

September 28, 2015

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM**SUBJECT**

Briefing on King County Metro Long Range Plan

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POLICY ISSUES

The City Council has identified transit solutions as an important element of the transportation system supporting land use goals and level-of-service standards as set forth in the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan. The Metro Long Range Plan (LRP) will be the basis for King County Metro's growth in the future including recommendations for additional transit service and capital investments to/from Bellevue's major activity centers where transit demand is high and expected to increase in the future.

Comprehensive Plan

Bellevue's *Comprehensive Plan* calls for working with transit providers and other partners to implement the Bellevue Transit Master Plan to ensure that transit is an easy and attractive mobility option for those who live, work, visit, learn or do business in Bellevue. (Policy TR-62)

Bellevue Transit Master Plan

The Bellevue *Transit Master Plan* identifies transit service and capital investments needed to serve Bellevue and connect to other parts of the region. The *Transit Master Plan* serves as an important reference document for collaboration with transit service providers and partner jurisdictions.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

☐ Action
☒ Discussion
☒ Information

No action is being sought from Council at this time. Tonight's briefing is an opportunity for Council to learn about the plan and how this effort will impact future transit service, to ask questions and provide feedback and/or staff direction. Victor Obeso, Deputy General Manager, Planning & Customer Services at King County Metro will provide an update on the Metro Long Range Plan (LRP). This briefing will also provide background for Council in preparation for commenting on the Draft LRP, which is scheduled for release in March.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In January 2015, the King County Council initiated the Metro Transit Long Range Plan (LRP) – a comprehensive look ahead at the system that will be required to meet King County's transit needs through 2040. The LRP considers current transit operations and performance, the priorities expressed by the public about the network, and projected growth in population and employment. Recognizing that transit operators in the region continue to face financial instability, planning for uncertainty is a central feature of the Metro LRP which will identify service and capital elements of a future Metro transit network at various funding levels.

As noted in the following project timeline, the second phase of the LRP is well underway:

1. **Discovery (January-May 2015):** Public provided input to Metro about their goals and needs for public transportation through 2040.
2. **Alternatives (June-December 2015):** Metro analyzing different kinds of transit service. The public weighs in on what types of service and capital investments they value, helping shape draft plan.
3. **Preliminary Plan (January-May 2016):** A draft plan is presented to the public with opportunities to give feedback online and in person.
4. **Final Plan (June-October 2016):** King County Council considers final Long Range Public Transportation Plan through the legislative adoption process.

At this stage in the LRP process, Metro is seeking input on what should be included in the preliminary draft transit network. This preliminary draft network is informed by the results of the three alternative network concepts tested this past summer. These alternative networks reflected varying levels of commitment to frequent, express, and local bus service; these “bookends” were meant to illustrate the trade-offs among competing investment priorities. At its September 28 briefing, Metro will share with Council information, including the following:

- How the alternative network concepts affect different parts of the county generally and Bellevue specifically;
- The impact of anticipated changes resulting from improved system integration with Sound Transit investments;
- How the Plan will respond to city input and how it supports the service and capital visions outlined in Bellevue’s Transit Master Plan; and,
- How it will be implemented, i.e., near-term action plans and what Metro estimates it needs to fulfill the plans over time.

Metro will use the feedback it receives in this phase of outreach to develop a Draft LRP scheduled for release in March 2016. City input between now and March will be very important. Metro is committed to an ongoing dialogue with the City as the LRP development continues. Both the Sound Transit Phase 3 (ST3) System Plan and Metro Long Range Plan are moving forward concurrently to ensure that the future bus network aligns with the expanding regional light rail system. Both of these planning initiatives are scheduled for completion in the summer of 2016. The Bellevue City Council received briefings on the Sound Transit System Plan on June 8, July 13 and September 14, 2015.

In developing its LRP, Metro is relying on input from a Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Transportation Department staff is representing the City of Bellevue on the TAC. Consistent with City Council direction, staff is leveraging the Bellevue Transit Master Plan in Metro’s LRP process to advocate for and secure commitments for municipal priorities.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A