

A message from Metro's general manager



South King County's affordable housing and other amenities have attracted many residents who rely on buses for their daily commutes.

I am pleased to report that Metro has used Transit Now funding to make those trips to work—and elsewhere—easier. We have expanded service on high-ridership routes and in rapidly growing areas. We have improved east-west service as well as connections to Sea-Tac airport—a major employment center.

The cities of Kent and Renton have partnered with Metro to expand service even more.

And we're planning now for South King County to become the first area to receive Metro's new bus rapid transit service, RapidRide, in 2010.

We look forward to continually improving public transportation in South King County, but Metro needs more stable funding to maintain and expand service. Demand for transit services continually outstrips our resources. In part that is because after we invest in transit improvements, ridership grows more. That's a challenge we welcome. The larger and problematic reason is that Metro relies heavily on an erratic funding source—sales tax—which currently is generating far less revenue than we had expected.

I welcome your suggestions, comments and support as Metro continues to improve service in South King County.

- Kevin Desmond

Metro's Transit Now program is expanding service in South King County

In the first two years of King County Metro's Transit Now program (2007-2008), Metro improved transit services in South King County as scheduled in the adopted 10-year plan:

- Added 24,000 hours of service to South King County bus routes that are heavily used or serve rapidly growing areas
- Added 4,000 new annual service hours through partnerships with the cities of Kent and Renton
- Engaged the community in planning RapidRide service that will begin on Pacific Highway S in June 2010
- Enhanced paratransit and ridesharing services in South King County.



Metro cut travel time on Route 140 by designing more direct routing, and also made service more frequent on this major east-west bus line.

Metro also restructured south end routes to better match customer travel patterns and improve efficiency, and designed and built the new Burien Transit Center, which will open in May 2009.

TRANSIT NOW

Transit Now, an initiative approved by voters in 2006, increased the sales tax by one-tenth of one percent to pay for a 15-20 percent expansion of Metro service over 10 years.

Metro is planning future service enhancements for South King County, including the start of RapidRide, more service in rapidly developing areas, and support for new routes through additional service partnerships.

Future service levels could be affected by Metro's financial situation

All funds for the Transit Now program, as well as more than 60 percent of Metro's total revenues, come from sales tax. Sales tax revenues are in steep decline because of the economic downturn. Metro has taken many steps to reduce costs, and is seeking new, stable funding to maintain and continue improving transit service in South King County and systemwide.

Learn more

Where Metro added service	2	Results	3
Subarea allocation	3	A key east-west connection.....	4

Transit Now improvements in South King County, 2007-2008

Metro made the following improvements in South King County in 2007 and 2008, on pace with the approved 10-year plan for phasing in the Transit Now program. (Service-hour numbers are rounded.)

18,000 new annual service hours on high-ridership routes

- Route 101 (Renton–downtown Seattle) – added peak trips (began 2/07)
- Route 120 (Burien–Delridge–downtown Seattle) – increased frequency to every 15 minutes on Saturdays (2/07)
- Route 140 (Burien–SeaTac–Tukwila–Renton) – increased service to every 15 minutes on weekdays (2/07)
- Route 166 (Kent–Des Moines) – added earlier morning trip (6/07)
- Route 180 (Auburn–Kent–SeaTac–Burien) – added midday service every 30 minutes between Kent, SeaTac, and Burien (6/07)
- Route 181 (Auburn–Federal Way) – increased evening and Sunday service to every 30 minutes (6/07)
- Route 194 (Federal Way–Sea-Tac Airport–downtown Seattle) – added two early morning trips on weekends (2/07)

6,000 new annual service hours on routes serving rapidly developing areas

- Route 143 (Black Diamond–Maple Valley–Renton–downtown Seattle) – added more peak trips (2/08, 9/08)
- Route 157 (Lake Meridian–Glencarin–East Hill–downtown Seattle) – created new peak route (9/08)
- Route 161 (Lake Meridian–East Hill–Tukwila–downtown Seattle) – extended service to Lake Meridian Park and Ride (9/08)
- Route 164 (Kent–East Hill–Green River Community College) – added new Saturday service (9/08)
- Route 915 (Auburn–Enumclaw) – added new Saturday service (9/08)

4,000 annual service hours funded through a service partnership with the cities of Kent and Renton

- Route 153 (Kent–Renton) – added midday service every 30 minutes in partnership with City of Kent and City of Renton (9/08)

Expanded paratransit and ridesharing services

- Expanded Access van program for people with disabilities to serve two rural southeast King County areas that were not previously served
- Registered 4,700 new south county participants in the Rideshare program
- Formed 150 new south county vanpools with more than 1,300 participants

2009-2010 service improvements

RapidRide service, to begin June 2010

- Add 34,000 annual hours of service for RapidRide A Line (Federal Way–Kent–Des Moines–SeaTac–Tukwila). *See box at right.*

8,000 new service hours in rapidly developing areas

- Route 157 (Lake Meridian–Glencarin–East Hill–downtown Seattle) – added trip (2/09)
- Route 168 (Kent–East Hill–Covington) – extend service to the Four Corners area of Maple Valley (planned for 9/09)

14,000 new annual service hours through three new service partnerships

- Route 913 (Kent) – add new route in partnership with City of Kent (planned for 9/09)
- Route 497 (Lakeland Hills–Auburn Station) – continue new route started in 2/09 in partnership with City of Auburn and Pierce Transit (planned for 2/10)
- Route 910/919 (Auburn) – modify Route 919 and add community shuttle in partnership with City of Auburn (planned for 9/10)



RapidRide shelters and buses will have a distinctive red and yellow color scheme.

