



King County

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104

206-263-9600 Fax 206-296-0194
TTY Relay: 711
www.kingcounty.gov

February 7, 2024

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

This letter transmits for your consideration a proposed Ordinance that would, if enacted, recommend service revisions to the King County Metro (Metro) bus system in north King County. If adopted, the proposed Ordinance would add five new routes, revise nine routes, and replace 11 routes in phases, with the earliest changes beginning on August 31, 2024, as part of Metro's regular service change.

This proposed service change, proposed concurrently with the Madison Street Area Bus Service Change Ordinance, is intended to improve mobility. It is also intended to better meet customer needs with a focus on historically underserved populations, while delivering integrated transit service that responds to Sound Transit Link light rail (Link) expansion and expected changes to Sound Transit bus service. When fully implemented, this proposal will add approximately 132,000 annual service hours to the system compared to fall 2023, restoring all service hours in the project area that had been suspended since the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Additionally, this proposal includes approximately 17,500 hours of service investment by the city of Seattle. Notably, due to current workforce and vehicle maintenance constraints, Metro may need to implement a reduced version of the proposed network and grow service over time contingent upon operational capacity.

Metro has an opportunity to improve mobility in an equitable and community-driven way by connecting Metro services with the new light rail stations. In fall 2024, Sound Transit is expected to extend the Link 1 Line from Northgate to Lynnwood and open four new stations, offering Link service in new communities. An additional new station at NE 130th Street in Seattle is expected to open in 2026. Sound Transit may also consider changes to ST Express Route 522 once trains can operate across Lake Washington. The frequency of the 1 Line will also be increased when Sound Transit opens the 2 Line across Lake Washington, bringing additional transit options to these communities. The integration of the Metro bus system with

Link will advance equitable outcomes for all by offering Metro customers faster, more frequent, and more reliable connections to jobs, education, recreation, and essential services.

The proposed service revisions are the result of a two-year collaborative process grounded in equity, community engagement, and service design best practices. To focus investment where needs are greatest, Metro's engagement plans, community relationships, and advisory groups centered on equity priority populations defined in Metro's Service Guidelines as communities of color, low or no income populations, disabled populations, foreign-born populations, and people with limited English proficiency. In developing the proposed service revisions, Metro's goal was to include people who have historically been left out of decision-making conversations related to transit, and who are disproportionately affected by these decisions. A comprehensive summary of these activities and how engagement influenced each project phase is provided in the enclosed public engagement report.

Proposed changes will be implemented in phases, contingent upon implementation of infrastructure changes by partner agencies. In addition, some routes may temporarily operate at lower levels of service than proposed until sufficient operational capacity is available. Metro is seeking approval of this complete set of changes that, if adopted by the Council, would be implemented in three phases:

- **Phase 1 (August 2024)** – Initial changes implemented when Link 1 Line extension to Lynnwood opens.
- **Phase 2 (Estimated 2025)** – Changes implemented when or after Sound Transit light rail trains can operate across Lake Washington; 1 Line frequency increases with full 2 Line opening. Sound Transit may also consider changes to Route 522 Express at this time.
- **Phase 3 (Estimated 2026)** – Changes implemented when Link 1 Line NE 130th Street Station opens.

Exceptions based on partner project phasing are also noted in proposed Ordinance Attachment A (see Routes 65, 72, 77, 331, and 372). Additional details about project phasing are provided in the attached executive summary. Sound Transit has not yet finalized 1 Line service levels for the Lynnwood Link extension opening. While Sound Transit expects to operate full service on both the 1 Line and 2 Line once trains are able to cross Lake Washington, any reduced 1 Line service levels between Angle Lake and Lynnwood provided during the interim may impact bus riders connecting with Link. However, Sound Transit is continuing to work to provide as much service as possible when the 1 Line opens to Lynnwood. Metro is coordinating with Sound Transit and Community Transit to understand the frequencies of Link service between Downtown Seattle and Lynnwood before the full opening of the 2 Line and its impacts to transit riders.

The proposed changes are consistent with the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021-2031 and King County Metro Service Guidelines. The project's emphasis on equitable community engagement, equity analysis, and prioritizing investment for people of greater need also aligns with the King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan and the Metro Mobility Framework Report. These improvements will also further the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through increasing transit use.

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Improving transit connections to new Link stations, providing frequent bus service to all stations, creating new east-west connections, improving the span of service, and providing more travel alternatives will result in more people choosing mass transit.

