

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Discussion of Metro Service Reductions
DEPARTMENT:	Public Works
PRESENTED BY:	Kirk McKinley, Transportation Services Manager Alicia McIntire, Senior Transportation Planner
ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

On November 7, 2013, King County Metro Transit released their proposal for system wide service reductions in response to a significant funding shortfall. Because funding for service operation is heavily reliant on sales tax revenues, the recent economic downturn has greatly impacted Metro's budget. Over the past five years, Metro has raised fares, implemented service changes to improve efficiencies, utilized reserve funding and enacted a two-year congestion reduction charge (in the form of a vehicle license fee). However, many of these were one-time measures and without additional funding, Metro will need to make significant service reductions beginning in June 2014.

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide Council with an update on the proposed bus service cuts currently under consideration by King County Metro Transit. Metro staff will present the details associated with the proposal to Council at this meeting.

RESOURCE/FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This report is for discussion purposes only. There is no financial impact to the City associated with King County Metro Transit's proposed service cuts.

RECOMMENDATION

No formal action is required at this time. Staff would like Council direction regarding formal comments to forward to King County Metro Transit. Staff recommends Council provide direction to prepare a comment letter addressing the following topics: 1) suggest changes to the proposed Route 355 to serve Richmond Highlands, Hillwood and Richmond Beach; 2) express support for preservation of as much service as possible within the City of Shoreline, recognizing the need for King County Metro Transit to make system wide cuts in response to the financial situation; and 3) encourage King County to continue to seek additional revenue sources for transit service that would eliminate the need for system wide reductions.

Approved By: City Manager **DT** City Attorney **IS**

BACKGROUND

On November 7, 2013, King County Metro Transit released their proposal for system wide service reductions in response to a significant funding shortfall. Because funding for service operation is heavily reliant on sales tax revenues, the recent economic downturn has greatly impacted Metro's budget. Over the past five years, Metro has raised fares, implemented service changes to improve efficiencies, utilized reserve funding and enacted a two-year congestion reduction charge (in the form of a vehicle license fee). However, many of these were one-time measures and without additional funding, Metro will need to make significant service reductions beginning in June 2014.

The proposed service reduction scenario was developed using King County Metro Transit's Service Guidelines. Adopted in 2011 and amended in 2013, the Service Guidelines provide the basis for the planning and management of Metro's bus and streetcar service throughout King County. The Guidelines direct how and where service is provided on over 100 corridors in the network based upon productivity, social equity and geographic value. The Guidelines strive to strike a balance among these factors to ensure that public tax and farebox dollars are used as effectively as possible when providing transit service.

The Service Guidelines were developed based upon the work of the Regional Transit Task Force. Created in March 2010 in response to Metro's financial difficulties during the recession, the Task Force was asked to consider a policy framework to guide service investments or reductions, identify short-term and long-term objectives for transit service investment and to formulate a service implementation policy based on those objectives. The Task Force was comprised of 30 members (27 voting and 3 non-voting members) with various perspectives and geographic representation, including Councilmember Eggen representing the SeaShore Transportation Forum. Metro Transit drew on the Task Force's recommendations when preparing the Service Guidelines.

DISCUSSION

The attached matrix and maps (Attachments A-E) outline the proposed cuts to service in Shoreline. The matrix provides a description of each route and describes the proposed changes for them (specific details of all proposed cuts can be found at the following link: <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/am/future/>). Of the 26 Metro Transit routes serving Shoreline:

- 11 would remain unchanged,
- Seven would be modified,
- Three routes would be retained, however, service in Shoreline would be eliminated, and
- Five would be eliminated altogether.

The following information provides a summary of the proposed changes. *The comments in the attached matrix and this summary should not be construed to mean that any of the proposed cuts are inconsequential or will not have significant impacts to riders who*

utilize these transit services. Additionally, the alternative options described should not be interpreted as being equally convenient, fast or reliable as the service proposed for elimination. Because the financial shortfall is so great, the proposed cuts will have to extend beyond reductions to poorer performing routes to those that perform well. Like all cities, Shoreline is going to be impacted. Some residents will see changes to their service and may also have to contend with overcrowding/more standing on buses, full buses that pass them by at their stop, or less reliable service.

