



King County Transit Advisory Commission

May 19, 2020

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Zoom meeting

Commission members: Cheryl Harrison, Bobby Wooten, Lin Robinson, Jacob Struiksma, David Johnson, Ayan Mohamed, Aaron Morrow, Angela Theriault, Judy Stenberg

Staff: Michelle Huynh (Community Relations, Metro), Cindy Chen (Community Relations, Metro), Anita Whitfield (EEO/Equity and Inclusion Managing Director) and Brent Jones (assistant general manager for Strategy and Partnerships)

Meeting opening:

Chair Pete Rubin opened the meeting at 6 p.m.

Members approved the consent agenda with meeting minutes from March and April.

General budget update:

Brent Jones, assistant general manager for Strategy and Partnerships and Anita Whitfield, Metro's EEO/Equity and Inclusion Managing Director, gave an overview of the budget development process and embedding equity analysis into the process. The budget operates on a biennial budget, in partnership with the KC Executive and King County Council. The budget is due to the Executive in July and transmitted to the council in September.

Prior to COVID, a \$1 billion shortfall was already predicted over 10 years. Even with additional revenue from the federal stimulus (CARES Act) and reserves, a \$2 billion budget deficit is still expected by 2028. This means Metro will begin planning at 20 percent net reduction in the bus network, 30-40 percent reduction in capital improvement, programs and services.

Questions and comments:

- How much \$ is KC anticipating from the CARES act?
 - o We are receiving \$242 million from the CARES act. Also have \$260 million that we have in revenue stabilization – “rainy day fund” – between these two pots of money, \$500 million we’re trying to fill gaps with.
- What’s included in the 5% reductions?
 - o All divisions will reduce operating costs by 5%
- Are senior citizens considered a priority population?
 - o The priority populations are the categories in which needs are the greatest; they are factored in to the extent that they intersect with those populations.



- Do the service changes have to happen in September?
 - o Yes.
- How does the regional network's functionality remain a priority?
 - o Metro Connects, the long-range plan, is very important and is part of the policies to be updated.
- How does regional equity and the tax base play a role? If whole areas are deprioritized, disproportionately to the tax base, then there may be more pushback to future funding measures.
 - o We are working on addressing this in the budget with a pro-equity lens, prioritizing underserved communities while maintaining service.
- Will the TAC be able to see the cuts prior to them being finalized? TAC would like to see the cuts in advance.
 - o May be an opportunity to review the cuts, but there will be opportunities to give public comment through the King County budget deliberations.
- How will Metro do community engagement/public comment during COVID about these big reductions?
 - o Community engagement is no longer possible the way it was. Community Relations is coming up with strategies and tactics now, but it will likely be a combination of online meetings, surveys and still working with community-based organizations to talk with community members.
- Is Metro and the county looking at other funding sources, like grants or big companies?
 - o Metro has an innovation team that is scanning for funding opportunities.
- Transit is a lifeline for people with disabilities, blind people, who live all over the county.
- Metro could reach people through phone banks or phone-based activities rather than internet.
- Want to know impacts to the RapidRide program and how Sound Transit's link light rail expansion will impact bus routes.

Metro is developing the budget by centering on equity, safety and sustainability. Using the Mobility Equity Cabinet to help us update our policies. Now doing an equity assessment of every proposal. Doing an enterprise wide analysis of the themes and opportunities, challenges, how do we best engage communities on a short timeline?

[COVID update](#)

Cindy Chen (Metro Community Relations) gave a brief update about Metro's COVID response including the new Public Health – Seattle & King County directive requiring everyone to wear face coverings on transit, if they are able. There are built in exemptions for certain people who



are unable to wear a face covering, like people with disabilities. Metro is still looking at what fare collection will look like when Metro resumes collecting fares.

Questions and comments:

- Let operators know that deafblind people and other people with disabilities may be traveling with a companion. Is there paperwork needed to show that they can sit together?
 - Metro installed “Seat closed” signs to help riders better distance themselves. Drivers are not enforcing seating requirements, but the signs show how far apart people should sit but do not restrict someone from sitting in the seat.
- What can customers do to report when they get passed up?
 - Report it to the general customer service line.

[Commission members connecting with their communities – discussion led by chair](#)

Members discussed whether their role as a member of the TAC is to represent the people who live in their Council District. Several members shared ideas for how to stay involved and in tune with the needs of their communities regarding transit:

- Serving on committees in the community and share out information that they learn from the TAC with those committees. However, they do not represent either group in the other setting.
- Hold coffee talks, meetings at the library with people in your district.

[Feedback for Metro:](#)

- TAC needs follow up on programs or issues that are presented to the TAC; often given a presentation but not follow up after programs end. A specific example is Ride2. TAC would like to see evaluation reports or a report back after a program ends; this provides greater communication and accountability with communities.
- Provide TAC with information about local and flexible services to share that information with community.

[Adjourned at 7:33 p.m.](#)