Item No. 3(b)
January 13, 2014

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:
Briefing on King County Metro Proposed Transit Service Reductions

STAFF CONTACT:
David Berg, Director, 452-6468
Paula Stevens, Assistant Director, Transportation Planning, 452-2802
Franz Loewenherz, Senior Planner, 452-4077
Transportation Department

Victor Obeso, Manager of Service Development, 206-263-3109
King County Metro

FISCAL IMPACT:
None

POLICY ISSUES:
King County Metro has proposed a 17% reduction in transit services (600,000 service hours) in 2014 in order to close a $75 million budget gap. In addition, an estimated 45,000 service hours would be cut when funding runs out for extra bus service during the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement work. Proposed reductions would be made in June and September of this year, with more to follow in 2015. These proposed reductions affect 28 of the 33 routes Metro operates in Bellevue. King County Metro staff will provide an overview of the proposed service reductions and outline a proposal by King County Executive Constantine for a ballot measure that would, if approved by voters, provide additional revenue to offset the service reductions. A proposal under discussion would use existing authority under the transportation benefit district statute to increase the sales tax by 1/10th cent and impose a vehicle license fee of up to $60 per year. Bellevue staff is seeking Council feedback and direction on the proposed service reductions and potential mitigation developed by City staff.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL:
X Action
X Discussion
X Information

As noted above, staff is seeking Council feedback on Metro's proposed service reductions and direction regarding potential measures developed by Bellevue staff that would mitigate some of the impacts of the service reductions. Council may wish to send a letter (see Attachment 1) to King County reaffirming its commitment to safeguarding the Frequent Transit Network and the Transit Master Plan's "Abundant Access" vision statement.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Bellevue is in the process of updating its Transit Master Plan (TMP). Council's project principles for the TMP direct staff to consider three distinct funding scenarios (reduced, stable, and growing resources) for three time horizons (2015, 2022, and 2030). Consistent with this

guidance, the Bellevue Transit Service Vision Report details route-level recommendations for nine funding/time-horizon scenarios that align with the TMP's "Abundant Access" vision statement and service-oriented strategies (available in the Council Office).

The desired end state of Bellevue's 2030 service vision is a Frequent Transit Network (FTN) that is: "Efficient, useful, attractive service for most people, to most destinations, most of the time, serving maximum ridership." Each scenario in the Transit Service Vision Report is designed, to some degree, to move the network in the direction of the 2030 FTN. This guidance positions Bellevue with a bold transit vision supported by practical, achievable strategies in the near term that establish a foundation for longer-term improvements through the 2030 plan horizon year.

What is Metro's service reduction proposal?

On January 13, 2014 Victor Obeso, King County Metro Service Development Manager, will join the Bellevue TMP discussion and provide Council with a status report on Metro's financial outlook. Attached to this agenda memo is a pamphlet that reflects how Metro intends to close a projected $75 million revenue shortfall (see Attachment 2). If Metro does not receive additional revenue, up to 17 percent of current service – about 600,000 annual service hours – will be cut from its network. Metro's service reduction proposal affects 28 of the 33 routes it operates in Bellevue; together, these routes transport approximately 35,000 daily weekday rides.

Eleven of the routes (167, 210, 211, 215, 217, 237, 242, 243, 244, 250, and 265) Metro is proposing to delete in Bellevue are peak-only services operating between 5-9 AM and 3-6 PM and one (route 280) is a night-owl operation. The other Bellevue-affected routes (111, 114, 212, 221, 226, 232, 234, 235, 240, 241, 245, 249, 255, 269, 271, and 342) are targeted for reductions/revisions impacting where, how often, and when they operate. In general, the Metro reduction proposal emphasizes the maintenance of existing service coverage -- opting to shorten spans for many all-day routes and reducing mid-day, weekend, and in some cases even peak frequencies.

What did the public say about a potential 17% service reduction?

The 2015 Reduced Funding Scenario (RFS) depicted in the Bellevue Transit Service Vision Report assumes a 17 percent decrease in Metro operating resources, consistent with current projections absent a new source of funding. Anticipating the potential need for this significant service reduction, Bellevue staff engaged the public in an extensive community outreach process that included:

- stakeholder interviews;
- presentations to interest groups;
- workshops with Board and Commission members, transit officials, neighboring jurisdictions, and business interests;
- an online survey of transit riders, former riders, and non-riders; and,
- targeted outreach to people with disabilities and non-native English speakers.

After considering the extraordinarily hard choices associated with the 2015 RFS, participants in the Bellevue Transit Master Plan outreach efforts overwhelmingly agree that if service reductions are necessary, transit agencies should reduce/eliminate low ridership coverage routes before impacting the frequency and span of service on Bellevue's most productive corridors (see Bellevue Transit Improvement Survey Report in the Council Office).

How does Bellevue's Frequent Transit Network coincide with Metro's proposal?
Consistent with the community feedback received, Bellevue's 2015 Reduced Funding Scenario (RFS) maintains all-day headways on Frequent Transit Network (FTN) corridors. Preserving the FTN necessitates two types of service reductions relative to the existing system: (i) deleting complex secondary peak services; and, (ii) deleting the weakest coverage services. Bellevue's 2015 RFS and Metro's service reduction proposal are in agreement when it comes to peak services. Consistent with Bellevue's proposal, Metro's first priority in its reduction scenario is to "cut the lowest-performing service (bottom 25%) that runs in peak periods only and doesn't carry enough riders or travel sufficiently faster compared to regular all-day service." The two proposals differ when it comes to Bellevue's FTN corridors.

