

**CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION**

Briefing on King County Metro Transit's New RapidRide K Line

Joyce Nichols, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, 452-4225  
*City Manager's Office*

Andrew Singelakis, Transportation Director, 452-6468  
*Transportation*

**DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL****INFORMATION  
ONLY**

Chris O'Claire, Mobility Division Director at King County Metro (Metro), will provide an overview of the K Line, a new RapidRide route that will begin service in 2025. The K Line will connect the Totem Lake Transit Center, South Kirkland Park and Ride, Downtown Bellevue, and Eastgate Park and Ride. The K Line will provide faster and more frequent service than existing transit routes.

No action is required from Council at this time. Tonight's presentation is an opportunity to learn about the RapidRide K Line, ask questions, and provide feedback.

**RECOMMENDATION**

N/A

**BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS**

RapidRide is Metro's premiere bus service and provides fast, frequent, reliable transit service to 67,000 riders every weekday across King County. RapidRide routes use bus-only lanes to move buses faster and employ special features to speed up boarding. As a result, RapidRide routes are up to 20 percent faster than Metro's traditional routes. Metro began its RapidRide service in 2010 with the A Line, which connects Federal Way and Tukwila. The B Line began service in 2011 and connects Redmond, Overlake and Bellevue.

During the development of the B Line, Metro and Bellevue staff briefed Council several times, providing updates on capital improvements, transit signal priority, and stop locations. In 2009, the City Council executed an interlocal agreement with Metro to partner on transit signal priority and capital improvements for the B Line. Metro committed to provide 10,000 additional transit service hours per year in Bellevue. Bellevue agreed to make transit signal priority and capital improvements. The K Line will be the second RapidRide line in Bellevue.

**Bellevue's Frequent Transit Network**

The K Line is an outcome of Bellevue's Transit Master Plan (TMP), adopted in 2014. The TMP identified a frequent transit network of 11 priority transit routes to connect Bellevue's major residential and employment centers with other regional destinations. The frequent transit network identified the

need for enhanced connectivity between Totem Lake, Downtown Bellevue, Bellevue College, and the Eastgate Park and Ride.

Bellevue staff collaborated with Metro to incorporate the frequent transit network into METRO CONNECTS, King County's long-range transit service vision. METRO CONNECTS was adopted by the King County Council in 2017 and proposes a 70 percent increase in transit service by 2040. One of the investments planned in METRO CONNECTS is a new RapidRide line on the Totem Lake-Downtown Bellevue-Eastgate Corridor, which is now the K Line. This project is in the planning phase and service is expected to begin in 2025. The final route for the K Line has not been finalized and Metro is seeking comment from stakeholders on the proposed route options within Bellevue will be developed and analyzed next year. Metro is working with a stakeholder committee, including Bellevue, to identify technical challenges and opportunities

Metro allocated \$2 million to advance design work and \$45 million is programmed in Metro's capital improvement program to implement the project. Metro will apply for \$43 million in Federal Transit Administration Small Starts grant funding in 2021 which will bring the total project budget to \$90 million.

The K Line will replace portions of Route 255 from Totem Lake to the South Kirkland Park and Ride, Routes 234 and 235 between South Kirkland Park and Ride and the Bellevue Transit Center, and Route 271 between the Bellevue Transit Center and Eastgate. When these segments are converted to the RapidRide K Line, transit service will be faster, more frequent, and available earlier in the morning and later at night. Passengers will enjoy larger, well-lit bus stops with electronic bus arrival signs.

### **Bellevue College Connector**

Bellevue's TMP identified the Bellevue College Connector as a key capital project needed to support the K Line. This project would construct approximately one mile of new roadway along the west side of the Bellevue College campus. The new road would allow K Line buses to bypass 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and Eastgate Way and connect directly to the campus.

Earlier this month, Ron Kessack, Bellevue's Assistant Director of Capital Program Services, updated Council on a three-party funding agreement to conduct Phase 1 of the Bellevue College Connector project. Phase 1 will include a land survey, preliminary engineering and design to determine the project scope and provide an estimated cost for the project. Bellevue committed \$100,000 for the Bellevue College Connector project to match contributions of \$100,000 each from Metro and Bellevue College to conduct Phase 1 of this project.

## **POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS**

### **Policy Impact**

Council has identified transportation as a high priority, and transit solutions as an important part of the local and regional transportation system. Bellevue's TMP supports implementation of the frequent transit network, including the RapidRide K Line.

### **Fiscal Impact**

As noted above, Bellevue is partnering with Metro and Bellevue College on one project to advance the K Line. Bellevue and Metro will identify additional capital projects as the K Line project advances.

## **OPTIONS**

N/A

## **ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS**

N/A

## **AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY**

N/A