

Section Six:

Developing Improvements – Implementation Strategies

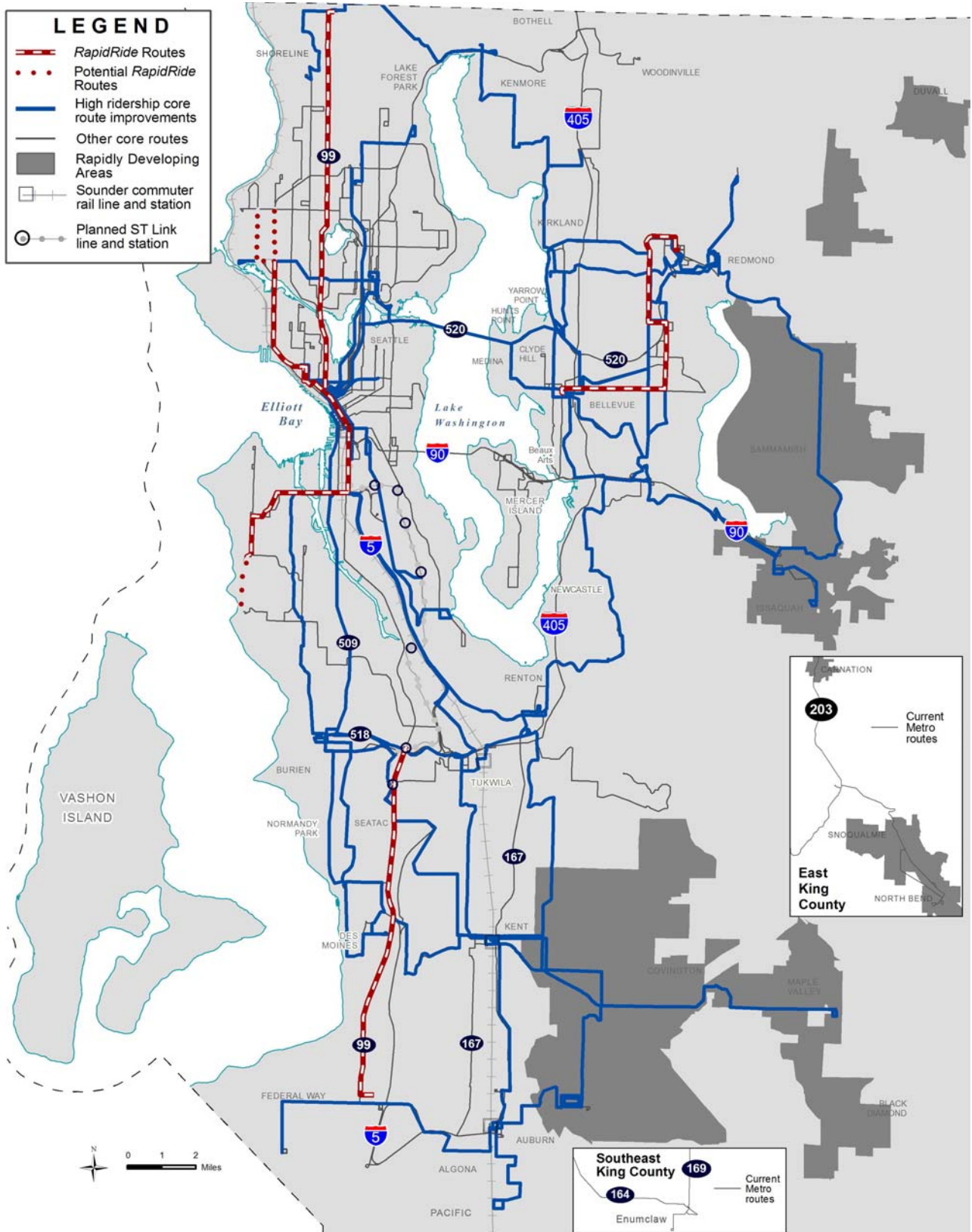
The implementation strategies identified in this chapter define priorities and a phasing plan to make *Transit Now* program improvements by 2016. *Transit Now* revenues comprise most of the resource increases anticipated during the period of the plan.

