

**Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative**  
**Scoping Report**

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April 2021



**King County**

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## II. Proviso Text

Ordinance 19210, Section 113, Transit, P5

A. Of this appropriation, \$5,000,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive, in consultation with the sheriff and internal and external stakeholders including those identified at subsection C.2. and 3. of this proviso, transmits a reimagining transit safety and security scoping report and a reimagining transit safety and security implementation report and motions that should approve the reports and the motions approving the reports are passed by the council. The motions should reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance number, ordinance section and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

B. In recognition of the vital importance of reimagining and reforming safety and security functions within King County, to reduce the role of law enforcement in transit safety and security functions and to advance the Metro transit department's commitment to become an antiracist mobility agency, the county must reimagine transit safety and security, by reexamining, restructuring and reducing the department's security, fare enforcement and law enforcement practices, partnerships and resource allocation.

C. The reimagining transit safety and security scoping report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A description of the Metro transit department's safety and security functions and the goals to be achieved by reimagining, reexamining, restructuring, and reducing those functions;
2. A proposal for internal engagement and cocreation with Metro transit department employees and stakeholders, including front-line Metro transit department employees, security and fare enforcement personnel and sheriff's office employees who serve as Metro transit police;
3. A proposal for external engagement and cocreation with community stakeholders including members of black, indigenous and people of color communities that have historically experienced negative impacts from policing, transit riders, jurisdictional and agency partners, human services providers and community-based organizations; and
4. A proposed timeline for the development of the reimagining transit safety and security implementation report based on the engagement and cocreation processes described in subsection C.2. and 3. of this proviso.

D. The reimagining transit safety and security implementation report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A summary of the goals to be achieved by reimagining, reexamining, restructuring, and reducing Metro transit department's safety and security functions;
2. A description of the Metro transit police as currently structured, including:
  - a. the annual budget and FTE positions for the Metro transit police;
  - b. the current status of the contract between the Metro transit department and the King County sheriff's office;
  - c. the current duties of the Metro transit police; and
  - d. a monthly summary of trends of coordinator service reports and dispatched calls for service from January 2017 through March 2021;
3. A description of the Metro transit department's fare enforcement processes, including:
  - a. the annual budget for fare enforcement;

- b. the current status of the contract between the Metro transit department and the contractor that provides fare enforcement services;
  - c. the current duties of fare enforcement officers;
  - d. a description of the process that is used to resolve fare violations; and
  - e. a monthly summary of trends of fare violations and the resolution of those violations from January 2017 through February 2020 and from October 2020 through March 2021;
- 4. A description of other Metro transit department safety and security functions, not included in subsection D.2. and 3. of this proviso, such as parking enforcement, including:
  - a. the annual budget and FTE positions for other transit safety and security functions;
  - b. the current status of any additional contracts between the Metro transit department and contractors providing transit safety and security functions; and
  - c. the current duties of staff or contractors carrying out other transit safety and security functions;
- 5. A description of the internal and external engagement and cocreation processes that were used to develop recommendations to reimagine, reexamine, restructure, and reduce transit safety and security functions, as well as a description of the ongoing plans to include, engage and cocreate with the internal and external stakeholders described in subsection C.2. and 3. of this proviso;
- 6. A proposal for ongoing measurement and reporting of transit safety and security processes and incidents;
- 7. A proposal for external or civilian oversight of transit safety and security functions;
- 8. Any legislation necessary to implement recommendations related to transit safety and security functions; and
- 9. Proposed recommendations to restructure or reduce transit safety and security functions provided by law enforcement agencies, including, but not limited, to Metro transit police and a timeline for implementation of the recommendations, with implementation to begin no later than July 2022, including, but not limited to:
  - a. a proposal, budget, transition plan and implementation timeline to restructure or reduce the duties, staffing, budgets, and contracts for the Metro transit police;
  - b. a proposal, budget, transition plan and implementation timeline to restructure or reduce the duties, staffing, budget, and processes for fare enforcement;
  - c. a proposal, budget, transition plan and implementation timeline to restructure or reduce the duties, staffing, budget and processes for other transit safety and security functions;
  - d. a proposal, budget, and implementation timeline to increase the use of non-police services, such as mental health or homelessness navigation services, as an alternative to existing transit safety and security functions; and
  - e. a proposal, budget and implementation timeline for ongoing engagement and coordination with the internal and external stakeholders described in subsection C.2. and 3. of this proviso.

E. The executive should electronically file the reimaging transit safety and security scoping report and the motion required by this proviso no later than March 15, 2021, and the reimaging transit safety and security implementation report and the motion required by this proviso no later than September 30, 2021, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff and the lead staff for the law and justice committee, or its successor.

### III. Executive Summary

King County Metro (Metro), the Puget Sound region's largest public transportation agency, is committed to providing safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility and prioritizing service where needs are greatest. To support Metro's fare box recovery and promote safety for customers and operators, the agency introduced fare enforcement practices, on its RapidRide service in 2010. Since then, these practices have been updated on numerous occasions—informed by audits, community outreach, employee engagement, research, and surveys—to reduce disproportionate impacts, to support safety, to ensure the cost of fare is not a barrier to mobility, to improve the customer experience, and to connect customers with social support when appropriate.

In June 2020, the King County Executive declared Racism as a Public Health Crisis, affirming the County's commitment to becoming an anti-racist and pro-equity organization. This declaration came amidst a growing local, national, and global awakening to the experiences of police brutality and racist systems that disproportionately harm Black communities. Metro strengthened its commitment to equity and began exploring new approaches to working with communities. Metro helped develop the King County Executive's Racism as a Public Health Crisis policy and budget priorities for the 2021-2022 budget. The agency sought to deepen relationships to advance safety, equity, and inclusion and center the voices of and input from Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities that enforcement systems have most negatively impacted.