- All of the eliminated routes and two of the partially eliminated routes are peak only routes. Peak only routes usually operate during peak commute times and in the primary commute direction. The remaining partially eliminated route that provides all day service serves only a small portion of NE 145th Street. All of the routes have some sort of alternative available, most of which will require a transfer and/or longer travel times.
- The span (length of time) of service for many all day routes will be shortened, eliminating night service in much of the City.
- Service will be added to Route 355, a peak only route, serving Shoreline Community College via Greenwood Avenue N. The rationale is a bit complicated. Currently, there are three routes that serve the Phinney Ridge/Greenwood/Shoreline neighborhoods from downtown Seattle via Greenwood Avenue N. Route 5 provides frequent, all day service along this route. Two peak only routes (Routes 5X and 355) also serve this route. Route 5X provides service from downtown Seattle to N 90th Street and Route 355 travels from downtown via Interstate 5 and begins service on Greenwood Avenue N at N 85th Street. The proposed revision would eliminate Route 5X and add trips to Route 355. Route 355 would be modified to serve the same routing as the all day Route 5, only with limited stops.
- Service headways on Aurora Avenue N will change when Route 358 is converted to the RapidRide E Line in February 2014. Morning and evening peak period service will run every ten minutes (service currently runs every 5-15 minutes, depending upon the direction of travel). Fifteen minute service during the off-peak periods will remain. The proposed system wide service changes would impact early morning and Sunday service on the E Line.

The service cut proposal shows the full breadth of service cuts across the system, representing 600,000 hours or approximately 17 percent of Metro's current service. In addition to these cuts, approximately 45,000 additional service hours that are funded by the State as mitigation for the construction on the viaduct will also be eliminated, as the contract for this service will expire. The system wide cuts would occur over five consecutive service changes, beginning in June 2014 with the elimination of the viaduct construction mitigation service. Subsequent cuts would then occur in September 2014, February, June and September 2015, with approximately 150,000 hours eliminated with each service change.

Staff is communicating with Metro staff and is evaluating the proposed changes to determine what, if any, options are available to help mitigate the scope of these cuts and their impacts to Shoreline residents. Any options would need to be consistent with Metro's service guidelines and still result in overall system reductions. To help mitigate the loss of Route 304 (peak only route serving Richmond Beach, Richmond Highlands and Highland Terrace), Route 355 could be diverted from Greenwood Avenue N to Dayton Avenue N and extended north beyond Shoreline Community College to Richmond Highlands, Hillwood and Richmond Beach. This would be a low cost alternative and would only add a few minutes of time to each trip, but serve a larger area. This modification would not provide service to residents along N 145th Street currently served by Route 304.

In an effort to forego these cuts, King County has been seeking additional funding sources. Fares have been raised multiple times in recent years. In 2013, King County, the Sound Cities Association, and the City of Seattle joined together to ask the State Legislature for a new set of local funding tools for transit as well as roads and bridges. Known as the "local option", one of the proposed tools is a vehicle renewal fee, which would generate about \$85 million annually for Metro. The fee would have to be approved by a public vote. The Legislature is considering a statewide transportation funding package that includes local funding tools for King County, but the package has not been approved at this time.

