

Reduction priorities from the service guidelines (adopted in Ordinance 17641 on August 19, 2013)

Pages SG-21 – SG-23

Reducing service

The service guidelines identify the steps for evaluation when Metro is reducing service. Routes that are in the bottom 25 percent in one or both productivity measures and operate on corridors that are above their target service levels have a higher potential for reduction than routes on corridors that are at or below their target service level. While the guidelines form the basis for identifying services for reduction, Metro also considers other factors such as system efficiencies, simplification, and potential changes to other service in an area. The use of these other factors means that some routes may not be reduced in the priority order stated below.

Metro also considers restructures when making large reductions, to identify areas where restructuring can lead to more efficient service. Reduction of service can range from reduction of a single trip to elimination of an entire route. While no route or area is exempt from change during large-scale system reductions, Metro will seek to maintain service at All-Day and Peak Network levels, and to avoid reducing service on corridors already identified as below their target service levels.

Service restructuring allows Metro to serve trip needs at a reduced cost by consolidating and focusing service in corridors such as those in the All-Day and Peak Network. Restructuring allows Metro to make reductions while minimizing impacts to riders. Metro strives to eliminate duplication, and match service to demand during large-scale reductions. As a result of service consolidation some routes may increase in frequency to accommodate projected loads, even while the result of the restructure is a reduction in service hours.

Metro serves some urbanized areas of east and south King County adjacent to or surrounded by rural land. Elimination of all service in these areas would result in significant reduction in the coverage that Metro provides. To ensure that Metro continues to address mobility needs, ensure social equity and provide geographic value to people throughout King County, connections to these areas would be preserved when making service reductions, regardless of productivity.

During service reductions Metro will consider the use of alternative services that can reduce costs on corridors with routes that are in the bottom 25 percent in one or both productivity measures. In this way, alternative services may help maintain public mobility in a cost-effective manner. These alternative services will be evaluated according to the measures and performance thresholds developed through the evaluation of the demonstrations called for in the five-year plan.

Priorities for reduction are listed below. Within all of the priorities, Metro ensures that social equity is a primary consideration in any reduction proposal, complying with all state and federal regulations.

1. Reduce service on routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold for a given time period. Routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold on both measures are considered for reduction before routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold for only one measure in the following order:
 - All-day routes that duplicate or overlap with other routes on corridors on the All-Day and Peak Network.
 - Peak routes failing one or both of the criteria.
 - All-day routes that operate on corridors that are above their target service levels, meaning corridors in which the all-day service family assignment (see SG-9) is a lower level of service than the corridor currently has.
 - All-day routes that operate on corridors which are at their target service levels. This worsens the deficiency between existing service and the All-Day and Peak Network service levels.
2. Restructure service to improve efficiency of service.
3. Reduce service on routes that are above the 25 percent productivity threshold for a given time period. Routes that are between the 25 and 50 percent productivity threshold on both measures are considered for reduction before routes that are above the 50 percent productivity threshold for either measure, in the following order:
 - All-day routes that duplicate or overlap with routes on the All-Day and Peak Network.
 - Peak routes that meet both peak criteria or are above the 25 percent threshold.
 - All-day routes on corridors that are above their target service levels.
 - All-day routes on corridors which are at their target service levels. This worsens the deficiency between existing service and the service levels determined through the All-Day and Peak Network analysis.
4. Reduce services on routes that are below the 25% productivity threshold for a given time period on corridors identified as below their target service levels. Routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold on both measures are considered for reduction before routes that are below the 25 percent productivity threshold for only one measure. This worsens the deficiency between existing service and the All-Day and Peak Network service levels.

In many areas of the county, and especially in urbanized areas adjacent to or surrounded by rural land, Metro may provide service in different ways in the future, including with alternatives to fixed-route transit service (Strategy 6.2.3). These services could include fixed-route with deviations or other Dial-a-Ride Transit, or other alternative services that offer mobility similar to the fixed-route service provided. Services such as Community Access Transportation also provide alternatives to fixed-route service by allowing Metro to partner with local agencies or jurisdictions to provide service in a way that meets the needs of the community and is more efficient and cost-effective than fixed-route transit. This approach is consistent with the *Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021* because it considers a variety of products and services appropriate to the market (Strategy 2.1.1).