With the adoption of the King County 2021-2022 budget, a proviso was included calling for the review of Metro's function and practices related to safety, security, and fare enforcement. This body of work aligns with BIPOC communities' concerns of and impacts from over-policing and law enforcement-type practices. Through the process of responding to the budget proviso, Metro will reimagine transit safety and security by looking at ways to reexamine, restructure, and reduce the department's security, fare enforcement, and law enforcement practices, penal codes, partnerships, and resource allocation.

The Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative aims to accomplish shared goals developed through a co-creation process with stakeholders to reimagine and reform safety and security functions at Metro. Fare Enforcement, Transit and Facility Security, and Metro Transit Police all contribute to Metro's ability to address customers' and employees' safety and security needs. These safety and security functions provide Metro with the appropriate public safety resources to uphold the transit "Code of Conduct" on Metro services. As established by King County Code, the Code of Conduct addresses "quality of life" and safety issues as needed on transit. Reforming the role of transit safety and law enforcement practices is critical to King County Metro's advancement to becoming an anti-racist mobility agency.

The SaFE Reform Initiative's goal is to co-create safety outcomes for transit and develop and amend safety, security, and fare enforcement policies and practices that continue to have disproportionate negative impacts or perpetuate inequities largely resulting from systemic racism. To do that, Metro will collaborate with external and internal communities to identify actions and pathways that could eliminate these impacts on BIPOC communities and equitably serve Metro's customers. Metro

recognizes that issues around safety and security are complex, and reform of policies and practices requires external coordination when decision-making authority is elsewhere.

The engagement process for the SaFE work will consist of an internal co-creation process with Metro transit department employees and stakeholders, including essential Metro employees, security, fare enforcement personnel, and sheriff's office employees serving as Metro Transit police, to learn and listen to their ideas and experience serving Metro customers. Conjointly, an external co-creation engagement process with community stakeholders including Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities who have historically experienced disproportionate negative impacts from policing, transit riders, jurisdictional and agency partners, and human services providers will be hosted to listen to and build on ideas and desired outcomes.

The internal and external engagement processes are outlined in four phases. Phase 1 engaged with employees and stakeholders to define co-creation and inclusive engagement. The conversations and feedback in Phase 1, which is now complete, influenced and shaped this scoping report. Phase 2 will establish transparency in how decisions will be made, set expectations on what this effort will address, and reach an agreement on this reform effort's approach and scope. Phase 3 will determine which current policies and practices help and hurt the vision of what a safe and welcoming Metro looks like and how those adversely impacted experience the impacts of these policies and procedures. Finally, Phase 4 will empower and equip the community to prioritize all feasible recommendations by exploring previous phases' content.

## IV. Background

### Department Overview

Founded in 1973, King County Metro (Metro) is one of the nation's 10 largest transit agencies. Metro provides bus, paratransit, vanpool, and water taxi services and operates Seattle Streetcar, Sound Transit Link light rail, and Sound Transit Express bus service. Prior to COVID-19, Metro delivered more than 400,000 trips every weekday and roughly half of downtown Seattle commuters relied on transit.<sup>1</sup> The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) named Metro the Outstanding Public Transportation System of the Year in 2018, recognizing its innovative leadership in mobility services, green practices, and programs for customers with low incomes.

### Key Historical Conditions

Metro began its Fare Enforcement Program in 2010 to support Metro's fare box recovery and to foster a safer experience for both customers and operators. Metro conducted its first fare evasion study in 2010. Data was collected, via operators, by counting individuals not paying a fare upon entering coaches. This study provided evidence that fare enforcement would be beneficial in minimizing fare evasion as Metro incorporated more bus rapid transit service lines. Three top actions identified for addressing fare evasion that emerged from Metro's first study were: eliminate the "Ride Free Area" in downtown Seattle (completed in 2012), provide more Transit Police or fare inspection officers, and simplify fare structures (removal of zone and peak surcharges on the adult fare were completed in 2017). These actions emphasized a need for increased safety, an easier-to-use system for customers, and the Fare Enforcement Program's creation. Metro has pursued all three of these strategies since that time.

In 2015, via Motion 14441, the King County Council directed the Executive to develop policies that:<sup>2</sup>

- Kept juveniles from being criminally charged for fare evasion – instead, fare evasion would become a civil matter
- Required a court order to impose long-term bus ridership suspensions for juveniles
- Eliminated the "Shoreline Rule" for youth who needed to deal with transit-related offenses (previously, all transit offenses are adjudicated solely at the Shoreline District Court)
- Provided specific training to transit security officers in working with adolescents

Metro conducted a lengthy community engagement process that included community stakeholders, Metro staff and leadership, Superior and District Court, the Department of Public Defense, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Hearing Examiner, and other King County staff. This group, called the Transit Safety and Equity Work Group, developed recommendations that led to the enactment of these and other due process-related policies in 2016 via Motion 14657 and in 2018 via Ordinance 18709.

Metro must comply with fund management policy on farebox recovery. As of 2016, Metro's fund management policy states that Metro will recover at least 25 percent of bus operating costs from

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<sup>1</sup> King County Metro welcomed roughly 130 million riders per year on various services prior to the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, <https://kingcounty.gov/~media/depts/metro/schedules/ready-when-you-are/metro-covid-recovery-report.ashx>

<sup>2</sup> Response to King County Council Motion 14441, <https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/OldOrdsMotions/Motion%2014675.pdf>

farebox revenues.<sup>3</sup> Fare enforcement has been a strategy Metro adopted to uphold and help assure that Metro achieves the farebox recovery goals and that customers are "riding right" per Metro's code of conduct.<sup>4</sup>

A 2018 King County audit of the RapidRide fare enforcement program found riders who are potentially unhoused and those with low- to no-income were disproportionately impacted by fare enforcement policies in which fare evasion citations were referred to the criminal legal system.<sup>5</sup>

Following the audit, Metro convened a Fare Enforcement Workgroup, comprised of Metro staff and stakeholders representing those disproportionately impacted by the consequences of fare enforcement, to develop an action plan. That action plan, approved by King County Council in July 2018, called on Metro to evaluate the root causes and impacts of fare enforcement and make recommendations to reduce adverse impacts. Metro conducted customer surveys with riders that have had experiences with fare enforcement, first in 2018 and again in 2019, to help inform research, engagement, and reform efforts around fare enforcement policies and practices. While both research and engagement efforts were structured to learn more about fare evasion solutions, public safety and security were still foundational to the study and subsequent recommendations. The King County Council adopted the results of this effort via Ordinance 18789, resulting in Metro removing fare evasion resolution from the criminal legal system and administering fare violations through an in-house program offering several options for resolution. A report on Metro's Fare Enforcement and Fare Violation Programs' performance has been submitted to King County Council on April 1 annually.