If a transportation package is not adopted at the state level or the legislature does not provide for a "local option", existing state law does allow the Metropolitan King County Council to enact an ordinance creating a transportation benefit district with specific revenue authorities, including sales taxes and a flat annual vehicle fee. This would be similar to Shoreline's existing transportation benefit district but would require voter authorization. April 2014 is probably the earliest a vote could occur. Revenues would be distributed to Metro Transit for bus service, and would also provide funding for roads and transportation needs in cities and unincorporated King County.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

King County Metro Transit is responsible for public outreach associated with their proposed service reductions. Metro has undertaken a robust countywide public outreach plan to inform people about the proposed cuts and solicit their feedback. In addition to their website detailing the proposed changes and ways to contact them, King County Metro has been attending and hosting public events and meetings around the County. They will also have an outreach van traveling to transit centers and park and rides throughout the County. Public events in and near Shoreline included an outreach van stop at Shoreline Community College on December 2 from 11 am – 2 pm and an upcoming public meeting at Lake Forest Park City Hall on January 27 from 6 – 9 pm.

COUNCIL GOAL(S) ADDRESSED

This issue addresses Council Goal 2: "Improve Shoreline's utility, transportation, and environmental infrastructure".

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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Proposed Service Cuts in Shoreline
- Attachment B: Service Reduction Proposal: Northwest Seattle/North King County
- Attachment C: Proposed network: Northwest Seattle/North King County
- Attachment D: Service Reduction Proposal: Northeast Seattle/North King County
- Attachment E: Proposed Network: Northeast Seattle/North King County

ATTACHMENT A – PROPOSED SERVICE CUTS IN SHORELINE

ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	PEAK OR ALL DAY	PROPOSED CHANGES	NOTES
NO CHANGE				
77	North City, Maple Leaf, Downtown Seattle	Peak	No change	
301	Richmond Beach (east), Downtown Seattle	Peak	No change	
303X	Meridian Ave, First Hill	Peak	No change	
309**	Kenmore, Lake City, First Hill	Peak	No change	
312**	Bothell, Kenmore, Lake City, Downtown Seattle	Peak	No change	
316	Meridian Park, Green Lake, Downtown Seattle	Peak	No change	
330	Shoreline Community College, Lake City	All Day	No change	
345	Shoreline Community College	All Day	No change	
347	Mountlake Terrace Transit Center, Ballinger, North City, Ridgecrest, Northgate	All Day	No change	
373	Aurora Village, Meridian Park, Jackson Park, University District	Peak	No change	
CHANGE TO SERVICE				
5	Shoreline Community College, Greenwood, Downtown Seattle	All Day	Reduced headways on weekdays and Saturdays, Service will end before 12:00 am, rather than before 1:00 am	
65*	Lake City, University District	All Day	Service will end before 11:00 pm, rather than before 12:00 am	This route is being extended to 15 th Ave NE to help mitigate some of the loss from Route 73 reductions
331	Shoreline Community College, Ballinger, Kenmore	All Day	Service will end before 7:00 pm, rather than before 11:00 pm	No alternative available after 7:00 pm
346	Aurora Village, Meridian Park, Northgate, Downtown Seattle	All Day	Service will end before 9:00 pm, rather than before 11:00 pm	No alternative available after 9:00 pm
348	Richmond Beach, North City, Northgate	All Day	Service will end before 9:00 pm, rather than before 11:00 pm	No alternative available after 9:00 pm
355	Shoreline Community College, Greenwood, Downtown Seattle	Peak	New trips added (replaces eliminated Route 5X in Greenwood neighborhood), Rerouted to serve Aurora Avenue N instead of I-5 from downtown to N 46 th St	This will be the same as Route 5, with limited stops.