Strategy IM-1: *Transit Now* Program

King County Metro's priority is to implement the *Transit Now* program passed by voters in 2006 and shown in Exhibit 6-1, which includes service and capital support for these initiatives:

- **RapidRide BRT.** Use a target of 100,000 annual service hours between 2007 and 2016 to implement RapidRide BRT service in five corridors, consistent with service strategy S-5. The RapidRide corridors are:
 - Shoreline/Downtown Seattle via Aurora Avenue North
 - West Seattle/Downtown Seattle via West Seattle Bridge
 - Ballard/Seattle Center/south downtown stadium area via 15th Ave Northwest and West Mercer Street with service or frequent connections to Ballard High School and the Ballard business district.
 - Federal Way/Tukwila via Pacific Highway South
 - Bellevue/Redmond via Crossroads and Overlake
- **High Ridership Routes.** Use a target of 350,000 annual service hours between 2007 and 2016 to improve service frequency and/or span of service on high ridership corridors on the core connections network, consistent with service strategy S-3 and shown in Exhibit 6-1.
- **Service Partnerships.** Enter into partnerships with public and/or private entities to serve established or emerging ridership markets, consistent with service strategies S-9 and F-3. A sustained fund supporting up to 90,000 annual service hours will be provided for this purpose, to be implemented between 2007 and 2013, matched by an additional 30,000 to 45,000 annual service hours funded by partner direct financial contributions, and by partner investments that will result in quantifiable transit speed and reliability improvements.

Exhibit 6-1 Transit Now Program



- **New Service for Developing Areas.** Add new service or improve existing services in rapidly developing areas in East and South King County within the Urban Growth Area, consistent with service strategy S-6. A target of 50,000 new annual hours of service will be deployed for developing areas between 2007 and 2016.
- **Expanded paratransit service.** Expand the service area for paratransit service to cover gaps within the fixed-route coverage areas as shown in Exhibit 4-3 and provide service to disabled users not served by Access through the Community Access Transportation Program.
- **Expanded ridesharing and the vanpool program.** Expand outreach efforts and provide incentives to increase program participation and facilitate ridesharing opportunities; promote ridesharing to smaller employers in King County, and in areas not served or underserved by the fixed-route transit system.

The primary focus for the 2007-2016 Strategic Plan will be the implementation of King County Metro's *Transit Now* program. Approved by the voters in November 2006, *Transit Now* is funded by a one-tenth of one percent sales-tax increase and identifies a program of transit investments to be implemented over 10 years. More information about the *Transit Now* program is included in Appendix B.

While *Transit Now* defines the anticipated resources and improvement program for transit until 2016, each service change will strive to advance multiple service and capital improvement objectives. If additional resources are available beyond those anticipated by the *Transit Now* program, other investments must be consistent with the strategies contained in this strategic plan.

Strategy IM-2: Service Implementation Phasing

Provide a predictable schedule of service expansions that expand all elements of the *Transit Now* program concurrently and in all subareas, as shown in Exhibit 6-2.

Transit Now is expected to expand Metro Transit service by 15 to 20 percent over ten years. A preliminary phasing plan for the implementation of new *Transit Now* annual service hours is presented in Exhibit 6-2. The phasing plan will continue to be refined as the program is implemented.

The phasing plan is guided by three general principles.

- 1) All elements of *Transit Now* should be implemented concurrently.
- 2) Service and capital investments should match cash flow.
- 3) RapidRide is a service concept that should be implemented as a complete package of capital and service improvements in each corridor.