In 2018, Metro began conducting extensive community and King County Council engagement for an income-based fare program. Activities included stakeholder interviews and focus groups with affected individuals and organizations that serve very low- and no-income communities. A significant finding of this engagement was that safety is a high priority for all communities.

Through this engagement and all of Metro's various stand-alone surveys conducted annually, like the Metro Rider/Non-Rider Survey, and in service restructure engagement, public safety is consistently a high priority for all communities.

## Key Current Conditions

The global racial justice protests of summer 2020 calling for changes to policies and practices that perpetuate disparities based on race, continue to impact King County and Metro. Internally, Metro began asking how the department could better live up to its four equity compacts: share power, interrupt business as usual, replace it with something better, and get comfortable with discomfort. Metro aims to center equity in its work, and equity is considered in everything Metro does, from how service is allocated, to where infrastructure is improved, to how engagement is conducted and input from the community is sought. Externally, Metro had already established an Equity Cabinet in 2019 to

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<sup>3</sup> Farebox Recovery, <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/about/accountability-center/performance/financial/annual.aspx#metro-bus-farebox-recovery>

<sup>4</sup> Code of Conduct, <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/about/safety-security/code-of-conduct.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Follow-up on RapidRide Fare Enforcement, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/depts/auditor/new-web-docs/2018/rapidride-2018/rapidride-afu-2020.ashx?la=en>



center community in Metro’s policy decision-making, including the development of Metro’s Mobility Framework and updates to Metro’s long-range plan, strategic plan, and service guidelines.

The death of George Floyd and the ensuing national debate about the effects of centuries of systemic racism brought heightened attention to the need for the County to realign its programs to meet the needs of BIPOC communities. Metro resolved to strengthen its work to examine its policies and practices that perpetuate disproportionate negative impacts and inequities resulting from systemic racism. Metro started with deciding to no longer facilitate requests for out-of-service buses to transport law enforcement to demonstrations or protests.<sup>6</sup>

In June 2020, the King County Executive declared Racism as a Public Health Crisis and Metro's Strategic Leadership Team issued a statement on a "Time for Action" asking employees to "speak up and act to tear down oppression and systemic racism of Black, Indigenous, and all people of color" and "adapt and meet the needs of the community" amongst other charges.<sup>7</sup> These statements were a direct response to a call from community for more anti-racist organizational changes and a commitment from the County and Metro to becoming an anti-racist and pro-equity organization.

To this end, Metro actively participates in the County Executive's Racism as a Public Health core team to dismantle systems of oppression. Metro also knows it needs to do more to be an anti-racist mobility agency, not just to consider equity in its practices and policies. To accomplish this, equity needs to be placed at the heart of the organization so that it is reflected in Metro's practices and policies. The need for a permanent shift in all County policies and operations to ensure BIPOC can thrive in King County is clear.

In addition, many agencies, including peers within King County, are working toward addressing policies and practices that have disproportionate negative impacts or are perpetuating inequities largely resulting from systemic racism. The King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) and peer agency, Sound Transit, are working on complementary efforts in their review and reform of policies and practices related to enforcement activities.

The KCSO is re-imagining the department and its functions in response to community needs. As KCSO navigates this reform work, its changes to safety practices will likely impact Metro due to the law enforcement contract between the agencies. Sound Transit is piloting new fare collection practices that educate travelers about fare options and encourage people to pay. The interconnectedness of the Metro and Sound Transit's transit systems makes collaboration across organizations vital to customers' positive outcomes. Metro will coordinate with each of those efforts to ensure communities are not being over-engaged, information gathered is being leveraged, and confusion is not an issue among the agencies.

Metro’s Safety, Security, and Fare Enforcement (SaFE) Reform Initiative will advance equity by building upon Metro’s past efforts and the current work of Metro’s partners. Metro will do this work by co-creating desired outcomes, policies, and practices with the communities Metro serves and with its internal stakeholders. Co-creating the process and outcomes aligns with Metro’s commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization. The “Time for Action” statement outlines these critical steps:

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<sup>6</sup> [Metro ends practice of providing buses to law enforcement – Metro Matters \(kingcountymetro.blog\)](https://kingcountymetro.blog/2020/06/23/metro-ends-practice-of-providing-buses-to-law-enforcement/)

<sup>7</sup> See the full “Time for Action” statement from Metro’s Senior Leadership Team in Appendix 3.

leading with love, changing systems of oppression, closing mobility gaps, and serving and sharing power with community.<sup>8</sup>

As described in this scoping document, Metro will respond to the Council's and community's call for equity through the SaFE Reform Initiative and its response to budget proviso P5 in Ordinance 19210, Section 113.

## Report Methodology

To prepare this scoping report, Metro engaged with internal and external stakeholders to define with community what co-creation and inclusive engagement mean. Metro spoke to over a dozen community organizations in one-on-one stakeholder interviews and conducted two focus groups, one with external partners and the another with Metro employees. This dialogue helped co-create the SaFE Reform engagement process (see Appendix 1 for a complete list of participants).

Co-creating this scoping report was critical to the process of engaging with community, both internally and externally, as it helped to create: 1) ownership of the process and, therefore, investment in advocacy, 2) inclusivity in engagement through inclusivity in planning, and 3) the opportunity to develop shared outcomes instead of a traditional system of agency-defined problems and community validation of proposed solutions.