Metro's service reduction proposal impacts the following Bellevue Frequent Transit Network corridors:

1. Downtown Bellevue – Kirkland Connection: Route 234 is currently scheduled in combination with Route 235 to provide 15-minute all-day service between Bellevue and Kirkland. Even though Metro's 2013 Service Guidelines Report (available in Council Office) identifies this connection (corridor #53) as warranting "very frequent service" the Metro service reduction proposal redirects Route 234 away from Bellevue as part of a larger restructuring of service in northeast King County, which also terminates Route 235 in downtown Kirkland instead of in Totem Lake. To mitigate this impact, Metro's reduction proposal increases Route 235 frequency to 15-minute service during commute hours between Bellevue and Kirkland. Metro's reduction proposal does not, however, propose increasing Route 235 frequencies to 15-minute service in the mid-day; as such, the Bellevue – Kirkland Connection is degraded during these off-peak hours. This off-peak service reduction is most impactful to Bellevue's Medical Institution District on 116th Avenue NE; Seattle Children's Hospital is on record expressing concern about this loss of service (see Attachment 3).

2. Factoria – Eastgate – Crossroads – Redmond – Kirkland Connection: Even though Metro's 2013 Service Guidelines Report identifies this connection (corridor #54) as warranting "very frequent service" it is proposing to operate service less often on Saturdays after 7:00 PM. Even more impactful to the Bellevue Frequent Transit Network is the elimination of the part of the route that travels into the Bellevue College campus. Metro's proposed restructuring of route 245 (and route 271) off campus onto 148th Avenue SE would add a half-mile walk from the 148th Avenue bus stop to the campus, further exacerbating riders' perceptions about the inconvenience of using transit. Furthermore, it would significantly limit access to campus for students and faculty with disabilities.

3. Eastgate – Downtown Bellevue Connection: Metro's 2013 Service Guidelines Report identifies this connection (corridor #14) as warranting "very frequent service." Although Metro does not propose modifying the frequency or span of service on Route 271, it proposes to restructure this route (like route 245) away from Bellevue College. Nearly a third of Bellevue College students ride transit as their primary mode of transportation; and routes 245 and 271 together serve 55% of student transit riders. It is for this reason that Bellevue College and the Bellevue College Associated Student Government are on record expressing concern about the proposed loss of route 245 and 271 service (see Attachments 4 and 5).

What is Bellevue staff doing to safeguard the Frequent Transit Network?
Bellevue staff is working closely with the City of Kirkland and Seattle Children's Hospital (regarding Route 235), Bellevue College and Associated Student Government (regarding Routes 245 and 271), and the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce (see Attachment 6) in developing a counterproposal to Metro's service reduction package that remains true to the City Council's "Abundant Access" vision statement and maintains the Frequent Transit Network outlined in the Transit Service Vision Report. The following are several more significant elements of this counterproposal:

1. Downtown Bellevue – Kirkland Connection: Consistent with Seattle Children's Hospital feedback, Bellevue staff proposes maintaining service along the Downtown Bellevue – Kirkland connection at current Frequent Transit Network levels by increasing Route 235 frequency to 15-minute service during the peak and mid-day periods.

2. Service to/from Bellevue College: Consistent with Bellevue College feedback, Bellevue staff proposes maintaining current bus routing (for both 245 and 271) through the Bellevue College campus in the near-term. In the long-term, Bellevue staff proposes to work with Bellevue College, Metro, and Sound Transit in developing Snoqualmie River Road along the west side of the campus so that it can serve the campus with Frequent Transit Network connections more efficiently without adversely impacting the quality of service provided. This long-term strategy, identified as TFP-252 in the City of Bellevue's 2013-2024 Transportation Facilities Plan, improves the average speed of coaches, minimizes travel times, and results in the improved provision of cost efficient and effective bus service to/from Bellevue College.

What is Metro's decision-making timeline for the service reduction proposal?
Metro is soliciting public input on its service reduction proposal before it transmits a final recommendation to the King County Council. Metro's adopted 2013/2014 budget assumes that an initial reduction of 150,000 annual service hours would be adopted by the King County Council in spring 2014 and would occur in June and September 2014, with more to follow in 2015.

NEXT STEPS:
The King County Council would have to approve a new tax proposal by February for it to go before voters in April 2014. At the January 27 Regional Issues discussion, staff plan to brief the City Council on the County's proposed ballot measure.

ALTERNATIVES:
1. Mayor signs letter to King County reaffirming City Council's commitment to safeguarding the Frequent Transit Network and the Transit Master Plan's "Abundant Access" vision statement.
2. Director of Transportation signs letter to King County reaffirming City Council's commitment to safeguarding the Frequent Transit Network and the Transit Master Plan's "Abundant Access" vision statement.
3. Do not send letter to King County at this time.
4. Provide alternative direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION:
Staff seeks Council concurrence to send a letter to King County reaffirming its commitment to safeguarding the Frequent Transit Network and the Transit Master Plan's "Abundant Access" vision statement. Either alternative 1 or 2 is recommended.

ATTACHMENTS:
Attachment 1 – Draft Bellevue Letter to King County Metro
Attachment 2 – King County Metro Service Reductions Proposal
Attachment 3 – Seattle Children's Hospital Letter
Attachment 4 – Bellevue College Letter
Attachment 5 – Bellevue College Associated Student Government Letter
Attachment 6 – Bellevue Chamber of Commerce Letter

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL OFFICE FOR REVIEW:
Technical memos and community outreach reports associated with the Bellevue Transit Master Plan.

