. The office serves as a central hub for analyzing transportation issues for divisions and the county. It also provides high-level government relations on transportation issues for the divisions, department and executive. The director provides oversight and coordination on regional transportation projects and efforts to secure new funding sources for transportation services and projects and plays a leadership role in interagency transportation workgroups. The Director's Office oversees division performance and provides a variety of administrative services including scheduling, correspondence, reporting and records management.

These functions have helped the divisions define clear policy and project objectives and move their agendas forward. The Director's Office has made the county an increasingly prominent player in local, regional and state transportation decision-making forums.

Public affairs/media relations

The Director's Office public affairs staff provides a wide range of communications services to advance division goals. These include managing media relations; producing communication products; providing strategic public affairs direction, planning and execution for initiatives and activities; notifying the public of road closures and Metro service disruptions; producing news and training videos; providing photography services to all county departments; managing public disclosure requests; supporting the operation of the county's Joint Information Center; and representing the department and divisions on a variety of interagency communications groups. The Transit and Road Services divisions have particularly heavy needs for public information services and rely on the Director's Office for this support; they do not have public affairs/media relations staff of their own.

In 2007, the Director's Office conducted a strategic communications planning process to identify and better serve the communication needs of the divisions. As a result of this process, public affairs and community relations staff members jointly developed a strategic communication plan. This plan emphasizes four key areas that are consistent with the divisions' goals: safety, security and preparedness; environmental stewardship; regional transportation planning and fiscal responsibility. This plan guides all communications products delivered by the Director's Office. Public affairs and community relations staff members will consult with the divisions annually and update the plan to meet the divisions' current needs.

Results for 2008 include issuing 250 news releases, coordinating responses to nearly 1,000 news inquiries, processing nearly 200 public disclosure requests, producing 55 videos and cataloging 7,300 new digital photos for use in county communications.

Community relations and communications

The Director's Office offers community relations and communications services to inform and involve local communities as the divisions develop and implement projects, services and policies. The community relations staff is also responsible for department-wide employee communications.

Community relations work is guided by the KCDOT Strategic Communications Plan jointly developed by the community relations and public affairs staffs (described in the section above.)

Services include conducting community outreach for policy initiatives for service and capital proposals; staffing community advisory committees for the Transit and Road Services divisions; producing employee communications including newsletters and intranet content; producing and maintaining the department web site; and producing presentations and communications materials for department and division leaders. The Transit and Road Services divisions depend on the Director's Office for community relations and communications services—just as they do for public affairs functions—as they use these services frequently and do not have division staff to perform this work.

Community relations work advances the work of the divisions in many ways. The Transit and Road Services divisions rely on community outreach to identify what transportation services communities want. The Airport Division turns to the Director's Office for assistance with community outreach, tenant relations, and other communication initiatives. The recently formed Marine Division is leveraging the wide range of services offered by the community relations staff to ensure the most cost-effective management of this small division. Fleet Administration receives assistance with its web site and with communication materials for projects such as the anti-idling campaign for employees who drive county vehicles.

In 2008, community relations work achieved the following results: organized 46 meetings, produced 22 public mailings—including translated versions; gathered and evaluated public comments about service proposals for the Transit Division; organized 10 meetings, staffed six community advisory groups and produced eight mailings concerning projects for the Road Services division; provided staff support for major transportation projects such as planning to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct (AWV); and produced more than a dozen newsletters, reports, fact sheets and other materials for the divisions.

Regional transportation planning and grants

The Office of Regional Transportation Planning (ORTP), which includes grants services and Transit Oriented Development (TOD), provides transportation planning and grants services supporting King County's leadership role in regional and countywide transportation.¹

ORTP actively supports the Transit Division's goal of providing products and services needed by citizens, businesses and communities. The group does this by working with regional partners and community leaders—including subarea boards—to identify needs and communicate plans and policies and by pursuing grant funding to support transportation services. The TOD staff works with cities and developers on mixed-use projects to strategically place housing, employment and shopping near transit services with the goal of reducing residents' dependence on driving as well as traffic congestion.

ORTP supports the Road Services Division goal to “be a leader and active partner in planning and carrying out local and regional transportation solutions that support mobility, accessibility and growth management.” By participating in the subarea boards and other forums, ORTP actively communicates with community leaders and elected officials to meet roadway needs,

¹ The Director's Office submitted a separate report to the King County Council on March 18, 2009 that responded to a budget proviso requesting information about transportation grant priorities. That separate report contains more detail about ORTP grants services and accomplishments than is provided here. This reported is expected to be considered by the council on May 12, 2009.

advocates for roadway solutions in regional transportation planning and funding processes, and seeks grants to fund roadway capital projects.