Execution of the engagement phases outlined in this scoping document will rely on using a combination of research from past efforts around safety and security and conducting engagement through surveys, community conversations, focus groups, and interviews to collect primary data. Issues of public safety and security are a regular feature of survey results gathered from various service changes and restructures, Metro's annual Rider/Non-Rider survey, and general engagement efforts to make Metro's services better. This combination of data and input will help Metro and community partners evaluate which current policies and practices have had disproportionate negative impact or are perpetuating inequities largely resulting from systemic racism and put Metro on the path of co-creating more equitable policies and practices.

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<sup>8</sup> See the full "Time for Action" statement from Metro's Senior Leadership Team in Appendix 3.

## V. Report Requirements

King County Metro developed the following responses to requirement C, subsections 1 through 4 of the proviso. Requirement D refers to the Implementation Report, which will be submitted by September 30, 2021. This section is organized in the same order as the proviso with sections listed as C1, C2, C3, and C4 corresponding to each subsection within requirement C.

### C1. Safety and Security Functions

The safety and security functions at Metro are Fare Enforcement, Transit and Facility Security, and Metro Transit Police. These functions support Metro's operations, infrastructure, and Metro employees' and customers' safety.

#### Fare Enforcement

Fare Enforcement operations are included as a part of Metro's contract with Securitas, USA to perform transit security services for Metro. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Fare Enforcement was used only on Metro's bus routes where passengers can pay the fare before boarding and enter coaches through any door, also known as a proof-of-payment route. Metro has six RapidRide lines and one transit corridor through downtown Seattle that use a proof-of-payment system to expedite transit service. As the COVID-19 pandemic impacted King County, Metro temporarily suspended fare inspections to support physical distancing guidelines. During this time, fare enforcement officers have been redeployed on some of Metro's busiest routes to provide safety support, education, and outreach to passengers; to promote physical distancing and the requirement to wear a mask; and provide information about social service resources to those in need.

During normal operations, standard procedures for fare enforcement officers (FEO) includes inspecting each rider onboard a coach for proof of payment (which consists of a valid paper transfer or valid ORCA card scan), providing riders with education about how proof-of-payment service works, and issuing warnings or fare payment violations when appropriate. When a rider is found without proof-of-payment, the FEO engages the rider with questions intended to determine the reason for non-payment. By identifying the reason for not having proof-of-payment, officers can tailor the best response to enable the rider to maintain access to transit, seek out fare payment resources when needed, and understand how to pay fare on future trips. King County Council passed Ordinance 18789<sup>9</sup> in October 2018, amending King County Code and providing authority to Metro to separate fare evasion offenses from the criminal legal system and offer in-house adjudication options. Metro's recently established Fare Violation Program gives FEOs additional tools to tailor responses to a rider by providing a direct connection to in-house staff who can assist in connecting the rider to fare payment resources and resolution options to resolve any fare violations. The Fare Violation Program has established a process that addresses fare violations within Metro and outside of law enforcement or the court system.

With data collected through proof-of-payment inspections, Metro can measure a rate of non-payment on its proof-of-payment routes, collect information about riders' fare payment habits, and understand more about barriers riders may face regarding fare payment. With fare violations now administered by

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<sup>9</sup> King County Ordinance 18789,  
<https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/OldOrdsMotions/Ordinance%2018789.pdf>

Metro's Fare Violation Program, Metro staff work directly with customers and offer multiple alternatives to resolving a violation, including a reduced penalty fine, non-monetary options, and the option to register for reduced fare programs or load funds to an existing fare medium in lieu of paying a fine. Administering violations and working with customers in-house allows Metro to collect meaningful data that Metro can use to inform efforts such as developing new reduced fare programs or fare policies that address causes of fare evasion.

Security personnel and fare enforcement officers' order of priorities are as follows:

1. Safety and security for all riders and Metro employees
2. Customer service
3. Proof-of-payment inspections

### **Transit and Facility Security Operations**

Facility Security operations are also contracted with Securitas, USA. The contract includes:

- Account Management: Securitas Account Manager who runs the account, liaising between Metro and Securitas.
- Security Monitoring Center: Operational center that actively monitors security cameras, intrusion alarms, and panic stations at Metro facilities.
- Dispatch: Operations that dispatch services for security officers in the field, tracking their locations, and provide the main line of communication between security, Metro's Transit Control Center, and emergency first responders.
- Campus Patrol: Security officers that patrol specific Metro locations.
- Park and Ride Patrol: One security patrol that travels between 12 different park-and-ride locations in south King County. The officer visits each site, inspecting any unlawful transit conduct (e.g., illegal dumping, camping, commercial vehicle storage), reporting possible stolen vehicles to law enforcement, and reporting unusual activity and safety or security concerns to Metro. Two additional security officers travel between Metro's 37 permanent park-and-ride lots to issue written (non-monetary) warnings for improperly parked vehicles and to initiate impounds for vehicles with multiple violations, vehicles parked in excess of Metro's 72-hour limit, or vehicles parked in fire lanes, bus lanes, or that otherwise pose immediate safety or operational concerns.

### **Metro Transit Police**

The King County Metro Transit Police is a division of the King County Sherriff's Office (KCSO), contracted with King County Metro in accordance with Motion 11711<sup>10</sup>, Transit Security Policies, passed in June 2003. Metro Transit Police (MTP) is contracted to provide appropriately resourced public safety service focused on upholding the transit "Code of Conduct" on Metro services and transit facilities. King County

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<sup>10</sup> King County Council Motion 11711, <https://mkcclegisearch.kingcounty.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=551301&GUID=F2F4D1BB-CE42-418D-AC05-6CC58347D4F6&Options=Advanced&Search=>

Code Chapter 28.96 established the Code of Conduct and addresses "quality of life" and safety issues as needed on transit.<sup>11</sup> The Metro Transit Police mission is to "keep our transit system safe and make it safer" for transit customers and employees.<sup>12</sup>

MTP is a transit policing service, providing services beyond what local law enforcement agencies would typically provide for mass transit public safety. MTP works in partnership with local law agencies and Metro Bus Operations, Fare Enforcement, and Transit Security teams, as well as with community-based solutions like Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) and Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) to respond appropriately to individuals' needs on a case-by-case basis and the needs of the greater transit system. MTP is focused on using a collaborative approach to accomplish its mission and honor valuable partnerships critical for successfully providing a safe public transit system.