Exhibit 6-2
***Transit Now* Phasing Plan –**
Targeted Increases in Annual Service Hours by Program
(In Thousands of Annual Hours)

Hours Categories	'02-'06	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Developing Areas			13	8	4	5	7	13				50
RapidRide					34	42	19	5				100
High Ridership/Core		45	9	8	4	9	38	43	68	86	40	350
Total 40-40-20 Adds		45	22	16	42	56	64	61	68	86	40	500
Service Partnerships		5	22	12	35	6	5	5				90
TOTAL		50	45	28	77	62	68	66		86	40	590

RapidRide Implementation:

Pacific Highway S. in 2010, Bellevue-Redmond & West Seattle in 2011, Ballard/Uptown in 2012, and Aurora in 2013.

The first service investments under *Transit Now* were made on select core routes in February 2007, with investments directed to off-peak service due to fleet constraints. Steady annual service growth is expected to continue over the ten-year period. No priority has been assigned to any of the elements of the *Transit Now* program, although specific factors affect when different investments are made. For example, RapidRide investments are scheduled to begin in the 2010 timeframe since RapidRide is dependent upon the purchase of special buses, and the completion of capital improvements and speed and reliability measures. Implementation of RapidRide also needs to be coordinated with plans to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct.

The other initiatives – core route investments, developing areas service and partnership programs as well as ridesharing, vanpool and paratransit program improvements are all expected to be deployed steadily throughout the period. Factors that affect the phasing include service needs, operating constraints and interest in the partnership program. In any one year, less than half the investment in new service hours will be devoted to service partnerships.

In addition to *Transit Now*, King County Metro will continue service integration with Sound Transit Express Bus, Sounder Commuter Rail and future light rail operations when Sound Transit service improvements or modifications are implemented.

The following list identifies some of the major investments for the associated time periods. Investments in certain programs such as the high ridership core connection services, developing area service, vanpool and paratransit will be on-going throughout the 10 year period.

2007

Reopen Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel - Return buses to tunnel and change street assignments for many routes in downtown Seattle.

Core Connections - Investment in off-peak service on core connections

Service Partnerships

- First service partnership with Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center began with 63 new trips on existing Metro Transit routes 25 and 75.
- Call for Projects issued for projects to begin in 2008 and beyond

2008-2009

Core Connections - Continued expansion of off-peak service and initial investment in peak-hour service on core connections.

Developing Areas – Continued investment in expanding service to areas experiencing growth.

Service Partnerships – Begin projects with major employers and cities to add new service.

Central Link integration - Revise routes to reduce duplication and improve feeder service when Link opens between downtown Seattle and Sea-Tac Airport.

2010-2011

RapidRide Initiation – Initiate RapidRide improvements on Pacific Highway South, Bel-Red and West Seattle corridors.

Service Partnerships – Continued investments for improvements and new service.

Core Connections – Continued investment in high ridership routes.

2012-2013

RapidRide – initiate RapidRide on Ballard and Aurora Avenue North corridors.

Core Connections – Continue to improve services on core connection routes.

Service Partnerships – Additional service partnership hours added; service will remain at current levels as long as partner funding is sustained.

Developing Areas – Make further service improvements in growing areas of South and East King County.

2014-2016

Core Connections – Additional investments in core service improvements.

University Link – Adjust service to reduce duplication and provide feeder service.

King County Metro will continue to adjust service as new Sound Transit investments are made. Some of the key activities will be the initiation of Central Link light rail to Sea-Tac Airport in 2009, North Link to the University of Washington in 2016 and the full implementation of Sounder commuter rail service.

Continued Delivery and Development of Established Metro Transit Services

King County Metro will continuously review and evaluate service structure, ridership demand, land use conditions and operating characteristics to develop proposals consistent with the service and capital strategies of this plan, local subarea priorities and to respond to changing conditions and resource availability.

King County Metro will continue to maintain and pursue new partnership initiatives that will help leverage limited public resources with additional financing from both public and private partners. Strategy S-9 summarizes initiatives that King County Metro continues to pursue with local jurisdictions, institutions, and employers to help finance alternative public transportation products and provide financial incentives for users of those

products. King County Metro is also working closely with local jurisdictions and the State of Washington to maximize funding from federal grants, primarily for capital projects. However, grant funds are often restricted as to when they can be used and typically support only one-time capital costs and/or short-term service demonstrations. Therefore, grants cannot be considered sustainable resources for service.