Specific services include aggressively pursuing grant opportunities and providing grants services to the divisions; leading the department's long range transportation policy efforts to ensure that the divisions' needs are reflected; coordinating with local staff members and elected officials to advocate for funding for local needs; developing transit-oriented development projects; supporting development and passage of the county's state and federal legislative agendas through research, analysis and preparation of information; and providing research, analysis, GIS-based graphics support and other services to support the divisions' work on transportation issues.

The regional affairs group has produced significant results for the divisions over the past five years. These include providing grants services resulting in \$35 million for the Road Services Division, more than \$471 million for the Transit Division, and more than \$6 million for ferry projects; helping negotiate the agreement for \$32 million of state funding for transit as part of the AWW projects; and providing support for obtaining \$74 million for transit, roads and marine projects from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and \$41 million for transit from the Lake Washington Urban Partnership Agreement. The group has advanced efforts including the Transit Now program; the Tri-Agency effort to develop recommendations for replacing the AWW; coordination of successful efforts to increase the state gas tax; passage of fuel hedging legislation that benefits the Transit Division; legislative authority for tolling and using toll revenues for transit operations; development of tools supporting investment in non-motorized transportation and land use that promotes transit; and development of a methodology to estimate costs for local roadway preservation that will be used throughout the region.

ORTP organized more than 80 regular and special meetings of local elected officials and jurisdiction staffs to provide information and develop recommendations that led to development of a methodology for estimating preservation and maintenance costs of the local roadway network; approval of regional grant processes and applications; better understanding of the successful implementation of Transit Now; development of proposals from local jurisdictions for the Transit Now partnership program; approval of a list of priority non-motorized projects in South King County that connect communities and provide access to transit; subarea legislative agendas that supported tolling and revenues for transit; and the development of updated interlocal agreements that promote discussion of critical issues across subarea boundaries.

The TOD staff has completed projects at Northgate, Redmond, Renton, Overlake, Olson Myers and Kenmore, and started developing projects at Northgate, Auburn, Burien, South Kirkland, Shoreline and Convention Place Station. These will add park-and-ride capacity, affordable housing, and realize a greater return on underutilized transit assets. The Convention Place development represents a potential investment of nearly \$1 billion in annual revenues to the Transit Operating Fund.

Emergency preparedness program

The Director's Office emergency preparedness manager supports the continuity of transportation services and operations by preparing the department to respond and recover from all hazards—natural or caused by human acts—that are beyond normal service disruptions. The emergency preparedness program integrates emergency management protocols with daily business practices

and improves communications, training, accountability, and partnerships within the department, the county, region and state.

The Director's Office emergency preparedness service advances fundamental division goals: to keep the public and employees safe and to maintain the department's public transportation services during emergency situations.

The emergency preparedness manager provides the following services: coordinating the development of emergency plans for the department; establishing emergency communication and management protocols for the department's leaders; integrating the department's plans with the national incident management system (NIMS); establishing partnerships with other jurisdictions; coordinating efforts to encourage employees to develop personal and family emergency plans; participating in the Regional Coordination and Communications Center when activated for events; and providing leadership and outreach to public works directors across the county to improve information-sharing and coordination. The manager also assists in the organization and delivery of the Airport Division's annual table-top emergency exercise, as well as provides input in the annual review of the division's emergency plan.

The emergency preparedness manager has taken on additional functions as part of the Director's Office's commitment to using its resources efficiently. These include coordinating the department's implementation of the county's Equity and Social Justice Initiative as well as managing the Charitable Campaign for the department.

Accomplishments include achieving compliance with National Incident Management System standards; developing and testing emergency communications methods and protocol for the department; participating in every major exercise offered by King County Office of Emergency Management (OEM); conducting twice-yearly training for the KCDOT line of succession; promoting evacuation drills and earthquake preparedness programs for employees several times a year; playing a significant role in developing a proposal that improves OEM's training and use of emergency coordination center representatives; updating the pandemic flu plan; and strengthening partnerships with local jurisdictions' public works directors, transportation departments, health divisions and first responders. A focus has been to improve communication and coordination concerning maintenance of critical transportation routes during major storms and other emergencies. The KCDOT director hosts meetings of public works directors of local jurisdictions at least once a year.