MTP's primary areas of responsibility include Seattle, South King County, North King County, and parts of unincorporated King County. MTP currently does not provide service to Metro service areas located on the Eastside of King County and along the I-405 corridor (including Bellevue, Redmond, and Kirkland), relying upon local jurisdictions in these areas.

Metro Transit Police includes approximately 80 personnel with varying roles that include:

- Command staff to oversee the Metro Transit Police operation, including a Police Chief and two Captains, consisting of an Operations Captain and Administrative/Investigations Captain.
- Patrol deputies and sergeants to work on buses, problem routes, bus zones and bus shelters, park and ride lots, and other transit properties (does not currently include patrol of the Water Taxi Service, ACCESS, Rideshare, Seattle Streetcar, or any of the Metro bases of operation except on a case-by-case basis).
- Bike Squad (BEES/ BEARS) patrol officers to patrol the 3rd Avenue corridor and central business district of Seattle, providing joint emphasis missions with other law enforcement agencies.
- Investigation Unit Detectives to conduct follow-up investigations on felony cases, prepare case packets for the prosecutor, and prepare and execute search warrants when needed.
- Plain-clothed undercover officers whose primary objective is to use their transit expertise to support criminal investigations and assist patrol.
- Joint Transit Anti-terrorism Officers designed to improve transit and passenger security through a comprehensive and strategic approach that enhances capabilities to detect, deter, and prevent terrorist attacks. These officers provide Metro and Sound Transit employees training in active shooter, security issues, and anti-terrorism skills. Included as part of this team is also one bomb dog and one officer/handler.
- Schools Liaison Officer responsible for responding to problems related to the students using Metro, providing training to Metro Transit Police deputies about roles and responsibilities with the schools, and facilitating information sharing between Metro and the schools/district.
- Transit Resource Officers whose objective is to collaborate with the transit community to develop community-based responses to problems that present safety and/or operational interruptions associated with the Metro transit system.
- MTP staff responsible for managing community-based programs such as the Operator Assault Program and Sexual Misconduct Reduction Program.

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<sup>11</sup> King County Code Chapter 28.96, [https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc\\_code/38\\_Title\\_28.aspx](https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc_code/38_Title_28.aspx)

<sup>12</sup> King County Metro Transit Police Chief's Message, <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/about/transit-police/chiefs-message.aspx>

## **SaFE Goal Statement**

Metro's goal for the reimagining safety and security work is to co-create safety outcomes for transit and develop and amend safety, security, and fare enforcement policies and practices that have a disproportionate negative impact or are perpetuating inequities largely resulting from systemic racism. To do that, Metro will collaborate with external and internal communities to identify actions and pathways that could eliminate disproportionate negative impacts on BIPOC communities and equitably serve the riding public.

## **C2. Proposal for internal engagement and co-creation**

The following engagement proposal is one that is iterative and designed to share power with community. Metro understands the need to involve community in decision-making if it is to establish more equitable policies and practices around safety, security, and enforcement and reduce inequities and adverse impacts based on race. To do this requires an extensive and inclusive engagement process in which people learn from one another's experiences, data is evaluated, empathy is built, and a shared vision for what a "safe and welcoming" experience for customers, employees, and providers – aboard services, at stops/stations, in facilities, and within community – is co-created.

Metro plans to engage with internal and external communities together in the same process. Metro employees have a perspective as employees and are also part of their communities. Simultaneous engagement helps to support participation in this effort in a way that acknowledges both perspectives for internal stakeholders. Hence, in the following proposal, reference to community means both internal and external community/stakeholders.

To prepare this scoping document, Metro engaged with internal and external stakeholders to define with community what is meant by co-creation and inclusive engagement. Co-creating this scoping document was critical to the process of engaging with community, both internal and external, as it helped to create: 1) ownership of the process and, therefore, investment in advocacy, 2) inclusivity in engagement through inclusivity in planning, and 3) the opportunity to develop shared outcomes instead of a traditional system of agency-defined problems and community validation of proposed solutions.

In this Phase 1 of engagement, Metro spoke to over a dozen community organizations in one-on-one stakeholder interviews and conducted two focus groups, one with external partners and the other with Metro employees (see Appendix 1 for full list of participants). This initial engagement helped Metro co-create the SaFE Reform engagement process.

Themes and questions asked in this Phase 1 of SaFE Reform engagement can be found in Appendix 1.

Key themes for how co-creation is defined and how Metro could achieve it included:

- Create authentic and intentional relationships with community
- Create the decision-making table together – don't invite stakeholders to a pre-determined one
- Value participants time and feedback – don't ask just to ask, know why you are asking
- Understand language matters – how things are presented is important
- Understand community needs to be able to hold Metro accountable
- Understand Metro cannot create limits before issues and recommendations are explored

Participants in the Phase 1 engagement also discussed how Metro’s engagement could be more inclusive by:

- Tailoring messages/tools to community
- Not leading with judgement or preconceived notions
- Emphasizing that engagement is not validation
- Removing barriers to access
- Understanding cultural norms and popular tools to communicate

To gauge initial thoughts on what shared outcomes could be, Metro also asked, “If Metro got to the end of this process, and you felt thrilled about the results, what would Metro have achieved?” A summary of suggestions from community included:

- Everyone who needs access should be able to access to Metro services.
- Metro buses, shelters/stations, and facilities should be welcoming places that provide information.
- Operators should be trained in de-escalation and should know when to contact security/enforcement and when to contact other resources that can help address root causes.
- Metro leadership implements recommendations instead of completing this process and doing nothing.
- Metro should own its past mistakes – Metro shouldn’t continue things that have caused harm.

The feedback gathered in this initial outreach is reflected in the engagement proposal outlined below.