Strategy IM-3: Service Resource Allocation

The implementation of transit service hours as stated in strategy IM-1 and IM-2 above shall use the following framework for transit service allocation. Service hours used for service partnerships, schedule maintenance, contracted services or partnership agreements are exempted from subarea allocation requirements.

With the implementation of each 200,000 annual hours of service investments that are subject to the subarea allocation requirement and at the end of the 2007-2010 *Transit Now* program investments, each King County Metro planning subarea would receive a share of actual service hours implemented: East 40%, South 40% and Seattle/North King County 20%.

Measurement of the resulting share of hours will be based on the baseline bus route allocations that assign one-way routes that originate in a subarea or two-way routes that operate wholly within a subarea to that subarea. Further, all-day, two-way routes that operate between two subareas will be attributed in hours at 50% to each subarea. Any system-wide reduction in service investment shall be distributed among the subareas in proportion to each subarea's share of the total service investment.

The subarea and community planning process described in strategy IM-4 will be used to determine service investment priorities within each subarea. This process may result in service recommendations for investments in a different subarea. When a route crosses subarea boundaries, it is possible that the improvement priorities identified in one subarea may not coincide with the priorities of another subarea. In those instances, the King County Executive will propose, and the King County Council will adopt service changes guided by the overall objectives of the plan.

Strategy IM-4: Subarea and Community-Based Planning

Conduct a community planning process in which transit riders, local jurisdictions, unincorporated area councils, employers, and educational institutions participate in the design and implementation of significant changes to existing service. Use service and capital strategies consistent with the service priorities described in Strategy IM-1. Involve the community, local jurisdictions and subarea groups in the development of recommendations for updates of the Strategic Plan at least every two years or more frequently if changing conditions or priorities dictate. Utilize overall roles and responsibilities as shown in Exhibit 6-3 and the service change process shown in Exhibit 6-4.

Plan updates shall address significant operating changes and capital improvements anticipated in the next ten years as well as any revision to adopted strategies necessitated by significantly changed circumstances affecting the transit program.

Subarea-based Community Planning

Subarea and community-based planning play an important role in the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan. The 2007-2016 Strategic Plan is focused primarily on the implementation of *Transit Now*, a program that was founded upon significant public input. In developing *Transit Now*, transit staff connected with more than 80 stakeholder groups, including employers, community organizations and local government agencies to obtain feedback used to shape the program.

Further opportunity for community participation will be possible as part of the major update to the Strategic Plan in 2008, which will involve a comprehensive public outreach and involvement program.

Plan Implementation

Implementing the Strategic Plan also involves working closely with communities affected by possible service changes.

The subarea-based community planning process to implement the Strategic Plan will involve the following:

- Defining subarea priorities within the parameters of the Strategic Plan
- Working with individual communities to define the specific improvements to be implemented, consistent with Implementation Strategies IM-1 and IM-2

Defining Subarea Priorities

King County Metro will work with the subarea transportation groups, including the Eastside Transportation Partnership (ETP), South County Area Transportation board (SCATBd) and Seattle/Shoreline (SeaShore), and other stakeholders to identify service priorities not specifically identified in this plan for each subarea. Where appropriate, King County Metro will develop community sounding boards to identify specific improvements and modifications to be implemented.

This effort will seek to establish a broad-based understanding of the priority service investments identified in Implementation Strategy IM-1 and phasing identified in Strategy IM-2 prior to the beginning of a more detailed community process identifying specific changes to be implemented. During this stage partnerships and other means of gaining additional resources will be also pursued. In the case of service partnerships, King County Metro expects to work closely with partners to develop joint recommendations that are reviewed by affected communities.

Making Changes

Formal King County Council approval of detailed service proposals concludes the annual service change process, which provides opportunities for the public to help design and implement changes. Current service will be changed, and new services will be developed through this process. Although the exact schedule of events may vary during each service change process, depending on the complexity of the changes being discussed, and the decision timeline associated with them, processes should be designed to include:

- Riders, nonriders, citizen advisory committees, elected officials, community leaders, city and county staff, school districts, social service agencies, and King County Metro staff and operators will be involved.