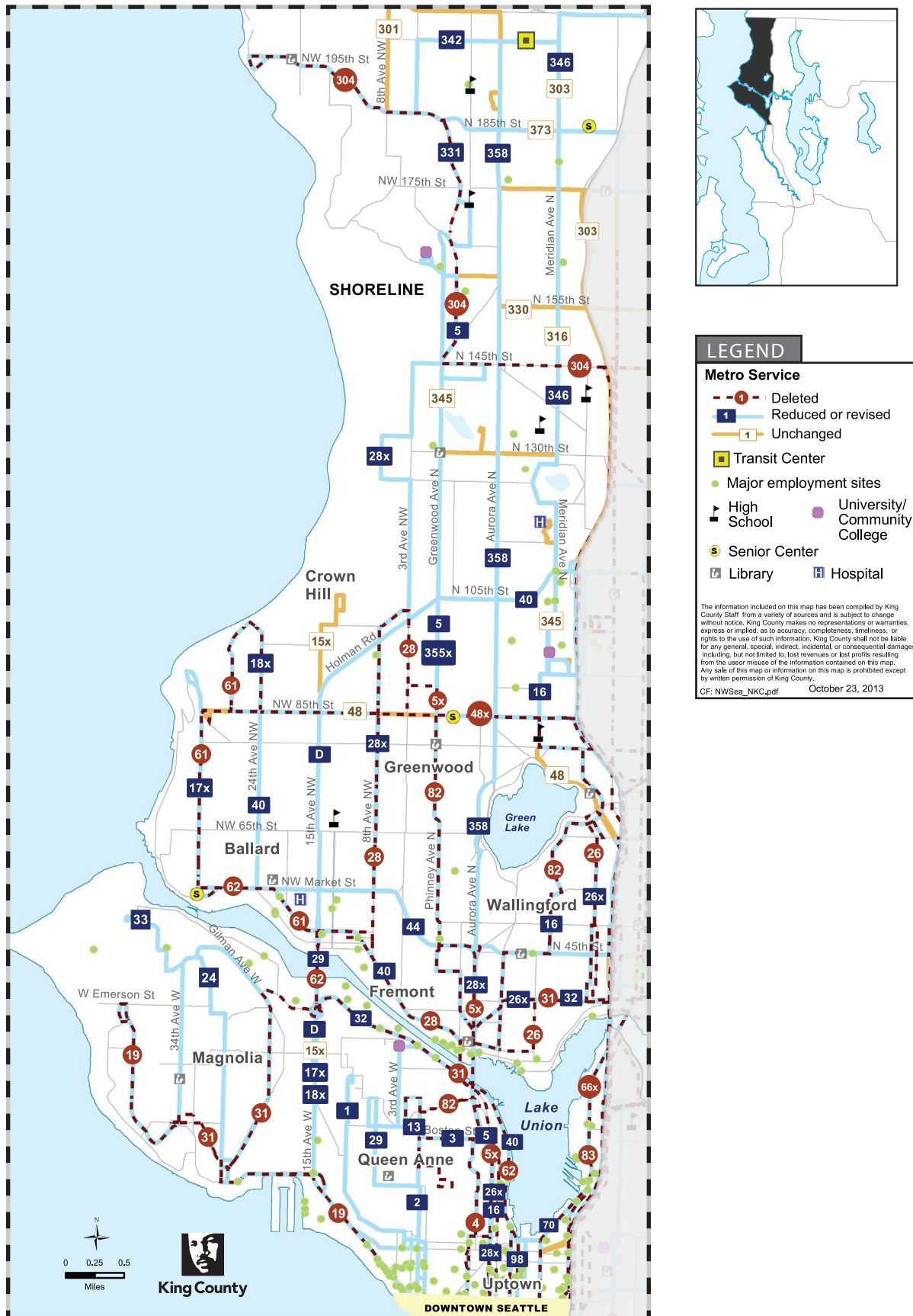
ATTACHMENT A – PROPOSED SERVICE CUTS IN SHORELINE

ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	PEAK OR ALL DAY	PROPOSED CHANGES	NOTES
358	Aurora Village, Aurora Corridor, Downtown Seattle	All Day	Reductions to early morning and Sunday trips	RapidRide E Line service scheduled to begin in February 2014. 10 minute service during morning and evening peak period, 15 minute service during off-peak periods. Scheduled service for late night/early mornings.
372**	Woodinville, UW/CCC Campus, Bothell, Kenmore, Lake City, University District	All Day	Additional night and weekend trips added serving Lake City and the University District only (replaces eliminated Route 72); Service eliminated east of UW Bothell Campus	To reach Woodinville: Alternative service available via Sound Transit Route 522 (transfer required in Kenmore)
SERVICE RETAINED BUT DELETED IN SHORELINE				
28X*	Broadview, Downtown Seattle	Peak	Segment serving Shoreline eliminated; service terminates at NW 103 rd Street	Alternate service available via Route 5 and Route 355
73*	Jackson Park, Downtown Seattle	All Day	Segment serving Shoreline eliminated; service terminates at NE 103 rd Street/Northgate Transit Center	Alternative service available via Routes 347 and 348 (transfer required at Northgate to continue downtown) and Routes 77 and 373 (peak only)
342	Shoreline P&R, Kenmore, Bothell, Bellevue, Renton	Peak	Service deleted in Shoreline and Renton	To reach Bellevue: Alternative service available via Route 331 (transfer required in Kenmore) To reach Renton: Alternative service available via Route 301 or 358 (transfer required in downtown Seattle)
ROUTE DELETED				
242	Ridgecrest, Overlake	Peak	Deleted	Alternative service available via Route 347 to Northgate, transfer required to multiple Metro and/or Sound Transit routes
243	Jackson Park, Lake City, Ravenna, Bellevue	Peak	Deleted	To reach Lake City: Alternative service available via Route 330 (requires ½ mile walk to NE 155 th Street) from P&R; transfer required at Lake City) To reach Bellevue: Alternative service available via Route 347 (transfer required at Northgate)
304	Richmond Beach, Downtown Seattle	Peak	Deleted	Alternative service available via Routes 331, 345 348 (transfer required at Aurora Ave N, 15 th Ave NE or Northgate to continue downtown). Other alternatives available: Routes 5, 316, 355
306	Bothell, Kenmore, Lake City, Downtown	Peak	Deleted	Alternative service available via Route 309, 312, 372 or Sound Transit Route 522
308	Lake Forest Park, Jackson Park, Downtown Seattle	Peak	Deleted	Alternative service available on Lake City Way via Route 309, 312, 372 or Sound Transit Route 522; Other alternatives available to downtown: Routes 64X (begins at NE 153 rd St), 77, 347 and 348 (transfer required at Northgate for 347 and 348)