### **Engagement Proposal**

To begin this proposal, Metro puts forth this definition of co-creation and inclusive engagement for SaFE reform based on engagement conducted in [Phase 1](#).

Co-creation: shared ownership of the creation of safety, security, and enforcement policies and practices that center those most impacted by the policy or practice, both internal and external to Metro, with the understanding that the process is continuous – as the environment changes, policies *and practices* should change with it – and will require a continued relationship with community.

Inclusive engagement: a tailored approach that creates trust with specific communities through open dialogue and respect for the value every stakeholder brings to creating a safe and welcoming Metro.

Metro will follow up with participants from Phase 1 of engagement on this proposed approach prior to the start of Phase 2. Metro will share this approach with all prior participants through two focus groups, one with the internal participants and another with the external participants. Metro must gauge how well the approach reflects the co-creation and inclusive engagement input community provided. Checks for resonance with community will be critical to this engagement approach to build trust.

Once the engagement approach is agreed upon by Metro and its community partners, Phase 1 of this work will end. The remaining phases of engagement Metro will conduct for the SaFE reform will build one upon the other. As each subsequent phase completes, Metro will use the information learned to adjust the outlines provided below. This is being done intentionally so that Metro may adapt to the needs of community as it progresses through this co-creation process.



Examples of possible engagement tactics for SaFE reform could include one-on-one meetings, large group meetings, community conversations, focus groups, surveys, or establishment of a smaller working group like the Equity Cabinet.

### Phase 2 – Set the Stage

The goal of Phase 2 will be to establish transparency in how decisions will be made, including where and who will make them, set expectations on what this effort will address, and reach agreement on approach and scope of this reform effort.

To kick-off the reform efforts, Metro will express a commitment to:

- Embracing the shared outcomes of the engagement process
- Spending time in the field and onboard Metro’s services to better understand impacts felt “on the ground,” if not already on the ground employees
- Coming to this conversation free of predetermined solutions

These elements are in direct response to feedback collected in Phase 1 of engagement. It is important for community to see Metro’s commitment to co-creation with community. In addition, for Metro’s internal community, it is important to employees in the field that those not usually on the ground better understand how policies and practices impact staff in the field.

After this commitment, Metro will work with community to establish a community agreement on how Metro will:

- Develop common language, including a shared framework and understanding of the meaning of racial justice and equity and how to work to advance these together
- Define safety and security on and at Metro
- Co-create a decision-making process and criteria for evaluation of recommendations
- Set general expectations for engagement and how power will be shared during this process

To accomplish this, Metro will need to create community agreements that include decision-making processes and a glossary of terms. These agreements will be based on community input. The agreements will be shared with community to check for concurrence.

An element that will need to be addressed for the community agreement is how safety and security will be defined. The terms will need to be co-defined much like how Metro co-defined co-creation and inclusive engagement with community in Phase 1. For defining safety and security, Metro plans to conduct a visioning exercise that centers BIPOC community members whose identities intersect with other marginalized identities such as immigration status, age, and gender to explore what a safe and welcoming environment on and at Metro looks like. Metro will also center those most negatively impacted by fare enforcement. The visioning process will help co-create safe and welcoming statements that can be used to guide the efforts and inform the community agreement.

### Phase 3 – Evaluate Current Policies and Identify Potential Changes

The goal of Phase 3 engagement is to determine which current policies and practices help and hurt the vision of what a safe and welcoming Metro looks like and how those who are disproportionately negatively impacted experience these policies, practices, and related impacts.



Metro will engage with community on how well current policies and practices contribute to achieving a safe and welcoming experience (defined by the safe and welcoming vision statements developed in Phase 2) based on a targeted universalism framework. The targeted universalism framework defines outcomes for all, identifies obstacles faced by specific groups – for SaFE reform, Metro will be looking at racialized obstacles – and tailoring strategies and building on community assets to address barriers. This will allow for a deeper understanding of disparate impacts and the design of focused solutions to help achieve a common goal of safety and security.

Key questions include how Metro policies, practices, and partnerships could change and what changes are needed to achieve the vision of a safe and welcoming Metro, particularly for BIPOC communities – including potentially eliminating some policies, practices, and partnerships that result in continued and disproportionate negative impacts to BIPOC communities.

#### Phase 4 – Prioritize Recommendations

The goal of Phase 4 engagement is to empower and equip community to prioritize all feasible recommendations.

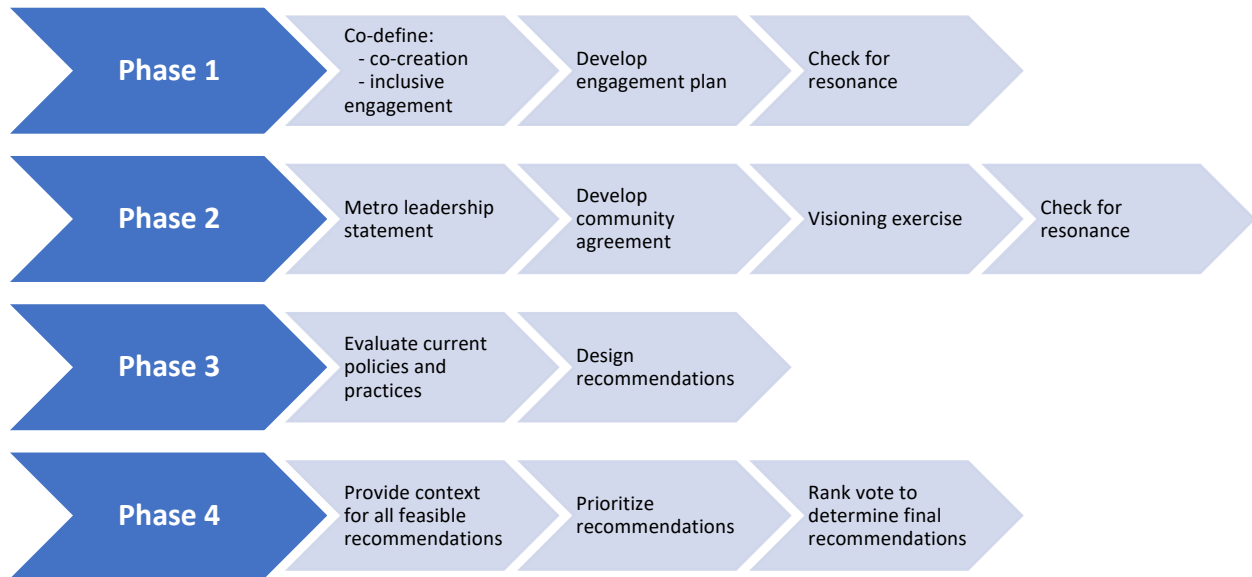
In this final phase of engagement, Metro will explore what is needed to achieve each recommendation collected in Phase 3 of engagement and how Metro can measure and monitor ongoing progress toward achieving a co-created vision of safety. Metro will provide necessary context for each recommendation and explain, without judgement, steps needed to achieve the recommendation so that community will have all the information needed to prioritize recommendations. Information provided for context could include any prior evaluation of a recommendation, estimated cost, operational impacts, explanation of any potential unintended consequences, ease of implementation, and if any legislation would need to be revised or passed at the local or state level.

