



**King County**

**Metropolitan King County Council  
Mobility and Environment Committee**

**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	18	<b>Name:</b>	Terra Rose Paul Carlson
<b>Proposed No.:</b>	2019-0464	<b>Date:</b>	March 10, 2020

**SUBJECT**

Proposed Motion 2019-0464 would adopt a summary of recommendations contained in the final Mobility Framework, a report that reflects the work of the Metro Equity Cabinet and Metro in response to the requirements of Motion 15253. The proposed motion would also outline Metro’s process for the updates to Metro policy documents.

**SUMMARY**

Proposed Motion 2019-0464 would adopt the Metro Mobility Framework Recommendations Summary and outline a process for the development of updates to the Metro transit department’s adopted policies. The Recommendations Summary is a five-page set of highlights of the Mobility Framework Final Report. The motion text also describes elements of Metro’s process for developing updated policy documents for submission to the Regional Transit Committee (RTC) and County Council. According to Metro staff, the Executive and Metro chose to transmit the proposed motion, even though it is not required by either Motion 15252 or Motion 15253, to provide a clear statement of Regional Transit Committee and Council response to the Mobility Framework.

Proposed Motion 2019-0464 has been designated a non-mandatory dual referral to the RTC and the Mobility and Environment Committee under K.C.C. 1.24.065.I as an issue that would benefit from interjurisdictional discussion. The RTC amended the proposed motion and gave it a “do pass” recommendation on December 5, 2019<sup>1</sup>. The Mobility and Environment Committee heard a briefing on the transmitted motion on December 3, 2019 and it is now before the Committee, as amended by the RTC, for further discussion and possible action. The Committee was briefed on the amended motion at the January 22, 2020 meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> The Motion was amended in committee to correct references to the number of Metro Equity Cabinet members and a Guiding Principle, to modify language concerning the Equity Cabinet, and to add language concerning Metro communication with cities on their transit needs.

## **BACKGROUND**

**Mobility Framework Background.** Motion 15253, approved concurrently with the County's 2019-2020 biennial budget, requires Metro to develop a framework to ensure that innovations in mobility put people first, use space equitably and efficiently, and are coordinated with transit policies and regional funding strategies. The motion specifies that the framework should include:

- A review of emerging technologies and local and national best practices;
- Opportunities to coordinate mobility innovations with fixed-route and other services;
- A review of potential policies for the allocation of public space, including streets, sidewalks, transit stops and station areas, focused on efficiency and equity of use;
- A review of industry-wide workforce trends, including the potential implications of new mobility options on labor needs, career opportunities, recruitment, training and economic prospects of transportation workers; and
- The development of guiding principles to inform the framework.

Additionally, the motion suggests that the development of the framework should include outreach to regional partners, transit riders and local communities, including but not limited to low-income populations, communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and limited English-speaking populations. Framework development should be coordinated with the efforts outlined in Motion 15252, which calls for the Executive to initiate a regional planning effort to develop and propose a strategy to convene regional leaders to develop a funding plan to implement Metro Connects and explore ways to support the ongoing maintenance needs of King County's transportation infrastructure.

A scoping document for the mobility framework outlining the timeline, expected work tasks and budget, as well as the proposed coordination with the regional planning effort under Motion 15252 was filed with the Clerk on April 18, 2019.<sup>2</sup>

**Mobility Framework Development Process.** According to Metro, the Mobility Framework was co-created by Metro staff and an Equity Cabinet, which was made up of 23 community leaders compensated for their time and expertise. A list of Equity Cabinet members and their affiliations is provided as an attachment to this staff report. This Equity Cabinet model was based on a process used by the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks for addressing disparities in access to parks and open space.

Per Metro, the Equity Cabinet began meeting twice monthly in early May 2019 to develop a list of guiding principles and work in subcommittees, based on their own expertise, to develop recommendations within five theme areas: Investments, Surrounding Land Use, Innovation, Workforce, and Engagement. Executive staff further state that the Equity Cabinet also worked with Metro staff to ensure that their recommendations considered input from elected officials, other regional partners and stakeholder/community groups, and the general public.