Information technology service delivery

The Director's Office created the position of information technology service delivery manager pursuant to County Council Motion 12323, concerning the Executive's recommendation for IT reorganization.

The Director's Office IT services are the backbone for the excellent customer service that all the divisions embrace as a goal. IT provides service that enables the divisions to store and organize information about transportation services and present it to the public effectively.

IT services also help the divisions achieve their goals of efficiency by supporting Internet-based communications in place of more costly, less timely communication tools.

Specific functions include managing all IT hardware, software and data infrastructure; ensuring that IT staff members are effectively managed by IT supervisors and managers; supporting the IT components of major new systems such as the One Regional Card for All (ORCA) smart card; supporting department web development and maintenance; supporting continuity of operations during emergency events; strategic planning; and acting as liaison with the county Office of Information Resource Management.

The IT service delivery program has achieved a number of results as it moves toward completion of the reorganization: higher quality IT services, reduced IT costs through inter-divisional and inter-department coordination and reduction of redundancy; and greater oversight, flexibility and coordination of resources to respond to department-wide issues.

Human resources service delivery

The Director's Office created the position of human resources service delivery manager in 2002 pursuant to the county's Human Resources Unification Program. The position reports to both the Human Resources Division of the Executive Services Department and to the KCDOT Director's Office. The goal is that human resources professionals throughout the county provide high-quality, equitable and cost-effective services that meet the county's HR goals and comply with applicable laws and regulations.

The Director's Office human resources service advances a goal shared by all the divisions: "to employ, support and retain a highly skilled, diverse and productive workforce." The human resources organizational model also contributes to the divisions' goals to operate efficiently.

Director's Office services include overseeing service delivery and legal compliance of the department's human resources programs; supervising three division human resources managers; managing Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) activities for the department; and evaluating, providing guidance and representing the divisions on countywide committees to help the divisions enhance human resources functions.

Results include contributing to efficient operations by representing the department's 25 human resources staff members in a variety of forums, such as the countywide steering committees for Accountable Business Transformation (ABT) implementation and for IT reorganization; implementation of the employee furlough program; and ensuring that the department's human resources services and programs are consistent with countywide goals and expectations.

Budget and finance

The Director's Office budget and finance manager provides financial and administrative services to support the Director's Office and the divisions in managing costs, seeking new revenues and delivering transportation services.

The budget and finance manager advances a key goal of all the divisions: efficiency.

This office also provides vital support to the Marine Division and the King County Ferry District as King County creates the organizational structure and operational capability and delivers capital projects necessary to provide ferry service on existing routes and up to five new demonstration routes.

Recent achievements include department compliance with county administrative requirements in a variety of areas; efficient and responsive work with auditors; and organization of the Marine Division. As a result of the budget and finance staff's efforts, the Ferry District has realized significant savings in the contract with Washington State Ferries, entered into an agreement with the state to leverage volume discounts for ferry fuel, successfully secured state approval to purchase fuel without paying state sales tax, negotiated grant agreements with the state and worked closely with ORTP to secure federal grants for ferry projects.

Benefits of the Director's Office business model

KCDOT divisions, as well as the county and the public, derive a number of benefits from the business model under which the Director's Office perform the functions described above. These benefits include the following:

Support for the divisions as they deliver transportation services

The Director's Office performs functions that help the divisions deliver transportation services to county residents. As examples, the office has provided grants management services resulting in millions of dollars of new funding for increased transportation services, has worked with regional partners to advance King County goals as part of transportation policy development and project planning and has coordinated storm response planning among the divisions and the Office of Emergency Management and between the county and other jurisdictions and agencies.

Efficient and effective delivery of services

The Director's Office provides a number of direct services to the divisions, including media relations, community outreach on transit service changes and road capital and street improvement projects and application for grants to fund transit, roads, airport, and fleet projects. This service delivery model yields efficiencies because the divisions can use these specialized services on an as-needed basis and do not have to maintain their own full-time staffs or hire consultants.

This model also enhances the divisions' effectiveness because the Director's Office staff has extensive experience and skills in specialized services as well as the institutional knowledge of departmental and King County government functions.