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January 14, 2014

Victor Obeso, Manager
Service Development
King County Department of Transportation
201 South Jackson
KSC-TR-0426
Seattle, WA, 98104-3856

Re: King County Metro Service Reduction Proposal

Dear Mr. Obeso:

On behalf of the City of Bellevue, we appreciate your efforts to integrate our input concerning Metro's service reductions proposal before you transmit a final recommendation to the King County Council. In conjunction with our Transit Master Plan, and anticipating the potential need for this service reduction, Bellevue staff actively engaged the public in an extensive community outreach process consisting of:

- stakeholder interviews;
- presentations to interest groups;
- workshops with Bellevue Board and Commission members, transit officials, neighboring jurisdictions, and business interests;
- an online survey of transit riders, former-riders, and non-riders; and
- targeted outreach to people with disabilities and non-native English speakers.

Consistent with the community feedback received, the City of Bellevue's highest priority is to maintain all-day headways on our Frequent Transit Network (FTN) corridors. FTN corridors are where transit service and capital investments need to be focused to serve the most riders and provide the highest quality of service. As an active participant in our Transit Master Plan process, Metro understands that the desired end state of Bellevue's "Abundant Access" service vision is a network that is "efficient, useful, attractive service for most people, to most destinations, most of the time, serving maximum ridership." This vision statement was approved by the Bellevue City Council on May 20, 2013.

Metro's Service Reduction Proposal

We are deeply concerned about the magnitude of Metro's service cuts proposal which affects 28 of the 33 routes it operates in Bellevue. Together, these routes transport approximately 35,000 daily weekday rides. It is difficult to contemplate the severity of these service cuts at a time when transit ridership in Bellevue is at record levels; between 2003 and 2012 we've seen

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citywide usage increase by 129 percent from 22,000 to 50,000 daily ons/offs. And, as we look to the future, transit usage in Bellevue is projected to increase threefold by 2030.

Although all aspects of Metro's service reductions proposal will create hardships for transit and non-transit users alike, the following recommendations are regarded as most deleterious to Bellevue's Frequent Transit Network corridors.

1. Downtown Bellevue – Kirkland Connection: Route 234 is currently scheduled in combination with Route 235 to provide 15-minute all-day service between Bellevue and Kirkland. Even though Metro's 2013 Service Guidelines Report identifies this connection (corridor #53) as warranting "very frequent service" the Metro service reduction proposal redirects Route 234 away from Bellevue as part of a larger restructuring of service in northeast King County, which also terminates Route 235 in downtown Kirkland instead of in Totem Lake. To partially mitigate this impact, Metro's reduction proposal increases Route 235 frequency to 15-minute service during commute hours between Bellevue and Kirkland. However, Metro's reduction proposal degrades this connection to 30 minute frequency during off-peak hours. This off-peak service reduction is most impactful to Bellevue's Medical Institution District on 116th Avenue NE; Seattle Children's Hospital is on record expressing concern about this loss of service.

2. Eastgate – Downtown Bellevue Connection: Metro's 2013 Service Guidelines Report identifies this connection (corridor #14) as warranting "very frequent service." Within Bellevue this corridor connects Bellevue College with downtown Bellevue and west into the University District in Seattle. Although Metro does not propose modifying the frequency or span of service on Route 271 it proposes to restructure this route away from Bellevue College. Metro's proposed restructuring of route 271 off campus on to 148th Ave SE would add a half-mile walk from the 148th Ave bus stop to the campus, further exacerbating riders' perceptions about the inconvenience of using transit. Furthermore, it would significantly limit access to campus among students and faculty with disabilities. Nearly a third of Bellevue College students ride transit as their primary mode of transportation; route 271, together with route 245, serve 55% of student transit riders. It is for this reason that Bellevue College is on record expressing concern about the proposed loss of route 245 and 271 service.

3. Factoria – Eastgate – Crossroads – Redmond – Kirkland Connection: Even though Metro's 2013 Service Guidelines Report identifies this connection (corridor #54) as warranting "very frequent service" it is proposing an identical modification, with identical results, as denoted in route 271 above through elimination of the part of route 245 that travels into the Bellevue College campus.

City of Bellevue's Counterproposal

Our counterproposal to Metro's service reduction package remains true to the City Council's "Abundant Access" vision statement and maintains our Frequent Transit Network (FTN). To facilitate this, we suggest that Metro's service cuts reduce/eliminate low ridership coverage

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routes before impacting the frequency and span of service on Bellevue's most productive FTN corridors. This perspective is supported by the extensive outreach process and technical analysis associated with our Transit Master Plan and is widely supported by the Bellevue business community, non-profit entities, and educational institutions (see attached letters).The more significant elements of our counterproposal include:

1. Downtown Bellevue – Kirkland Connection: Consistent with Seattle Children's Hospital feedback, Bellevue staff proposes maintaining service along the Downtown Bellevue – Kirkland connection at current FTN levels which would necessitate increasing Route 235 frequency to 15-minute service during the peak and mid-day periods.

2. Service to/from Bellevue College: Consistent with Bellevue College feedback, Bellevue staff proposes maintaining current bus routing (for both 245 and 271) through the Bellevue College campus in the near-term. In the long-term, Bellevue staff proposes to work with Bellevue College, Metro, and Sound Transit in developing Snoqualmie River Road along the west side of the campus so that it can serve the campus with FTN connections more efficiently without adversely impacting the quality of service provided. This long-term strategy, identified as TFP-252 in the City of Bellevue's 2013-2024 Transportation Facilities Plan, improves the average speed of coaches, minimizes travel times, and results in the improved provision of cost efficient and effective bus service to/from Bellevue College.