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<sup>2</sup> 2019-RPT0061.

## **ANALYSIS**

Proposed Motion 2019-0464 would adopt the Metro Mobility Framework Recommendations Summary, which is Attachment A to the Proposed Motion, and outline a process for development of updates to Metro's policy documents.

**Proposed Motion Text.** The proposed motion consists of a series of 18 clauses describing key factors leading to the creation of the Mobility Framework that was transmitted to the County Council at the end of October. Following this narrative component, the proposed motion contains two parts. Part A adopts the Recommendations Summary. Part B describes the Metro Transit Department's planning process to update its "adopted policies and associated reporting requirements." The policy documents are the:

- Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021 (Transit Strategic Plan),
- King County Metro Service Guidelines,
- King County Ferry District 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, and
- METRO CONNECTS Long-Range Plan.

The anticipated outcome of the process is "to incorporate recommendations from the mobility framework, as well as policies needed to implement METRO CONNECTS."

The transmitted motion text includes the following process elements:

- Regular reports to the RTC and the County Council's standing committee with Metro jurisdiction, the Mobility and Environment Committee;
- Outreach to a range of stakeholders including cities;
- Ongoing consultation with the Metro Equity Cabinet;
- Provision of updated information to supplement METRO CONNECTS, including changes in population, congestion, inflation and construction costs, mobility needs, and innovations;
- Analysis of METRO CONNECTS funding options;
- Identification of the components of the METRO CONNECTS 2040 network that can be implemented using existing funding;
- Analysis of opportunities to assist local jurisdictions with speed and reliability improvements and increased access to transit; and
- Analysis of innovative mobility services testing, implementation, and partnerships.

At the December 2019 RTC meeting, the Committee amended the motion to also require the development of a proposal to engage with cities regarding their transit needs on an ongoing basis using existing groups, venues and briefings. The other changes made by the RTC include:

- Non-substantive corrections; and
- Clarifying language supporting ongoing engagement by the Equity Cabinet.

The Mobility and Environment Committee was briefed on the amended motion at the January 22, 2020 meeting.

Executive staff initially anticipated transmitting an ordinance that would approve the updates to the Transit Strategic Plan, Service Guidelines, and METRO CONNECTS sometime mid-year 2020.<sup>3</sup> More recently, however, Executive staff have indicated they expect to transmit such an ordinance in early 2021. This ordinance is anticipated to be referred to the RTC for initial review as a mandatory referral.

**Mobility Framework Recommendations Summary (Attachment A).** The Mobility Framework Recommendations Summary is a five-page overview of the Mobility Framework Final Report<sup>4</sup> focused on the recommendations and the guiding principles that informed the recommendations. The Mobility Framework Final Report is a longer document that includes additional detail to support each of the recommendations, as well as appendices describing travel and population trends, best practices research related to the provision of equitable and sustainable mobility services, and the community engagement approach used. The full report was submitted to the County Council at the same time as Proposed Motion 2019-0464, but is not an attachment to the proposed motion.

The Recommendations Summary begins with an Introduction describing the Equity Cabinet and stating that the Mobility Framework responds to Motions 15253 and 15252 as well as the following significant changes: (1) the County's growing and diversifying population; (2) increasing housing prices and the associated transportation challenges that result from displacement; (3) the worsening climate crisis; and (4) the need to integrate traditional, fixed-route transit with rapidly evolving new mobility services.

The Summary lists the 10 overarching Guiding Principles and provides one sentence summaries of recommendations in five categories. The recommendations are intended to **"build on and strengthen Metro's existing network of transit services."** These recommendations, in an even more abbreviated form, are:

### **Investments**

- Provide additional transit service in areas with unmet need (see discussion of "unmet need" and "priority populations," below)
- Support investments to increase safety
- Support improvements to increase speed and reliability

### **Surrounding Land Use**

- Increase dense, mixed use zoning and affordable housing in urban areas near transit, while working to minimize displacement of priority populations
- Develop station area and right-of-way guidelines
- Develop people-friendly street design near transit

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<sup>3</sup> The updates are anticipated to incorporate the Marine Division/Passenger Ferry provisions also.