- Make use of information on public and community needs and preferences, research on other transit systems, and data on the performance of the current system.

Exhibit 6-4
Strategic Plan Roles and Responsibilities

Task	Recommendations to County Executive			King County Council		
	Subarea Steering Committees (ETP, SCATBd, SeaShore)	Local Jurisdictions	Community Involvement	Regional Transit Committee	Transportation Committee	King County Council
Select subarea priorities	Review and refine alternative service priorities for the subarea. Recommend subarea service priorities to the County Executive.	Help subarea steering committees define priorities by participating in the steering committees and at the staff level.	Use information from Six-Year Plan outreach efforts and from existing research in discussions with local jurisdictions and subarea steering committees.	Receive progress reports on subarea discussions.		System approval of system priorities and expenditure levels in annual budget.
Develop service changes	Review service change proposals developed by King County Metro, local jurisdictions and communities for consistency with defined priorities.	Work with King County Metro staff and community members to develop specific service change proposals.	Representatives from a broad range of community interests work with King County Metro staff and local jurisdictions to develop specific service change proposals.		Review and recommend service change ordinance to Council.	Final Council action on service change ordinance.
Update Six-Year Plan	Recommend Six-Year Plan modifications to the County Executive.	Help subarea steering committees develop recommended Six-Year Plan modifications.	Representatives from a broad range of community interests help develop recommended Six-Year Plan modifications.	Review and recommend Six-Year Plan update ordinance to Council.		Final Council action on update of Six-Year Plan

Working partnerships will be created between King County Metro and communities affected by service changes. This approach assumes the following:

- Public involvement occurs early in the planning process.
- The public is advised about opportunities for involvement throughout the planning process.
- An extensive public information effort uses a variety of media and communication media to keep discussion open.
- Clarity is needed as to who contributes to decisions and who is responsible for the final decision.
- Flexibility is necessary.

The goal of this approach to community involvement is to ensure that King County Metro is responsive and accountable to the community during implementation of the Strategic Plan. Depending on the complexity of a given service change proposal, the community involvement process may take up to eighteen months, including Council adoption of the final service recommendations.