Metro will conduct a community prioritization engagement process for all feasible recommendations crowdsourced in Phase 3 of engagement. Feasibility will be determined by an internal and external stakeholder decision-making body created as part of the SaFE reform organizational structure. The community decision-making body will help to hold Metro to the shared community agreement.

All feasible recommendations will then be rank voted by community to help determine final recommendations that will be submitted in the reimagining safety and security report due to King County Council on September 30, 2021.

A list of types of stakeholders Metro will engage with can be found in Appendix 2.

## SaFE Reform Engagement Proposal At-A-Glance



### C3. Proposal for external engagement and co-creation

External engagement will be conducted concurrently with internal engagement. The engagement proposal in section C2 is designed for engagement to both internal and external stakeholders. Reference section C2 for the external engagement proposal.

Metro will prioritize and partner with Black, Indigenous, and people of color representing and led organizations and individuals identifying from those groups. In addition, emphasis will be placed on individuals and organizations that also intersect these long un(der)served groups:

- No- or low-income
- Disability (physical, behavioral, cognitive)
- Food insecure
- Formerly incarcerated
- Immigrant and refugee
- LGBTQIA
- Senior
- Unhoused
- Women
- Youth
- Limited English speaking

### C4. Timeline

Jan – Apr: Phase 1 of engagement; Scoping Report

Feb – Apr: Establish and stand up operational structure

May - June: Phase 2 of engagement

June – Jul: Phase 3 of engagement

Jul – Aug: Phase 4 of engagement

September: Draft Implementation Report document with recommendations for proviso response

## VI. Conclusion/Next Steps

Through Metro’s community engagement process, Metro heard much positive feedback and appreciation for engaging with community early in the process. Metro is committed to this level of engagement through each phase of the reform effort and will next determine internal structure for the elements described in this scoping document and begin Phase 2 of engagement upon Council approval of Metro’s process.

## VII. Appendices

### Appendix 1: SaFE Reform Phase 1 Engagement Participants and Themes

- ACLU-WA
- Alliance of People with disAbilities
- Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS)
- CISC
- Choose 180
- Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC)
- Freedom Project
- Hopelink
- Kandelia
- King County Transit Advisory Commission
- Metro Bus Operations Division
- Metro Customer Information Division
- Metro Equity Cabinet
- Metro Fare Enforcement
- Metro Transit Police
- Mother Africa
- Rainier Valley Food Bank
- Seattle Neighborhood Greenways
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Transit Riders Union

The following central themes emerged from King County Metro’s engagement in Phase 1 of the SaFE Reform efforts with the participants listed above. Stakeholders and focus group attendees were asked the following questions to help co-define co-creation and inclusive engagement:

1. What does co-creation mean to you?
2. Have you seen any examples of successful co-creation? At Metro? Other organizations?
  - What step(s) were taken that made you feel like co-creation was happening?
  - What made it successful?
3. How could Metro achieve co-creation based on your definition?
4. What does inclusive engagement look like?
5. How might Metro balance the needs of both internal and external stakeholders in making recommendations? For example, should there be transparent decision-making criteria or should be use a consensus-based model?
6. How do you tell engagement was successfully inclusive?
7. A common criticism in these efforts is that an agency didn’t talk to “the right people”. What does that mean to you? When Metro engages on reimagining safety, security, and enforcement functions, who should be at the table? As in specific groups or people.
8. What are the best communications channels? Tools?

To wrap up the interview, Metro asked respondents to think about what the goal is/should be for engagement around safety, security, and enforcement functions. To do that, the respondent was asked to think about possible shared outcomes. Things that could be agreed upon as “universal truths” when it comes to someone’s experience on Metro services, at stops/stations/facilities, and in how Metro shows up/interacts in community.

9. If we got to the end of this process and you felt thrilled about the results, what would we have achieved?

**Central Themes** (note: these are paraphrased statements from the participant organizations and divisions listed above and are treated as direct quotes.)