<sup>4</sup> 2019-RPT0156

- Meet King County's climate goals by reducing car use, developing green infrastructure, promoting climate justice

## **Innovation**

- Change Metro's adopted policies to assert the role of innovation, address new mobility services, and support innovative, equitable, sustainable mobility
- Develop new mobility guidelines for how Metro partners with private providers
- Facilitate integrated payment and planning
- Enhance communications and engagement
- Convene and support jurisdictions

## **Workforce**

- Strategically partner with the labor community
- Use future transportation innovations to target new riders as potential employees
- Use strategic and culturally specific communication methods
- Build infrastructure to provide pathways to mobility-related employment
- Use strategic workforce planning
- Purposefully foster a sustainable learning culture within Metro
- Require the centering of equity in all contracts and subcontracts

## **Engagement**

- Strengthen communication and marketing efforts
- Build lasting relationships in communities
- Use a coordinated cross-departmental approach to engagement
- Develop an equity-centered engagement framework
- Develop a community liaison program
- Identify metrics to measure success and continually improve

The Recommendations Summary concludes with a description of Next Steps to update Metro policy documents.

Additional background information provided by Metro staff in response to Council staff questions is provided below.

## **Why a Proposed Motion?**

According to Metro staff, the Executive and Metro chose to transmit the proposed motion, even though it is not required by either Motion 15252 or Motion 15253, to provide a clear statement of RTC and Council response to the Mobility Framework. Metro chose to transmit a motion (Proposed Motion 2019-0464) that would adopt the Mobility Framework's recommendations and outline a process for Metro's 2020 policy updates for two reasons:

- First, given the importance of the Mobility Framework's recommendations to Metro's updates of its policy documents (the Strategic Plan for Public

Transportation, Service Guidelines, and Long-range Plan/METRO CONNECTS), Metro felt it was vital to ensure that the RTC and Council had the chance to formally review and adopt the Framework recommendations and, if desired, amend them. This adoption process will ensure that Metro's work to develop policy updates is based on Framework recommendations that are acknowledged by elected leaders to be an appropriate basis for future policy choices.

- Second, Metro felt it important to seek RTC and Council input on the process by which it plans to complete its policy updates. As a result, Proposed Motion 2019-0464 outlines a process that Metro should follow for the policy updates, including guidelines for community engagement, work with the Equity Cabinet, consultation with elected officials and regional leaders, and information and analysis to include in the updates. Outlining this process in a motion gives the RTC and Council the change to review, approve, and, if desired, amend the process to ensure that it meets the goals of the elected leaders who will ultimately be asked to review and adopt the policy documents.

### **What is the origin of Metro's definition of priority populations, and what process was used to determine which populations would be prioritized?**

The Mobility Framework defines and uses the term "priority populations" frequently. The definition of priority populations in the Mobility Framework is taken from King County's [Determinants of Equity report](#), which defines priority populations as those that "include low income, people of color, and those with LEP." The Determinants of Equity report was developed in response to Ordinance 16948, which established definitions and directed implementation steps to achieve King County's fair and just principle. As the Determinants of Equity report noted, "It is becoming more widely recognized that King County residents do not enjoy the same health, resources, and opportunities because of their race and where they live."

As Metro began work on the Mobility Framework, Metro staff coordinated with staff from the Office of Equity and Social Justice to expand the priority population definition specifically for the Mobility Framework to include people with disabilities, in acknowledgement of Metro's federally mandated role in providing ADA access and paratransit services for people with disabilities.

The specific words used to describe the priority populations in the Mobility Framework ("low- and no-income people, black, indigenous, and people of color, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, and members of limited-English speaking communities"), was developed by the Equity Cabinet to express the Determinants of Equity priority populations definition in a way that Equity Cabinet members determined to be inclusive and respectful.

### **What was the methodology for determining the "Areas of Unmet Need" and how do they compare to the Service Guidelines methodology for determining unmet system needs?**

The first Investment recommendation is to “**Provide additional transit service in areas of unmet need**, defined as areas with high density; a high proportion of low-income people, people of color, people with disabilities, and members of limited-English speaking communities; and limited mid-day and evening service.”