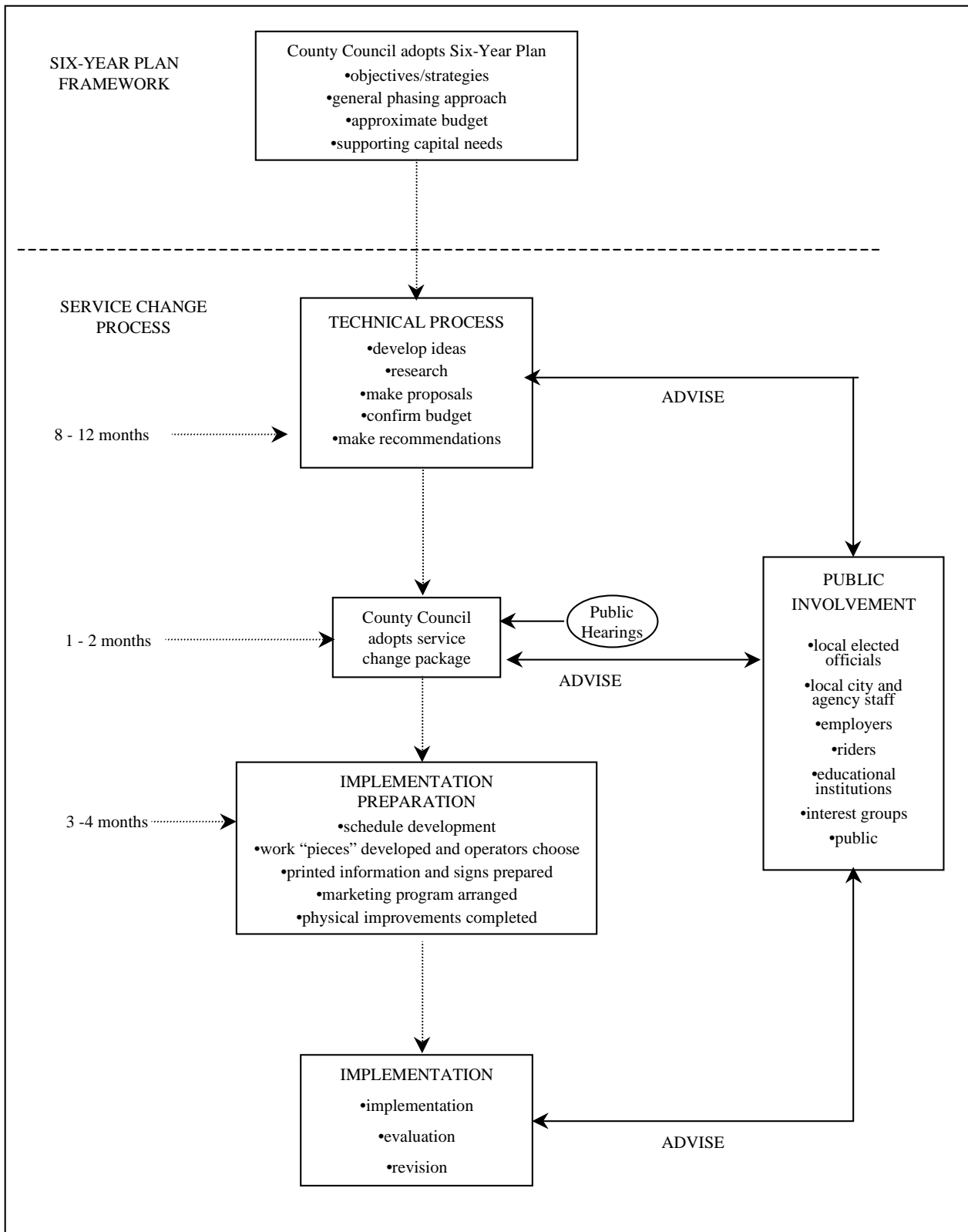
Additional Factors

Beyond consistency with plan objectives and strategies, during any given service change process a number of factors will influence the selection of a specific set of service changes. These considerations include federal requirements, cost, capital requirements, relationship to other proposals, and subarea priorities.

Federal Requirements

King County Metro is required to comply with two federal requirements - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - that are integrated in all service proposal assessments.

Exhibit 6-5 Service Change Process



The objectives of Title VI are to ensure that the level, quality and distribution of transit services, as well as participation in transit planning, are provided to ensure equal access and mobility without regard to race, color or national origin. In anticipation of significant transit system modifications, King County Metro will identify resulting service levels and quality of service for minority and non-minority communities, and make such information available to policy makers.

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requires that complementary paratransit service be comparable to non-commuter, fixed-route service for the general public in several ways, including service area, days and hours, response time and fares. The minimum complementary paratransit service area, as defined by federal regulations, is based on King County Metro's non-commuter fixed-route service. When non-commuter fixed route service changes occur, the paratransit service area is adjusted to reflect these changes as needed.

Financial Constraints

Some service changes may have to wait for implementation because of funding constraints. To the extent that additional revenues become available, the magnitude and timing of service improvement implementation will vary.

Capital Requirements—Integrating Service with Capital

The establishment of service priorities will influence the timing for implementation of critical supporting capital program elements (fleet procurement, transit hubs, speed and reliability improvements, etc.).

Relationship to Other Proposals

Different service proposals may complement each other by mutually enhancing their effect on overall mobility or system efficiency. Circumstances such as these could require that certain changes be linked.

As individual services are agreed upon, periodic reviews with the subarea groups will be made to update them on progress towards their implementation. In addition, the groups will be used as a "clearinghouse" to address issues regarding the direction of service changes and any issues resulting from the community work and affecting the overall network for the subarea in question.