*Route serves small sections of 145th Street only

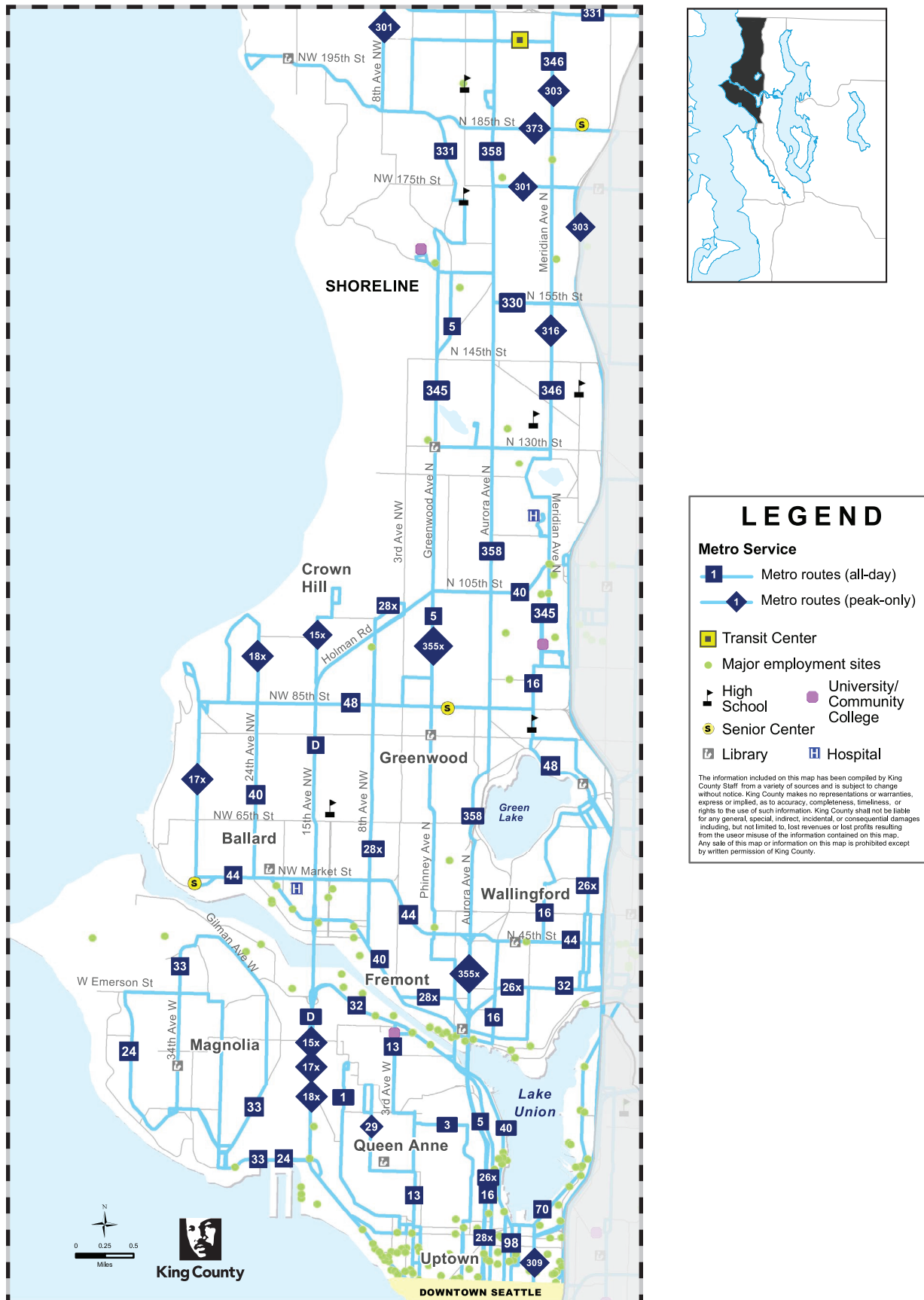
**Route serves Bothell Way NE/Lake City Way NE (SR 522)