Innovative RapidRide service coming in 2010

RapidRide is designed to keep people moving. Service will be frequent—every 10-15 minutes most of the day. Riders will be able to pay before boarding. Buses will have low floors and three doors so people can get on and off quickly. Street modifications and traffic lights that stay green when buses approach will help buses move through traffic.

Metro's first RapidRide route, the A Line, will replace Route 174 service on Pacific Highway S between Federal Way and Tukwila beginning in June 2010.

Service expansion follows subarea allocation policy

Metro allocates new service hours to subareas of King County according to a policy enacted by the King County Council: 40 percent to East King County, 40 percent to South, and 20 percent to West (the “40-40-20 policy”).

Metro’s Transit Now program follows this policy, but as Metro phases in the program over 10 years, subareas may receive more or less than these percentages in particular years. This is because Metro typically adjusts numerous routes in one subarea when improving the local bus network or when starting a major new service like RapidRide. For example, East King County received about 70 percent of new Transit Now service hours in 2008 when Metro restructured and expanded a number of routes; South King County is scheduled to receive

South King County is scheduled to receive about 90 percent of Transit Now’s new service hours in 2010

about 90 percent of new service hours in 2010 when the RapidRide A line gets underway on Pacific Highway S.

The Transit Now phasing plan provides for the subarea investments to balance out over time and adhere to the 40-40-20 policy. Metro’s investments will meet the 40-40-20 allocation at regular intervals—whenever 200,000 new service hours have been added—and by the end of the Transit Now program in 2016. (Hours added through service partnerships are not included in the 40-40-20 allocation.)

Subarea	New annual service hours 2007-2008	Percent
East	37,000	53%
South	28,000	39%
West	6,000	8%
Total	71,000	100%



A construction worker at the Burien Transit Center in March, as the center neared completion.

New Burien Transit Center will improve passenger comfort

In addition to making Transit Now improvements, Metro is developing a new Burien Transit Center. Slated to open in May 2009, the transit center will have a spacious platform, passenger shelter and benches, improved lighting, monitored security, and public art.

Buses will load and unload at off-street bays rather than at the curb along Fourth Avenue SW as they do now. The center will accommodate up to eight buses at a time in four bays, and have layover spaces for eight buses.

The transit center project budget is approximately \$12 million, which includes funding from a combination of local and federal grants.

As Metro planned the new transit center it worked with a community advisory group made up of Burien-area residents, local business owners, and members of the City of Burien staff. This group helped Metro conduct community outreach and review public comments. The group also participated in the design of the new transit center.

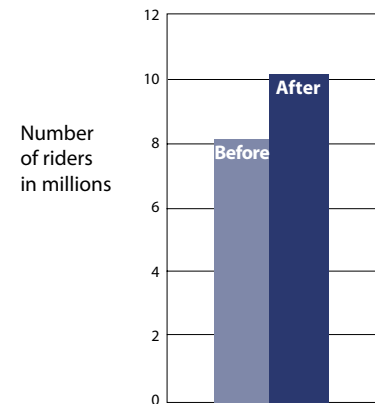
Performance measures

South King County ridership has been growing

Metro restructured a number of high-ridership routes in South King County in 2007, leading to a 23 percent increase in ridership on those routes.

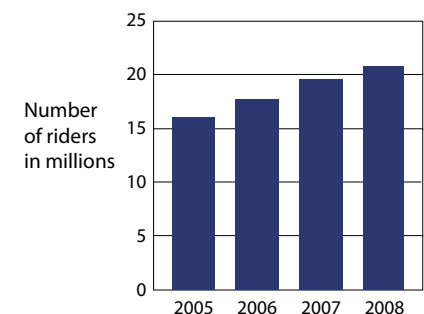
Ridership on Metro Routes Before and After Restructuring
(Before - Sept. 2006; After - Feb. 2008)

Routes: 101, 120, 140, 164, 166, 168, 180, 181, 194



Metro has been serving a steadily increasing number of riders in the South King County subarea. Ridership grew by 30 percent from 2005 to 2008, as shown in the chart below.

Metro’s South King County Subarea Ridership 2005-2008



Transit Now funding supports key east-west service

Metro has improved east-west service in South King County by adding new Route 180, which provides an important connection between Burien and southeast Auburn via Sea-Tac Airport.

Also known as the Airport Connector, Route 180 provides direct service from Auburn and Kent to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and the Burien Transit Center. It also provides local service seven days a week along S 188th Street in SeaTac, and will connect with the new Link light rail Airport Station after that facility opens in February 2010.

The route provides service as early as 3 a.m. to meet the needs of southeast King County commuters working early shifts at Sea-Tac Airport.

Route 180 began in September 2006, after Metro received a two-year, \$750,000 state Regional Mobility grant to fund advance implementation of the route between Kent, SeaTac, and Burien.

In June 2007, Metro used funding from Transit Now to expand service on Route 180 between Burien and Kent, adding trips during weekday midday hours and on weekends.

Transit Now funding allowed Metro to assume the full cost of the route in 2008.

Since fall 2006, ridership on Route 180 has grown rapidly, increasing by 28 percent to nearly 4,500 daily riders on the entire route. On the portion of the route between Burien and Kent, average daily ridership increased from 484 daily rides in fall 2006 to nearly 1,800 daily rides in fall 2008.

Metro involved people in southeast King County as it planned the service



Riders board the Airport Connector for direct east-west travel.

improvements that included the creation of Route 180. Metro distributed information and questionnaires and formed a community sounding board. Metro revised its original proposals after considering comments from the public.



Department of Transportation
Metro Transit Division
201 S Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104
www.kingcounty.gov/metro

For information about Transit Now, please visit:
www.kingcounty.gov/transportation/kcdot/metrotransit/transitnow

To request this document in an alternate format,
please call 206-263-5277 (TTY Relay 711)