Equity Cabinet members spent time reviewing travel trends and demographic patterns to determine areas of unmet need in transit service allocation, and worked through several modeling exercises with Metro staff and consultants to review different approaches to defining need. The areas of unmet need ultimately identified by the Equity Cabinet were determined to be those that “include areas of high density; a high proportion of low-income people, people of color, people with disabilities, and members of limited-English speaking communities; and that have limited mid-day and evening transit service to schools, jobs, and child care centers and other ways to build wealth and opportunities.” (Please note that the methodology used for Metro’s adopted Service Guidelines (Ordinance 18301) does not currently include people with disabilities and members of limited-English speaking communities.)

On a more technical level, the map that was included in the Mobility Framework recommendations uses census block groups in the top 60th percentile of the [z-score](#) composite. These areas were used as the initial subset of “priority areas” and those areas with population densities of greater than the median density (8 people per acre) were considered the final “areas for investment.” Additional filters and maps were developed to highlight areas with: (1) population densities greater than 15 people per acre to denote areas that could be served with fixed-route transit; and (2) block groups between 4 and 15 people per acre that could be served by alternative services.

The areas of unmet need map developed with the Equity Cabinet was then used to identify a number of priority routes (see Appendix C to the Mobility Framework report). Metro is in the process of analyzing the alignment between these areas and routes and the existing Service Guidelines. Any changes to adjust how the Service Guidelines take into account the areas of unmet needs and priority routes from the Mobility Framework would be made as part of an update to the Service Guidelines.

As currently adopted, the Service Guidelines identify how service levels for a total of 113 transit corridors connecting 85 centers are established and receive investments within an All-Day and Peak Network. Service levels are set based on:

- Productivity: households, jobs within ¼ mile of stops per corridor mile (50% of score)
- Social Equity: percent boardings in low-income, minority census tracts (25% of score)
- Geographic Value: primary connection between regional or transit activity centers (25% of score)

As Metro prepares to update its Service Guidelines, staff and consultants will model scenarios using different definitions and weightings for the social equity measure to identify implications for service investment in the transit network under different conditions. As these scenarios are analyzed, they will be reviewed with the Equity Cabinet, stakeholders, and elected leaders to identify how different definitions and

weightings for social equity could implement the Mobility Framework recommendations and could affect the network of regional transit service.

**Mobility Framework Final Report.** As mentioned previously, the Mobility Framework Final Report itself has been transmitted separately to the County Council (2019-RPT0156). There is no formal action for the RTC or County Council (i.e., approve, accept, amend, etc.) on the Final Report but it is available as a resource. The Mobility Framework is about 70 pages long. There are also include six appendices:

- Appendix A: Travel and Population Data, Trends, and Implications
- Appendix B: Best Practices
- Appendix C: Analysis of Recommendations
- Appendix D: Community Engagement
- Appendix E: Motion 15253
- Appendix F: Crosswalk of Requirements of Motion 15253

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Transmittal Letter
2. Metro Equity Cabinet Membership



October 31, 2019

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

Dear Councilmember Dembowski:

This letter transmits a proposed motion that will, if enacted, adopt Metro's Mobility Framework Recommendations Summary and a process to update King County Metro Transit's adopted policies. The proposed motion and recommendations summary respond to Motion 15253, which directed King County Metro Transit to "begin a planning effort during 2019 to develop a framework for the equitable implementation of innovations in transit service and mobility" and file a scoping document by April 18, 2019.

The scoping document, filed by the required deadline, included a commitment to transmit the completed Mobility Framework to the King County Council by October 31, 2019. The proposed motion and recommendations summary are transmitted separately from the Mobility Framework report and its associated appendices.

King County Metro's Mobility Framework envisions a regional network of traditional and new transportation services that gets people where they want to go, when they want to get there, while contributing to healthy communities, a thriving economy, and a sustainable environment. The recommendations in the attached summary support that vision. In addition to responding to the requirements in Motion 15253, it responds to several other significant changes in our region that affect Metro's service, including:

- King County's growing and increasingly diverse population;
- Increasing housing prices and the associated transportation challenges that result from displacement, when households must move farther from work, school, and other destinations, to places that are often less in-demand, less dense and therefore less well-served by transit;
- The worsening climate crisis and the need to quickly and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, promote climate resilience, and improve health outcomes; and,
- The need to integrate traditional, fixed-route transit with new mobility services to help people move quickly and seamlessly throughout the region.