Service Reduction Proposal: Northwest Seattle/North King County

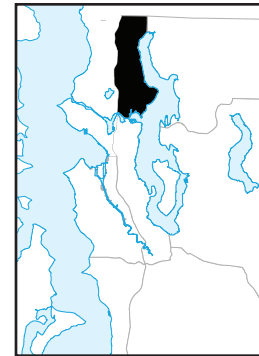
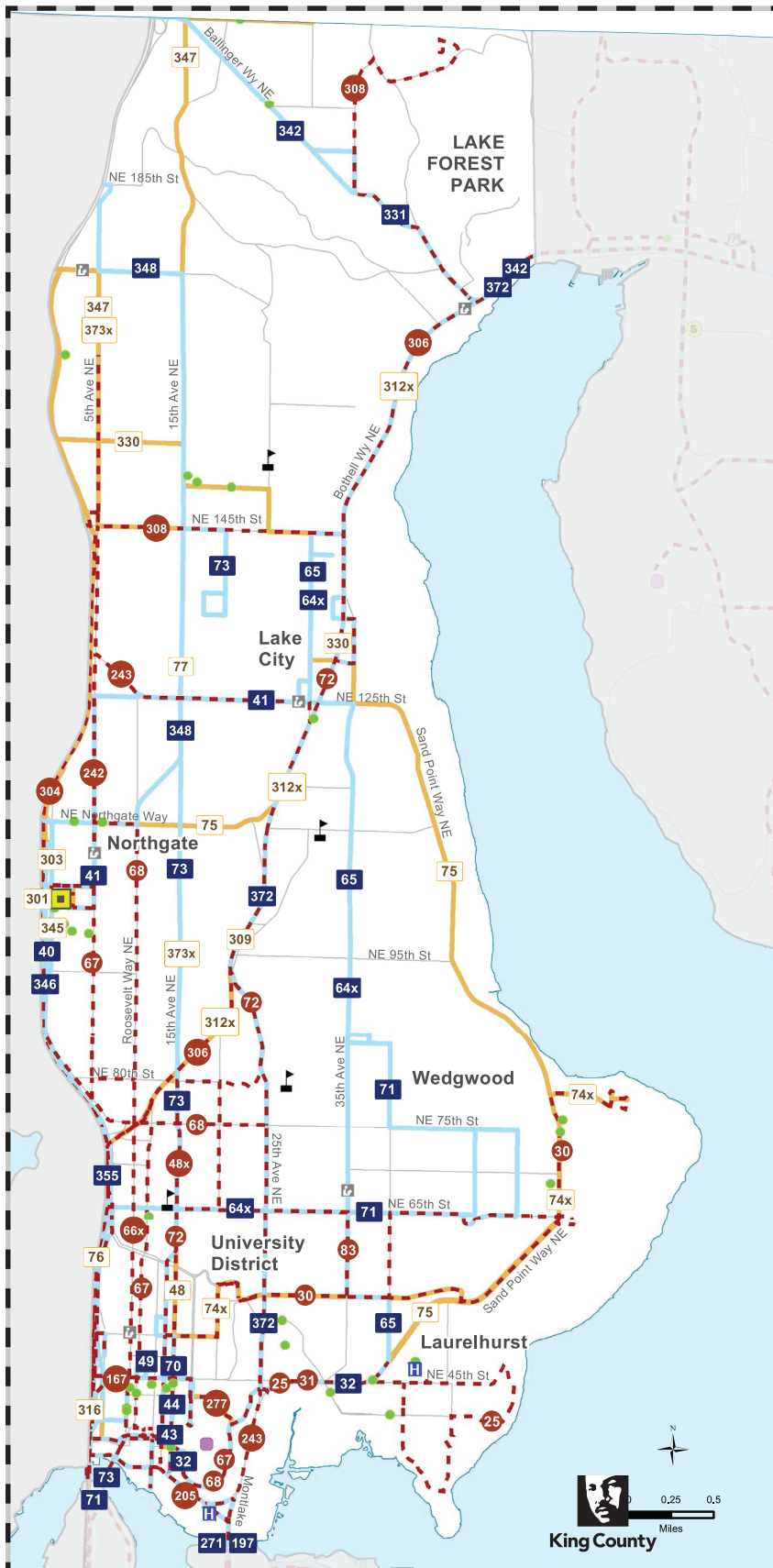


