



Legislation Text

File #: 2018-0549, **Version:** 1

Clerk 11/01/2018

AN ORDINANCE creating an Access paratransit advisory committee; and amending Ordinance 11431, Section 7, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.124.010.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. Access paratransit is a supplementary transit service for people with disabilities who are unable to use regular transit services for some or all of their travel needs. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act ("the ADA") requires all transit agencies to provide paratransit services that meet minimum requirements established in the ADA and implementing regulations. The King County Code authorizes additional paratransit service in excess of minimum federal requirements and the program is delivered by contractors.
2. In June 2017, the King County auditor published a report entitled, "Access paratransit: action needed to address cost, quality, and equity," which stated that expenditures for the program had increased while ridership and on-time performance had declined and that Metro transit had not performed adequate outreach to historically underserved populations, such as people with limited English proficiency.
3. In July and August, 2017, the King County council's transportation, economy and environment committee held hearings on the King County auditor's report and heard testimony about Access paratransit from Metro transit staff and Access paratransit riders, family members, advocates and service providers.
4. Following the council hearings, Metro transit paused an ongoing procurement process for a

new contractor to operate Access paratransit and convened an Access paratransit workgroup made up of Access riders, family members, advocates, providers and council staff to review Access paratransit service and provide input on the terms of a future contract for the service.

5. In July 2018, the council adopted Ordinance 18766, which added funding to the Metro transit budget to upgrade Access paratransit to provide ninety percent on-time service and a thirty-minute rather than sixty-minute drop-off window.

6. The Access paratransit workgroup developed a proposal that outlined three potential tiers of service upgrades for Access paratransit, which Metro transit used to inform a renewed procurement process for a new contractor.

7. In September 2018, the King County executive transmitted a proposed budget for the 2019-2020 biennium, which include the already-adopted Access paratransit service upgrades, additional service baseline adjustments to account for increases in diesel and gasoline prices, additional customer service investments and program performance improvements at the level of the first tier of upgraded service that had been outlined by the Access paratransit workgroup, for a total proposed biennial increase of more than twenty-five million dollars.

8. The council recognizes the importance of Access paratransit to the passengers it services and is committed to service excellence in Access paratransit operations. The council is creating a new Access paratransit advisory committee to provide advice and counsel on Access paratransit service and to identify opportunities for continued improvement.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Ordinance 11431, Section 7, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.124.010 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

The King County Metro transit department shall employ a transit public involvement model to promote responsiveness and accountability to the community. The Metro transit department shall provide staff support

for the transit public involvement model, which shall include the following major elements:

A. Sounding boards which are geographically, topically or community-based groups convened for a limited time to consider specific transit topics. Sounding boards shall be established by the Metro transit department to provide advice on identified issues including, but not limited to, transit service changes. Sounding boards shall provide information to the transit advisory commission, local jurisdictions, subarea transportation forums as well as the Metro transit department, the executive and the council. For major planning exercises such as service changes, sounding boards shall make consensus recommendations to the transit advisory commission and the Metro transit department.

B.1. The transit advisory commission, which is a permanent body that shall advise the Metro transit department, the executive, the council, local jurisdictions and subarea transportation forums on transit issues and policy, including matters of concern to the elderly and persons with disabilities. The transit advisory commission shall advise the department on the inception and development of long-range planning efforts, and serve as a resource for transit promotion.

2. As of February 18, 2011, the commission shall have up to thirty members who were appointed by the executive and confirmed by the council to serve on either the transit advisory committee or accessible services advisory committee. These initial members may serve for the remainder of the terms for which they were appointed to the transit advisory committee or accessible services advisory committee. The executive shall not appoint individuals to fill vacancies in these positions if the result would be to exceed the membership limits in subsection B.3. of this section.

3. Except as otherwise provided in subsection B.2. of this section, the commission shall have eighteen members who are appointed by the executive and confirmed by the council to two-year terms.

a. Nine members shall be transit riders, recruited by the Metro transit department to reflect the diversity and geographic distribution of county residents.

b. Nine members shall be persons with disabilities or elderly persons, or be associated with an

agency that works with disabled and elderly persons, recruited by the Metro transit department to reflect the diversity of the communities they represent and types of disabilities, as well as consideration of the geographic distribution of county residents.

4. The commission shall:

- a. adopt by-laws, elect a chair and vice-chair to quarterly terms and adopt an annual work program, which shall include issues of interest to transit riders and issues related to accessibility and ACCESS services for elderly and disabled riders as well as all items requested by the council or the Metro transit department;
- b. meet as needed to complete the work plan and address other issues as they arise; and
- c. designate one member to serve on each sounding board.

5. The transit advisory commission may establish standing and ad hoc subcommittees to review issues that, in the commission's discretion, require in-depth study. The subcommittees shall report to the transit advisory commission and are not authorized to take actions independent of the commission.

C.1. The Access paratransit advisory committee, which shall advise the Metro transit department, the executive and the council on issues related to Access paratransit relative to the terms of the contract for Access paratransit service.

2. The Access paratransit advisory committee shall have at least nine members who are appointed by the executive and confirmed by the council by motion. Membership shall be comprised of Access paratransit riders, family members of Access paratransit riders, representatives of organizations that provide services to Access paratransit riders and representatives of organizations that support Access paratransit riders or potential riders who have limited English proficiency. Members shall serve for four-year terms.

3. The Access paratransit advisory committee shall:

- a. adopt bylaws, elect a chair and vice-chair to annual terms and adopt an annual work program focused around review of Access service;
- b. meet as needed to complete the work plan and address other issues as they arise;

c. provide verbal reports to the council's mobility committee, or its successor, at the request of the committee; and

d.(1) prepare and transmit to the executive and the council an annual report, beginning in August 2020, on Access paratransit service, including:

(a) a review of and comment on the Metro transit department's annual performance metrics and trends relevant to Access paratransit;

(b) a review of and comment on information from customer surveys distributed by the Metro transit department relevant to Access paratransit;

(c) a summary of areas of strength, deficiency or priorities for improvement in the provision of Access paratransit services; and

(d) an overall assessment of Access paratransit service for the prior year.

(2) The Access paratransit advisory committee shall file the report required under subsection C.3.d.(1) of this section in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the executive and the clerk of the council, and the clerk of the council shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers.

SECTION 2. This ordinance takes effect January 1, 2019.