The project's equity analysis ensures consistency with King County's equity and social justice goals. The project's process and outcomes are also consistent with King County's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, 2016-2022; the equity rationale for the proposal is documented in the Equity Impact Review. In accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Title VI regulations (49 CFR Part 21) and King County Code and policy, Metro prepared the August 2024 Lynnwood Link Connections Mobility Project Title VI Service Equity Analysis, which is enclosed with this transmittal.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance to approve public transportation service changes for the Lynnwood Link project area, to be implemented starting in 2024. If your staff have questions, please contact Katie Chalmers, Managing Director, Service Development, Metro Transit Department, at 206-477-5869.

Sincerely,



for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
 ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff
 Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council
Karan Gill, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Penny Lipsou, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive
Michelle Allison, General Manager, Metro Transit Department
Christina O'Claire, Mobility Division Director, Metro Transit Department

Project: Lynnwood Link Connections Mobility Project

Locations: Bothell, Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Seattle, Shoreline

Background

With the opening of five new Link 1 Line stations in north King County and Snohomish County, King County Metro (Metro) has an opportunity to improve mobility in the area in an equitable and community-driven way. The integration of Metro's bus system with Link light rail will offer current and future Metro customers fast, frequent, and reliable connections to jobs, education, recreation, and other essential services.

Informed by King County's Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Strategic Plan and Metro's Mobility Framework, Lynnwood Link Connections Mobility Project staff prioritized outreach and engagement with those whose voices have traditionally not been sufficiently included or considered in many decisions that disproportionately affect them. By engaging and collaborating more closely with those with the greatest need, Metro can better provide freedom of mobility to those who need it most.

The proposed network responds to community-identified needs by offering improved east-west service, new and improved connections with key destinations, more frequent service, and connections to Link light rail. The proposed network also shifts away from peak-only commuter service toward all-day service with more frequency, as well as routes that offer better evening and weekend service. This change aligns with the priorities heard from the community during engagement and reflects new ridership patterns that have emerged following the COVID-19 pandemic. The addition of more weekend and night service reflects that weekends have and continue to maintain higher shares of ridership relative to weekdays when compared to 2019. The reinvestment of service hours from peak-only commuter service to all-day service also reflects that weekday off-peak and night times maintained a higher share of ridership relative to weekday peak periods when compared to 2019.

Service Proposal for Ordinance Approval

Route	Change from Baseline	Summary of Proposed Change
16	Deleted	Delete route
20	Deleted	Delete route
28	Revised	Delete the northern portion of Route 28 in Broadview between NW 100th Pl. and N 143rd St.
45	Revised	Revise route to extend south along University Way to NE Pacific St. and Boat St. layover. Reduce peak period frequency from every 10-12 minutes to every 12-15 minutes
61	New	New route providing frequent east-west service between Lake City, Northgate, and Greenwood
64	Deleted	Delete route
65	Revised	Revise route that has weekday 15 minute frequency south of Lake City and NE 125th, with alternating trips terminating at NE 130th St. and Lake City Way, and the other at the Shoreline South/148th Station via 30th Ave., NE 145th St., 25th Ave. NE, NE 150th St., 15th Ave. NE, and 155th NE

Route	Change from Baseline	Summary of Proposed Change
72	New	New very frequent route between U-District, Lake City and Shoreline South Station operating 7 days per week
73	Deleted	Delete route
77	New	New frequent route providing east-west service between Bitter Lake, the NE 130th St. Station, Lake City, Roosevelt Station, and U District Station
301	Deleted	Delete route
302	Deleted	Delete route
303	Revised	Revise route to serve South Lake Union via Mercer St before serving First Hill. One additional trip added to each of the AM and PM peak periods
304	Deleted	Delete route
320	Deleted	Delete route
322	Revised	Revise route to serve Northgate Station instead of Roosevelt Station, and serve South Lake Union via Mercer St before serving First Hill. Route 322 and 303 would provide coordinated frequent service between Northgate, South Lake Union, and First Hill
330	Deleted	Delete route
331	Revised	Revise to serve Mountlake Terrace Station and extend to UW Bothell. Extend span of service to end at 12 AM on weekdays and 11 PM on weekends
333	New	New route that serves Mountlake Terrace Station, North City via 15th Ave NE, NE 175th, Shoreline Community College, and the Shoreline South/148th Station via 145th St
345	Revised	Revise route to serve the Shoreline South/148th Station instead of Shoreline Community College via Westminster and NE 155th St. Revise pathway to serve DSHS office at North Seattle College
346	Revised	Revise route to serve Meridian Ave between Aurora Village Transit Center and the South Shoreline/148 th Station (via N 155th St.) and provide 30-minute local service throughout the week
347	Deleted	Delete route
348	Revised	Revise route to include two variants so that half of Route 348 trips terminate at Richmond Beach, and the other half terminate at 8th Ave NW. The overlapping portion of the route variants have improved frequent all-day service, with extended span of service until 12 AM. Revise to serve the Shoreline North/185th Station
365	New	New route that serves Northgate Station, North Seattle College, NW Hospital, Haller Lake, the Shoreline South/148th Station via Meridian Ave and 145th St., and the Shoreline North/185th Station via 5th Ave. NE
372	Deleted	Delete route