Proposed network: Northwest Seattle/North King County

The future network if service reduction proposals are adopted



Service Reduction Proposal: Northeast Seattle/North King County



LEGEND

Metro Service

- Deleted
- Reduced or revised
- Unchanged

 Transit Center

● Major employment sites

▲ High School

● Senior Center

📖 Library

● University/Community College

🏥 Hospital

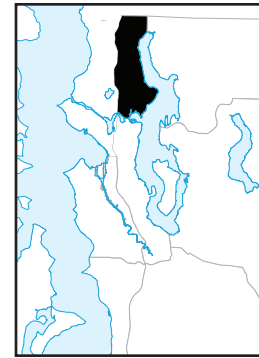
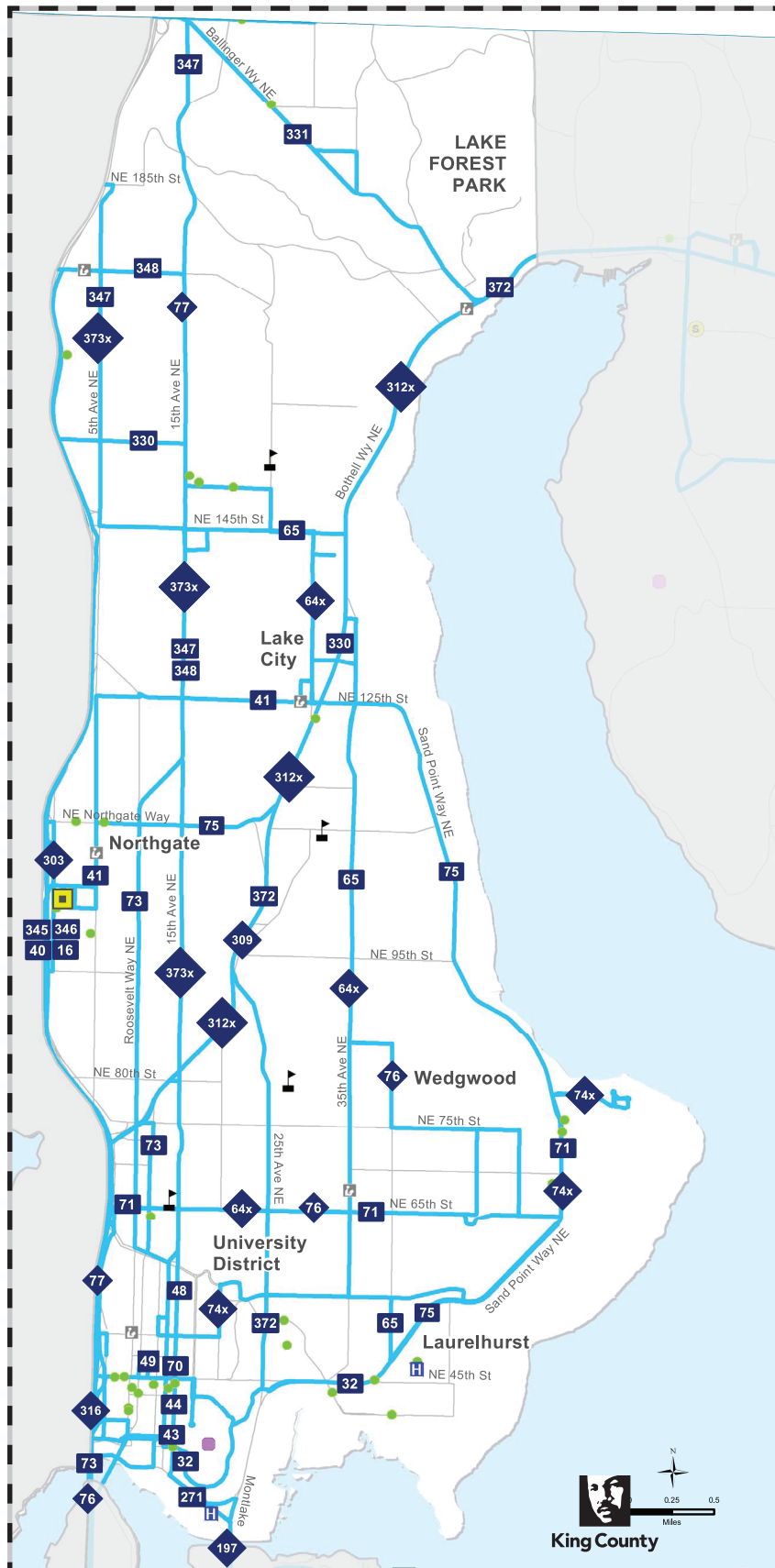
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CF: NESa_NKC.pdf

October 24, 2013

Proposed Network: Northeast Seattle/North King County

The future network if service reduction proposals are adopted



LEGEND

Metro Service

- Metro routes (all-day)
- Metro routes (peak-only)

Transit Center

- Major employment sites
- High School
- University/Community College
- Senior Center
- Library
- Hospital

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