We understand Metro is facing difficult and unpopular choices associated with a 17 percent service reduction. We will continue to work with Metro on your service reduction proposal focusing on maintaining the FTN thereby ensuring transit is serving the most riders while providing the highest quality of service.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

_____

cc: Bellevue City Councilmembers
Brad Miyake, Bellevue Interim City Manager
Kevin Desmond, King County Metro General Manager

attach: Bellevue College Associated Student Government Letter (January 7, 2014)
Seattle Children's Hospital Letter (January 2, 2014)
Bellevue College Letter (December 30, 2013)
Bellevue Chamber of Commerce Letter (December 27, 2013)
Hopelink Letter (TBD)

King County METRO

Would my bus be deleted? 2
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Bus cuts planned to close funding gap

Metro works hard to provide the service our customers rely on; the last thing we want to do is make cuts. As the sales tax revenue that supports Metro service has fallen short since 2009, we've cut costs, raised fares, and taken many other actions to keep buses on the road. But after some temporary funding runs out next June, Metro faces a $75 million budget gap. Legislators are considering new ways to fund transit, but they haven't yet agreed on a solution. Without new funding, we have no choice but to plan service cuts.

What can you do?

Learn more and tell us what you think about the proposed cuts.

If ways are found to reduce impacts on riders and serve more customers while still cutting the necessary service hours, we might be able to make adjustments to the plan. We'll submit a final proposal to the King County Council by April.

Visit www.kingcounty.gov/metro/future for details about the proposal and an online survey.

Come to a community meeting or visit our roving information van. Meeting schedule on back.

Other ways to give us your feedback or ask questions:
email: haveasay@kingcounty.gov

Call: 206-263-9770
Non-English language lines on back.

Join our conversation
Blog:
http://metrofutureblog.wordpress.com
Twitter: @kcmetrobus
Facebook: HaveaSayatKCMetro
hashtag #KCMetroCuts

To close the gap we would have to cut up to 600,000 service hours—about 17 percent of the Metro system. Another 45,000 hours would be cut when funding runs out for extra bus service during Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement work. Reductions would be made in June and September 2014, with more to follow in 2015.

- **74 of Metro's 214 routes would be deleted.**
- **107 routes would be reduced or revised**—fewer trips, service ending earlier at night, part of a route deleted or combined with another route, or bus moved to a different street.
- **33 routes would not be changed, but would likely become more crowded** as they absorb other riders.

More than 80 percent of Metro's bus and DART routes would be affected.

Riders and communities across King County would feel the impacts: fewer travel options, longer waits between buses, more transfers, more-crowded and less-reliable buses, and increased traffic congestion.

Metro's ridership is approaching an all-time high. Instead of making cuts, ***Metro should be increasing service by 15 percent*** to reduce crowding, keep buses on time, and meet demand today. Even more service is needed for the future.

How routes are affected in the service reduction proposal

For more information >> www.kingcounty.gov/metro/future

Deleted

4	82	205 EX	DART
5 EX	83	209	
7 EX	84	210	901
19	99	211 EX	908
21	110	213	909
22	113	215	910
25	139	217	913
26	152	237	916
27	154	238	919
28	158	242	927
30	159	243	930
31	161	244 EX	935
37	167	250	
47	173	260	
48 EX	178	265	
57	179	277	
61	190	280	
62	192	304	
66 EX	200	306 EX	
67	201	308	
68	202		
72	203		

Reduced/Revised

C Line	33	116 EX	180	252
D Line	36	118 EX	181*	255
1	40	118	182	257
2	41	119 EX	186	269
3*	43	119	187	271
5	44	120	193 EX	311
7	49	121	197	331
8	50*	122	204	342*
9 EX	55	123	208	346
11	56 EX	124	212*	348
12	60	125	214	355 EX*
13*	64 EX	128	221	358 EX* (E Line)
14	65	131	226	
16*	70*	132	232	372 EX*
17 EX	71	143 EX	234	DART
18 EX	73*	148	235*	
21 EX	98†	150	236	903
24	105	156	240	907
26 EX*	106*	157*	241	914
28 EX*	107	164	245	915
29	111	168*	248	917
32*	114	177*	249	931

Unchanged

A Line	268
B Line	301
10	303 EX
15 EX	309 EX
48	312 EX
74 EX	316
75	330
76	345
77	347
101	373 EX
102	601 EX
140 (F Line)	DART
153	906
166	
169	
183	
216	
218	
219	
224	
246	

Routes in shaded cells are among Metro's lowest-performing 25%
* Routes have additional service/trips as a result of a revision
† South Lake Union Streetcar

How did Metro determine where to propose cuts?