#### Co-Creation

- Need to create authentic and intentional relationships with community
- Start from the beginning, don’t bring people in when the baking has already started
- Value participant’s time and feedback – don’t ask just to ask, know why you are asking
- Overcommunicate and be transparent – it helps build trust
- Share power with community when it comes to decisions that affect community
- Community needs to be able to hold Metro accountable
- Set up community agreements/shared rules for operating
- Don’t put limits before things can be explored
- Language matters – are we trying to fix a system we know is broken or are we trying to create a system that works
- Be responsive – nothing is one size fits all, things change constantly, be willing to change with it
- Leadership has to commit to the process – be uncomfortable with being pushed, be open to listening; understand decisions made at the top mean you may not always know what’s happening at the bottom and their impact

#### Inclusive Engagement

- Tailored to community – different communities need different tools and tactics
- Trusted community partner is a two-way street
- The right people at the right levels
- Do your homework, engage when you need to – no one wants to be asked the same questions over and over again; no one wants to be asked about something they already issued a statement/report on
- Don’t lead with judgement or preconceived notions – engagement isn’t validation
- Remove barriers to access
- Understand people are many things (intersections of who they are) and allow space for that
- Understand culture norms and popular tools to communicate

#### Shared Outcomes/Expectations

- No enforcement issues if there are no fares
  - Everyone understood this most likely isn’t possible, but it needed to be stated
- Everyone who needs access gets access to Metro services
- Metro buses, shelters/stations, and facilities are welcoming places and provide information

- Operators are trained in de-escalation and know when to contact security/enforcement and when to contact a social worker – finding the root issue
- Recommendations have equitable impact
- Metro owns past mistakes – we don't reimagine things that harm
- Metro visibly shows that it is a welcoming and tolerant place
- Everyone knows how and why decisions are made
- We create a process that is replicable

## Appendix 2: SaFE Reform Phase 2 through 4 Engagement Participants

Additional stakeholder analysis will be conducted to continue the examination of particular individuals, groups, stakeholders, institutions, and decision makers and their influence over the outcomes in relation to the impact the outcomes will have on them, so the list below is not exhaustive. At the same time, the county is working with community on other different but related public engagement efforts such as King County Sheriff Office charter amendment implementation, unincorporated area public safety, and Office of Law Enforcement Oversight. It will be necessary to respect the time and substantive contributions of stakeholders by coordinating and sharing information among these efforts to avoid repetition and to monitor for and minimize potential engagement fatigue.

Together, this will help Metro discover areas of opportunity to deepen community connections and relationships and design engagement that involves people in the right ways at the right times. Metro will focus on the following stakeholders. The list is not exhaustive but will be used as a baseline to ensure Metro is strategic in who it centers in the SaFE reform engagement.

### Internal

- Metro employees
  - Employees at work sites and whether they interact directly with customers: Bus Operations, Facilities, Marine, Rail, Streetcar, contracted services, non-operational
  - Employees inclusive of diverse experiences, including:
    - race
    - geography
    - gender
    - represented or not
- Labor
- Contract employees (Metro Transit Police/King County Sherriff's Office and Securitas)

### External

- Metro Equity Cabinet
- King County Transit Advisory Commission
- Business ORCA employers
- Commute Trip Reduction participants
- King County Council
- Peer transit agencies
- Jurisdictional and agency partners

- King County Department of Public Defense
- Black, Indigenous, and people of color-focused and led organizations
- Transit riders – with a focus on:
  - BIPOC workers who ride the bus, including during non-peak times
  - Geographies where there has been disproportionate presence of Fare Enforcement and Transit police
- Non-transit riders
- Human service providers
- BIPOC mental health providers
- BIPOC business owners whose workforce and business depend on transit
- Affordable housing/Government subsidized housing
- Black, Indigenous, and people of color-led community-based organizations that also serve:
  - Disability (physical, behavioral, cognitive)
  - Food insecure
  - Formerly incarcerated
  - Immigrant and refugee
  - LGBTQIA
  - Senior
  - Unhoused
  - Women
  - Youth
  - Limited English speaking
  - Low- or no-income



## Appendix 3: “Time for Action” by Metro Senior Leadership Team (2020)

“...All life is interrelated...we’re caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



### Time for Action

We, the Strategic Leadership Team of King County Metro, ask you to join us

- to speak up and act to tear down oppression and systemic racism of Black, Indigenous, and all people of color,
- to embrace each other, our differences, and our sameness with love and compassion,
- to build a workplace where employees feel respect from one another,
- to take action to rebuild a transit system that is centered on equitably improving the quality of life in Martin Luther King, Jr. County,
- and to adapt and evolve to meet the needs of the community.

The events of 2020 demand that we take more action. The Metro Strategic Leadership Team is committed to:

**Lead with love.** Make change through compassion, listening, and love. We recognize that systemic racism and injustice exist in King County and our society and this cannot be tolerated. We will take action, at Metro and in our community, to root out the words and actions that disrespect and undervalue people of color. Within Metro, we will build a culture where employees feel heard, valued, and respected by each other. We will build Metro service as a safe space where everyone is welcome and respected. We will continually take bold necessary steps to eradicate racism from our agency and replace it with love.

**Change systems of oppression.** Slavery, Jim Crow laws, segregation, and exclusionary real estate and land use practices are just some of the systems of legalized White supremacy. These systems have inequitably distributed access to mobility in our community and to opportunity within Metro. And our organization has perpetuated this. Black people continue to pay dearly under these injustices. That cost must be acknowledged and reckoned with. **We affirm that Black lives matter. Black health matters, Black minds matter, Black families matter, Black wealth matters.** We must correct injustices in Metro transit service and within Metro itself.

**Close mobility gaps.** We support and will use the Mobility Framework proposed by the Metro Equity Cabinet and adopted by the King County Council to dismantle and rebuild structures that support racism and other forms of inequity. We will listen to the community as we restructure the existing transit system resources. And, we will seek to deliver those resources to Black and other historically disadvantaged communities first.

**Serve and share power with community.** Metro reflects the community and exists to serve it. The community has entrusted us to provide mobility. We will fulfill this obligation by listening to the community and leading with them to close the mobility gap. Metro is also a community. Within our organization, we will listen to, respect, and love one another as we replace historical structures of racism with new structures of equity.

Moving forward together,  
The Strategic Leadership Team of King County Metro

Rob Gannon, General Manager  
Terry White, Deputy General Manager  
Michelle Allison, Chief of Staff  
Diane Carlson, Capital Division Director  
David Eldred, General Counsel  
Brent Jones, Assistant General Manager, Strategy and Partnerships  
Chris O’Claire, Mobility Division Director  
John Resha, Assistant General Manager, Finance & Administration  
Lisa Voight, Interim Assistant General Manager, Employee Services