Implementation of county initiatives and programs

The Director's Office provides leadership and coordination among the divisions for KCDOT's work on countywide initiatives. These include initiatives to save energy, counter climate change, address equity and social justice issues, improve service to rural communities and increase public accountability by reporting on performance measures. The Director's Office leadership on these initiatives has increased employee awareness of them and has resulted in real achievements, such as cuts in energy costs and reduction in idling of county vehicles.

A clear line of communication and accountability between the divisions and the county's executive department

The KCDOT director serves as a single point of contact concerning the department's work overall. In addition, the deputy director, special projects manager, and managers of other functions represent all the divisions on countywide committees and work groups. This model

yields efficiencies by giving county staff members one point of contact for multiple divisions. This organization also gives the divisions opportunities to have their business interests represented at the county level.

Consistent application of county policies, procedures and business practices

Director's Office managers work with division staff members to ensure consistent application of county policies and responses to county requirements. For example, the human resources manager has worked with all the divisions to ensure that the employee furlough program is administered according to policy. The budget and finance manager has worked with the divisions to ensure consistency of the divisions' annual business plans and budget submissions. The IT manager assists and ensures compliance with county security policies and Project Review Board processes.

Innovation and continuous improvement

The Director's Office has initiated strategic planning processes, organized inter-divisional work groups to address issues and taken other steps to improve the productivity and efficiency of the department. One of these steps is reorganization of workgroups with communications responsibilities to provide more streamlined services and support greater use of new communication tools such as social media. Another step is to develop cost-neutral options for staff support of the subarea transportation boards.

Fulfillment of county requirements and other mandates

A number of Director's Office functions are mandated in the county code or administrative plans or in other laws and regulations. These include the following:

- Community outreach services provided by the Director's Office, as well as support for the Transit Advisory Committee and Accessible Services Advisory Committee, implement requirements established in the King County Code (28.94.140).
- Community outreach services also fulfill federal funding requirements that apply to the Road Services and Transit divisions Federal Highway Administration/Washington State Department of Transportation National Environmental Policy Act, State Environmental Policy Act, and Federal Transit Administration (FHWA/WSDOT NEPA, SEPA, and FTA).
- The Director's Office human resources service delivery manager implements the county's Human Resources Unification Program, which seeks to build well-managed, sustainable and efficient human resource service delivery. As part of this integrated centralized and decentralized system, the position reports to both the Human Resources Division of the Executive Services Department and to the KCDOT Director.
- The Director's Office information technology service delivery manager implements County Council Motion 12323, concerning the Executive's recommendation for IT reorganization.

Looking forward

The Director's Office will continue to work with the divisions to regularly review their business needs and find cost-effective ways to support them. At this time, the Director's Office plans to focus on the following areas:

- Support the divisions in finding more revenue by continuing to seek new sources of funding and more efficient ways to work.
- Support the department and divisions in community outreach and communications pursuant to 2010 budget development and plans.
- Support and advance critical transportation policy initiatives for the department and divisions—for example, work with the Executive and County Council on a framework for large scale transit service reductions if necessary.
- Support the integration of division and county efforts into broader federal, state, and regional programs and plans.
- Make greater use of Internet-based communication tools such as blogs, feeds, social media, virtual meetings and online surveys, when these tools will make public communications and outreach more effective and efficient.
- Support and lead the new Marine Division in successfully providing the King County Ferry District's passenger-only ferry service.
- Successfully complete the re-organization of IT services into the Director's Office as well as on-going IT service management.
- Advance the department's use of performance measures to improve the efficiency and productivity of our work.
- Successfully implement the ABT program within the department and divisions.
- Achieve the goals the department has set pursuant to the county's energy and climate change plans and continue to ensure that transportation services are delivered in an equitable and just manner.
- Continue to improve the divisions' preparation to maintain services and provide information to the public during winter storms, earthquakes, flooding, acts of terrorism and other disruptions.
- Fully participate in the development of the county strategic plan, and prepare to develop a strategic plan for the department.
- Ensure stability for the department and divisions at a time of transition in the county.
- Work with divisions and the county Human Resources Department to meet the affirmative action goals set forth in the KCDOT's 2008-2012 affirmative action plan, and continue other efforts to promote diversity in the workplace.

The Director's Office will continually assess divisions' needs and adjust its work programs and priorities as necessary to advance the divisions' work.

In keeping with the Department of Transportation's core mission of providing mobility for the citizens of King County, the Director's Office is committed to providing ongoing support to the divisions as they address the region's critical transportation needs during this challenging time.



King County

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