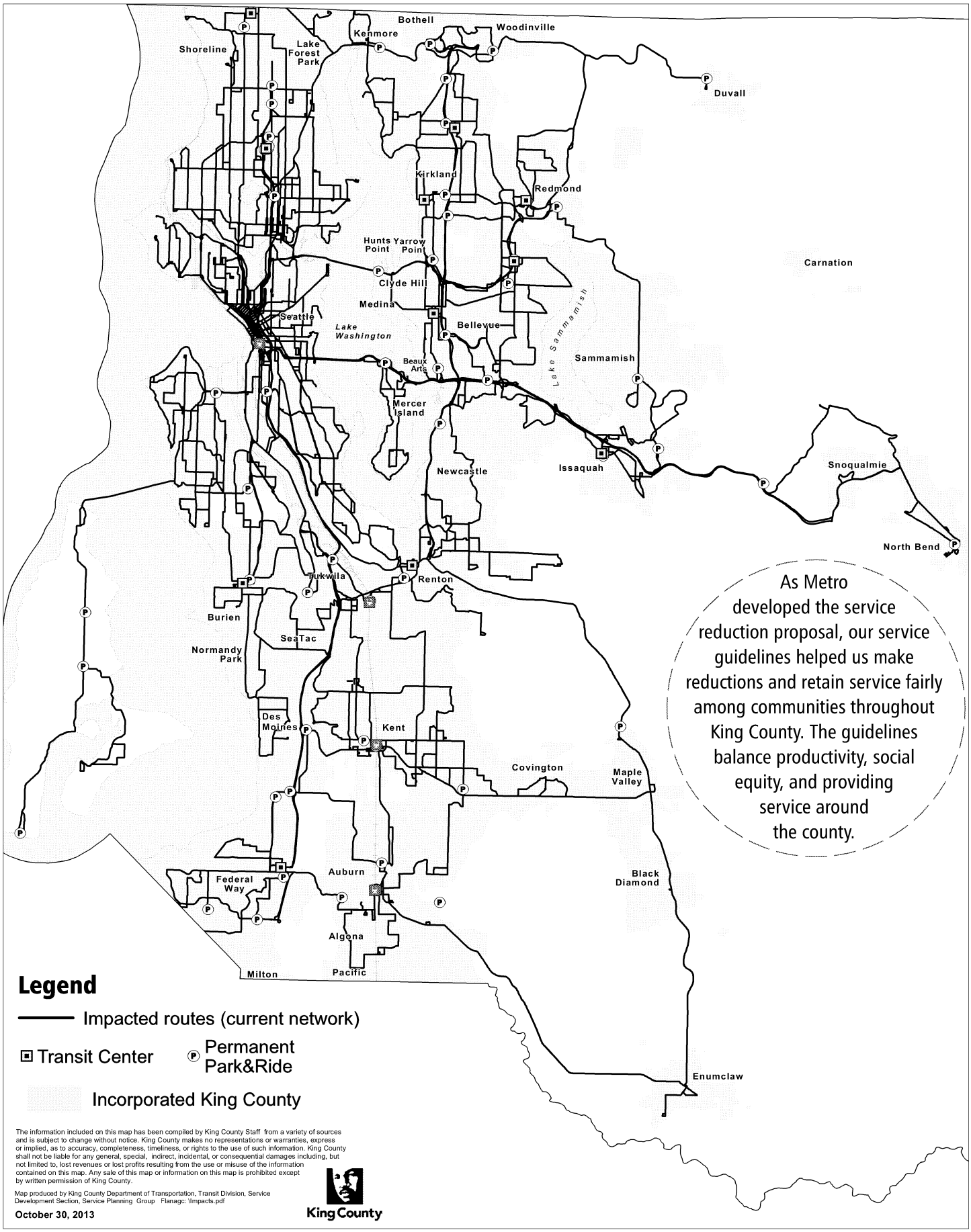
Following our service guidelines, we collected data about our service and asked these questions:

The Regional Transit Task Force, made up of community members, recommended that Metro adopt objective guidelines for adding, reducing, or changing transit service. The King County Council adopted the service guidelines in 2011.

- **How well is the route performing compared to other routes?** We measure performance by asking how many riders does the bus carry every hour, and how well used are all miles of the route? The lowest-performing routes, trips, or parts of routes are the first we consider deleting or reducing.
- **Does the route duplicate other bus service?** If so, it's more likely to be cut because other options are available for riders.
- **If the route runs in peak periods only, are its travel time and ridership much better than the all-day service?** If not, it might be changed to reduce costs.
- **Is existing transit service in the corridor below, at, or above its target service level?** Metro sets target service levels for transit corridors based on the number of homes, jobs and colleges nearby; the number of riders in areas that have many minority and low-income residents; and the major destinations the corridor serves. A route is less likely to be reduced if service on the corridor is already below the target level.
- **Are there opportunities to restructure a network of routes to soften the impact of cuts, serve the most riders, and reduce operating costs?** We might combine routes, delete parts of routes that carry fewer riders, or move buses to different streets to improve the overall network. Even routes that are performing well and carrying many riders might be revised.

We proposed cuts and revisions based on the answers, following a priority order defined in the guidelines.

Service reductions would affect all areas of the county

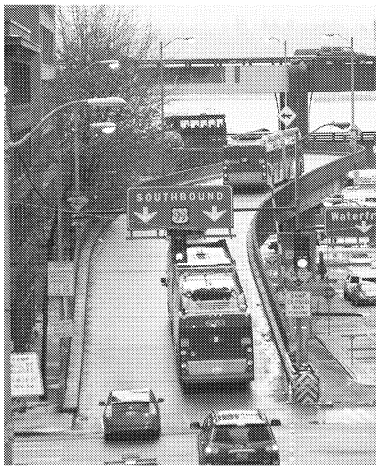


As Metro developed the service reduction proposal, our service guidelines helped us make reductions and retain service fairly among communities throughout King County. The guidelines balance productivity, social equity, and providing service around the county.

Why does Metro have to reduce service?