Related Administrative & Other Changes

Route	Change from Baseline	Summary of Proposed Change
5	No Change	No changes proposed
67	No Change	No changes proposed
75	Revised	Decrease in frequency on weekdays from 10-15 minutes during peak to 15 minutes to better match service levels to demand
Metro Flex	New	New Metro Flex zone serving Kenmore and Lake Forest Park north of SR-522 and Ballinger Way and southeast Mountlake Terrace, providing a connection to Link light rail at Mountlake Terrace Station

Project Phasing Summary

The final proposed network is expected to be implemented in phases built around changes to Sound Transit’s Link light rail and Stride S3 BRT line. Most routes will be impacted in Phase 1 in 2024 when the Link 1 Line is extended to Lynnwood. Some new routes and changes will be phased in as Sound Transit stations and lines are completed. In addition, providing full proposed service levels on all routes will be contingent upon the availability of sufficient workforce to deliver reliable service across Metro’s system.

Note that the sequencing and timing of phased changes described below are contingent on implementation of the following changes by Sound Transit:

- Lynnwood Link Extension on the Link 1 Line is implemented (Phase 1)
- Link 2 Line fully opens—operating across Lake Washington at full service levels, at which time Sound Transit may also consider revisions to ST Express service in the SR 522 corridor (Phase 2)
- Sound Transit opens 130th St. Station on the Link 1 Line (Phase 3)

Additionally, Sound Transit has not yet finalized service levels on the 1 Line Lynnwood Link extension opening expected to occur in late summer 2024. Final service levels on the Lynnwood Link extension may not be in place until trains can operate across Lake Washington, where trains from their Operations & Maintenance Facility East (OMFE) can provide additional capacity on the 1 Line. Once trains are able to operate across Lake Washington, it is expected that Sound Transit will be able to operate both the 1 Line and the 2 Line at fully planned service levels. Sound Transit is continuing to work to provide as much service as possible when the 1 Line opens to Lynnwood, however lower service levels on the 1 Line may impact bus riders connecting with Link with the potential for some crowding to occur on light rail.

Project Phasing Details and Network Changes

Since the project will be phased in and is contingent on Sound Transit service changes, not all the proposed network changes will happen at once. The information below details proposed timing for network changes. In addition, service levels on routes will be contingent upon Metro’s available workforce capacity.

Phase 1: Fall 2024 Service Change

- Add new routes 61, 333, and 365
- Delete routes 16, 20, 64, 73, 301, 302, 304, 320, 330, and 347
- Revise routes 28, 65, 303, 322, 331, 345, 346, and 348
- Retain Route 372
- Retain existing Routes 45 and 75 pathways and service levels, including existing through-route
- Do not implement proposed Routes 72 or 77
- Route 65 revised to extend to Shoreline South Station via N 145th St
- Add new North Kenmore Metro Flex zone
- Do not extend Route 331 to UW Bothell
 - NOTE: Route 331 would be revised to serve Mountlake Terrace Station at this time.

Phase 2: Proposed Metro changes in the SR 522 corridor would occur when ST Link 1 and 2 Lines are both in fully scheduled operation. Sound Transit may also consider changes to ST Express service in the SR 522 corridor at that time as well.

- Delete Route 372
- Add new Route 72
- Add new Route 77. Through-route with Route 75
 - Route would operate between Lake City and U District.
- Revise Route 45 and 75 to final service levels, Route 45 pathway shifted to use Boat St. layover. 45/75 no longer through-routed
- Revise Route 65 to serve Shoreline South Station via NE 150th St. and NE 155th St.
- Extend Route 331 to UW Bothell

Phase 3: Link 1 Line NE 130th St Station opening

- Extend Route 77 from Lake City to Bitter Lake