Motion 15253 required that the framework be informed by outreach and engagement with regional partners, transit riders, and local communities, including but not limited to low-income populations, communities of color, immigrants and refugees, and limited English-speaking populations. As a result, the Mobility Framework was co-created with the King County Metro Mobility Equity Cabinet, a group of 23 community leaders representing low- and no-income people, communities of color and indigenous people, immigrants and refugees, limited-English speaking communities, people with disabilities, and other countywide community groups. Engagement with regional partners, transit riders, jurisdictions, elected officials, advocacy organizations, and other stakeholder groups also informed the framework.

The recommendations in the Mobility Framework will guide updates to Metro's adopted policies, including Metro's Strategic Plan, long-range plan (METRO CONNECTS), and Service Guidelines, as well as the Transportation Goal Area of the Strategic Climate Action Plan. They will also guide the development of Metro's 2021-2022 biennial budget proposal and ongoing regional planning efforts to fund and implement METRO CONNECTS.

Development of the Mobility Framework has been coordinated with Metro's income-based approach to fares. However, because of the different legislative requirements and transmittal requirements for the two efforts, Metro's plan for an income-based approach to fares will be transmitted separately.

The Mobility Framework's recommendations summary will advance goals in the Strategic Plan for Equity and Social Justice by recommending changes to policies, programs, services, and investment strategies to better advance equity through Metro's operations. They will also support goals in the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, including "provide equitable opportunities for people from all areas of King County to access the public transportation system" and "help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region." Finally, by including recommendations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through transportation, the framework will advance the objectives in the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan.

This report required an estimated 1,200 staff hours to prepare, costing \$60,000. The estimated printing costs are nominal.

The Honorable Rod Dembowski  
October 31, 2019  
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Thank you for considering this legislative package. The Mobility Framework's recommendations will help our region move toward an innovative, integrated, equitable, and sustainable mobility system that will benefit Metro's customers and all King County residents. I look forward to working with elected officials and partners region-wide to implement them.

Please contact Tessa McClellan at 206-263-5750 or [tmcclellan@kingcounty.gov](mailto:tmcclellan@kingcounty.gov) with questions.  
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers  
    ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff  
          Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council  
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget  
Rob Gannon, General Manager, Metro Transit Department  
Chris O'Claire, Mobility Division Director, Metro Transit Department

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### Equity Cabinet Members and Affiliation

Equity Cabinet Member	Affiliation and Title
Paulina López, Co-Chair	Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, Executive Director
Tony To, Co-Chair	HomeSight, Director Emeritus
Lylianna Allala	Community Leader
Leda Chahim	Community Leader
Rita Green	NAACP Youth Coalition, Education Chair
Ellany Kayce	Nakani Native Program
Munira Mohamed	East African Community Services, Executive Director
Linwood Robinson	King County Transit Advisory Commission, Member
Jeff Smith	United Indians of All Tribes Foundation
Michelle Benetua	Seattle Parks Foundation, Community Partnerships & Planning Manager
Tamieko Cook	Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 587, Recording Secretary
Mozart Guerrier	21Progress
Lavanya Madhusudan	Got Green, Board Member
Pah-tu Pitt	Community Leader
Sili Savusa	White Center Community Development Association, Executive Director
Chalisa Thompson	University of Washington Student
Niesha Brooks	Community Leader
Sarneshea Evans	Friends of Waterfront Seattle, Outreach & Partnerships Manager
Virginia Herrera-Páramo	Para los Niños
Alex Mayo	Community Activist
Jessica Ramirez	Puget Sound Sage, Director of Community Engagement
Leo Segovia	Ingersoll Gender Center, Economic Justice Manager
Anna Zivarts	Rooted in Rights

Names, affiliations, and titles pulled from full Mobility Framework Report (2019-RPT0156), page 1-3