Despite top-to-bottom financial reforms, funding gap remains

Much of Metro's funding comes from sales tax. Fares are the next largest source. Metro's revenue from sales tax fell sharply during the financial crisis, and hasn't caught up to the level needed today.



We've avoided major service reductions so far by vigorously adopting financial reforms throughout the agency. We have cut costs, made operations more efficient, tapped reserve funds, found new sources of revenue, and raised fares four times in four years (a total 80 percent increase). *These and other actions have saved or raised nearly $800 million, preserving most bus service between 2009 and 2013.*

In 2011, the County Council passed a two-year congestion reduction charge to help bridge Metro's remaining budget gap while the state legislature looked for a transportation funding solution.

The state legislature hasn't agreed on a fix. With the congestion reduction charge running out in June 2014, and available reserves used up, Metro faces a shortfall of about $75 million per year beginning mid-2014. To close that gap, we would have to reduce up to 600,000 hours of bus service. (The actual amount could change depending on our financial situation at the time reductions are approved.)

Alaskan Way Viaduct funding also runs out. The Washington State Department of Transportation has been paying for extra bus service in areas where traffic is affected by the Alaskan Way Viaduct work. (Between downtown Seattle and West Seattle, Burien, White Center, north Seattle [Aurora], and Ballard. Most is in the West Seattle area.)

Metro is carrying 33,000 more riders each weekday—and taking a bite out of traffic congestion—as a result.

Funding for this extra service ends in June 2014. If it isn't extended, 45,000 additional service hours—about 150 bus trips a day—would have to be cut. West Seattle would lose about 30 percent of its service as a result of the combined reductions.

With no funding solution, Metro has to plan for cuts. We are continually looking for ways to preserve service by operating more efficiently. However, after all the actions we've taken already, there are no options left that could close the large remaining gap. We are not able to provide the service the public needs without additional, sustainable funding.

Community meetings

Federal Way, Wednesday, Nov. 20, 6-8 p.m., Federal Way Community Center

West Seattle, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 6-8 p.m., Youngstown Cultural Arts Center

North Seattle, Thursday, Dec. 5, 6-8 p.m., North Seattle Community College

Downtown Seattle, Tuesday, Dec. 10, noon- 2 p.m., Union Station

Bellevue, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 6- 8 p.m., Bellevue City Hall

Kent, Monday, Dec. 16, 6-8 p.m., Kent Commons

Kirkland, Thursday, Jan. 16, 6- 8 p.m., Peter Kirk Community Center

Southeast Seattle, Thursday, Jan. 23, 6-8 p.m., South Shore K-8

North King County, Monday, Jan. 27, 6-8 p.m., Lake Forest Park City Hall

Non-English message lines

206-477-6234 – Amharic
206-477-6235 – Arabic
206-263-8874 – Chinese
206 477-6232 – Korean
206 477-6236 – Oromo
206-296-0851 – Russian
206-296-0850 – Somali
206-263-9988 – Spanish
206-477-6237 – Tigrinya
206-477-6233 – Ukrainian
206-263-9674 – Vietnamese

King County METRO
King County Dept. of Transportation
Community Relations
KSC-TR-0824
201 S Jackson St
Seattle, WA 98104-3856

Reasonable accommodations at public meetings available upon request.
206-477-3835, TTY relay: 711

Alternative formats available
206-477-3835, TTY relay: 711

Seattle Children's®
HOSPITAL • RESEARCH • FOUNDATION

January 2, 2014

Bellevue City Council
450 110th Avenue NE
PO Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009

RE: Preserving All-day 15-Minute Frequencies on Route #235

Dear Bellevue City Council Members:

Seattle Children's is deeply concerned about preserving affordable and convenient transit access for our patients and their families as well as our employees. We share this perspective as a major regional employer, a teaching institution and as a specialty and critical care provider to Bellevue and Eastside region. King County Metro Transit is in an unenviable position of planning service cuts when the time demand for transit service is at its peak. We appreciate the thoughtful and challenging work involved as Metro and the City of Bellevue determine where the reductions in service will be made.

Seattle Children's Bellevue Clinic and Surgery Center is a Significant Trip Generator Throughout the Day. Our Children's Bellevue Clinic and Surgery Center is a significant trip generator in downtown Bellevue, attracting over 250 patients and their families and over 100 employees and volunteers daily. Patients and staff arrive throughout the day - not just at peak times. It is critical that the frequency and span of service on Bellevue's most productive corridors be maintained which is consistent with Children's travel demand. It is for this reason that we support the 2015 Reduced Funding Scenario depicted in the Bellevue Transit Service Vision Report that preserves all-day frequent service to/from Bellevue's Medical Institutions District on 116th Avenue NE.

Metro's Proposed Frequency for Route #235 is Inconsistent with Planning Priorities. Metro's service reduction proposal for route #235 is inconsistent with the City Council's "Abundant Access" vision and commitment to the Frequent Transit Network in the Bellevue Transit Service Vision Report, specifically on a corridor that has been identified for "very frequent service" per Metro's 2013 Service Guidelines Report. Metro proposes increasing #235 frequency to 15-minute headways during commute hours but does not propose this same frequency during mid-day. We support all-day, 15-minute frequencies, on route #235 because the route's role connecting employees to their jobs, and patients and their families to critical care at all times throughout the day.

Seattle Children's has a High Rate of Metro Ridership. Seattle Children's is an unique institution providing speciality and critical care to families throughout the region regardless of their ability to pay. Seattle Children's ability to provide critical care is supported by the availability of transit to connect our staff to their life-saving jobs each day. On a daily basis 25% of Seattle Children's staff relies on public transit to get to work (almost 900 people on an average weekday). These 900 Children's employees and transit riders include nurses, doctors, administrators, housekeepers and food service employees.

Frequent headways throughout the entire day support affordability, convenience, access, effective regional connections, and the local economy. Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Paulo Nunes-Ueno
Director, Transportation and Sustainability

4300 Roosevelt Way NE, M/S ROS.410 Seattle, WA 98105-5005 Office: (206) 987-5500 Fax: (206) 985-3301 www.seattlechildrens.org

BELLEVUE COLLEGE

3000 Landerholm Circle SE • Bellevue, WA 98007-6484 • www.bellevuecollege.edu

December 30, 2013

Bellevue City Council
450 110th Ave. NE
P.O. Box 90012Bellevue, WA

Honorable Councilmembers,

The King County Metro funding gap and proposed service cuts are of great concern to Bellevue College and the entire region and we hope that a resolution will be found to avoid impacts in Bellevue and throughout the county. We appreciate the time and effort put into the City of Bellevue Transit Master Plan and the framework of "abundant access," which provides a roadmap for a cuts scenario that preserves our primary corridors. We look forward to working with you and King County Metro to assure that vision is realized should the cuts take place in the near-term including protecting direct service to the Bellevue College campus.

Upon reviewing the King County Metro proposed Service Cuts we were extremely alarmed that service to the Bellevue College Campus would be cut for our two most well used routes, the 271 and the 245, which serve 55% of our student transit riders. Nearly a third of our students ride transit as their primary mode of transportation, which alleviates congestion in our neighborhood and throughout Bellevue. Metro's proposed re-routing of these services off campus on to 148th Ave SE would block traffic by stopping for passengers in-lane at frequent intervals. We already face complaints from students and employees that transit takes too long; adding a half-mile walk from the 148th Ave southbound bus stop to campus would only exacerbate riders' perceptions about the inconvenience of using transit, and it would significantly limit access to campus among students and faculty with mobility limitations. We should emphasize connections to population centers like Bellevue College, as more than 1,500 riders board or depart each day from this stop alone.

Bellevue College's staff have been participating in the Transit Master Plan process workshops and contributing feedback to the development of this plan. We support a robust network that encourages our students and employees to travel efficiently in Bellevue and make connections to destinations throughout the region. Given the dire tradeoffs we face, we support direct connections and streamlining coverage to make transit cost effective and operate at a meaningful frequency in primary corridors, including service to the Bellevue College.

As our partner in the region we support the City of Bellevue Transit Master Plan vision for abundant access—including its proposal for dealing with the potential cuts we face—and we look forward to your support in preserving direct service to Bellevue College in the face of these cuts, consistent with the City's plan.

Thank you,

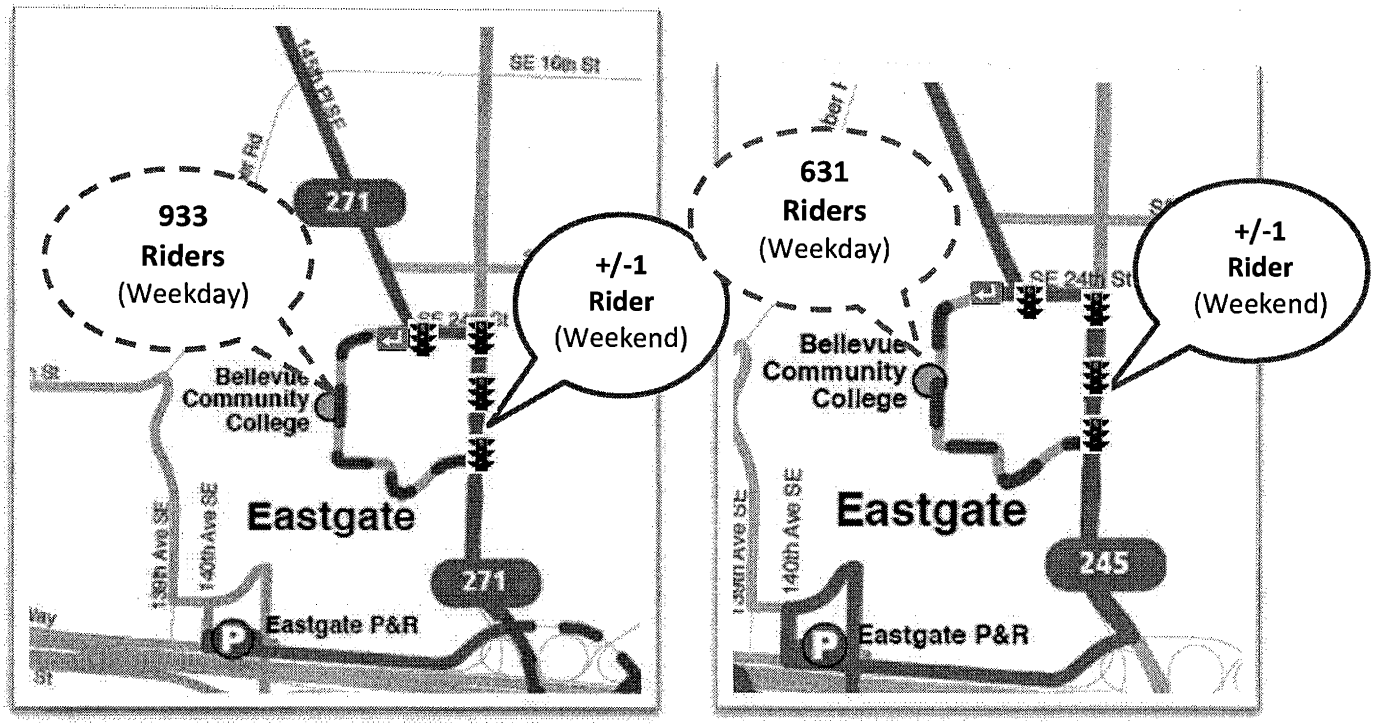
Ray White
VP of Administrative Services
Bellevue College

Enclosed: Service Cut 245 and 271 Bellevue College, one page factsheet

Metro Proposed Elimination of Bellevue College Stop

Routes 271 and 245

Metro's proposes cutting the *most well used stop* on 245 and 271, second only to the downtown transit center in the Bellevue corridor. These stops serve over 1,500 rides daily on this route.



2012 Data; 2013 City of Bellevue Transit Masterplan. *Within margin of error of ~48 http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Transportation/TNP2011-12Update_020513.pdf

- **The proposed cuts would eliminate the Bellevue College campus bus stops on routes serving 55% of student transit riders; 17% of all students.**
- **The reroute would put vulnerable, evening and disabled students at risk, forcing a long walk to transit service or lengthy transfer delay.**
- **There are no real time advantages except fewer passengers boarding, and would add congestion and delay to 148th for all drivers.**
- **The Reroute would reduce the routes productivity score of by moving service more than 1/3 of a mile away from more than 12,000 students and jobs.**

Metro website for cuts:

- Overall website
- 271
- 245

January 7, 2014

Bellevue City Council
450 110th Avenue NE
P.O. Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009

Bellevue College Associated Student Government

Honorable Councilmembers,

The changes proposed by King County Metro in response to lack of state funding will have a large impact on our student body. Specifically, the reroute of the 245 and 271, which would send the buses around the campus as opposed to its current route down through the heart of campus. The stop that would be cut picks up and drops off 1500+ rides a day. The 245 and 271 represent 55% of our transit riders and 17% of our entire student body. With ongoing work to promote alternative transportation, we have seen a rise in transit ridership, and as a result the college has seen a 4% drop in greenhouse gas emissions. The reroute diminishes the incentive for our students to use alternative transportation.

The stops that would be available for the students to use presents a saftey issue both for the riders and drivers on 148th. The students would be have to cross the street at 148th, creating uneeded foot traffic along a busy street. Buses dropping and picking up over 1500 rides a day would also add to the congestion. The distance to the campus is also an issues for safety and accessibility. At night the walk is dark and does not feel safe for most of our students. These changes impact equitable access to campus as the distance needed to be walked would make the campus difficult to access for some students with disabilities.

The current stop is on campus and features a heated shelter with bus arrival screens and a bike repair station. This creates an environment that promotes using buses as they have proven to make our campus accessible.

The City of Bellevue Transit Master Plan looks to provide efficient, abundant access across our region. Bellevue College has a strong relationship with the City of Bellevue and our campus is an important partner in building a sustainable city and future. Please support continued direct service to our campus.

Thank you,

Bellevue College ASG

ASG President

Kazuki Yorebayashi
米林和希

Bellevue
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
THE VOICE OF BUSINESS

December 27, 2013

Bellevue City Council
450 110th Avenue NE
P.O. Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009

Dear Council members,

The Bellevue business community is concerned about King County Metro's service reduction proposal which affects 28 of the 33 routes it operates in Bellevue. These potential cuts are proposed at a time when the need for improved bus service has never been greater. Bus travel to and from downtown Bellevue from employment centers to homes, and parts in between, helps employees, residents, and business patrons move Bellevue's economy forward.

During this time of financial uncertainty, where service cuts and fare hikes are distinct possibilities, it is imperative that that we have a consensus around a strategy for the most efficient way to distribute bus transportation resources. As an active participant in Bellevue's Transit Master Plan process at different levels of our organization we thank city staff for their outreach efforts to the business community. City staff has heard from many of our members in different settings on the importance of efficient mobility options and market-driven planning.

In May 2013 we testified in favor of the Bellevue Transit Master Plan's "Abundant Access" vision statement to the Bellevue City Council and we continue to advocate for robust bus service for all of Bellevue and the I-405 crescent. As we told the Council, we encourage the City of Bellevue to communicate strongly with King County Metro about the importance of encouraging long-term ridership growth which involves building capacity to meet future demand for transit service by: (i) providing service where there is anticipated to be high ridership; (ii) building and supporting Park & Ride facilities that help people access the transit system; (iii) improving the way people make transit connections so they can reach more destinations in less time; and, (iv) investing in enhancements such as transit priority measures and bus rapid transit.

The Chamber recognizes that the provision of cost-efficient and effective bus service necessitates making some difficult decisions. Moving toward the City of Bellevue's vision means maximizing the return on investment of limited resources which consequently has an impact on routes in Bellevue's lower density residential areas where service is less productive. After considering the difficult choices associated with a 17 percent service reduction, we suggest that if service cuts are necessary, Metro should reduce/eliminate low ridership routes before impacting service on Bellevue's most productive transit corridors.

We support the City's advocacy for robust bus service in Bellevue and the Eastside and will continue to communicate the messages we receive from our membership to you and our regional transportation agencies.

Thank you,

Tom Sulewski
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Betty Nokes
President & CEO