



Southeast Seattle Bus Changes

Public Engagement Report

Prepared by

King County Department of Transportation Communications

March 2016

NARRATIVE SECTION ONLY - APPENDIX CAN BE FOUND
AS PART OF THE LEGISLATIVE RECORD FOR
PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2016-0199

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Outreach Plan and Activities.....	7
Overview.....	7
Background and timeline	7
Engagement goals.....	8
Notifications – how we let people know they could participate	8
Feedback methods – how people shared their opinions	9
Public Feedback Summary.....	13
Who we heard from	13
What we heard	16
Appendix A: Online Survey Questions and Results	23
Appendix B: Emails, Phone Calls, and Letters Received	183
Appendix C: Community Advisory Group Meeting Notes	219
Appendix D: Trusted Advocate Session and Public Meeting Notes.....	240
Appendix E: Media and Social Media	253
Appendix F: Sample of Materials – Multi-Lingual Handout	258

Executive Summary

Since June 2012, Metro has been working with community organizations and listening to transit riders and the general public to find out how Metro can help people get around better in southeast Seattle. We learned that people want better connections between downtown Seattle, Martin Luther King Jr. Way South (MLK Way) and Renton. People also said they want more convenient bus service to stores, services and the many social, health, cultural and religious activities along MLK Way.

In May 2016, Metro convened a community advisory group that met three times to advise us about a set of proposed changes to fixed-route bus service and a timeline for implementation. The advisory group did not reach consensus that the proposed changes should be adopted; rather, they said the proposal was the best possible set of changes to put forward to the community for feedback.

The proposed changes attempted to address unmet needs for people traveling between downtown Seattle, MLK Way and Renton within Metro's current service funding limits. They also took into consideration changes in transit infrastructure, such as Link light rail serving Capitol Hill and the University of Washington and First Hill Streetcar serving Capitol Hill, First Hill, the International District and Pioneer Square.

Southeast Seattle service change proposal for September 2016:

- **Revise Route 106** – Move the route to serve the Rainier Valley and the International District via MLK Jr. Way S, Rainier Avenue S, and S Jackson Street. The route would no longer serve Beacon Hill and Georgetown. A revised Route 106 buses would come more often—every 15 minutes during the day on weekdays and Saturday and every 30 minutes at night. The revised route would replace today's Route 8 (and the future Route 38).
- **Revise Route 107** –Extend the route beyond Rainier Beach through south Beacon Hill to the Beacon Hill Link light rail station. This revision would replace the segment of Route 106 that currently serves these communities. A revised Route 107 would come more often—every 15 minutes on weekdays during peak periods (northbound in the morning and southbound in the afternoon) and every 30 minutes at night.
- **Add trips to Route 124** – Increase weekday peak and evening service on Route 124 to maintain the same level of service provided today between Georgetown and downtown Seattle by the combination of routes 106 and 124.
- **Replace southern segment of Route 8 (and the future Route 38)** – Today's Route 8 will be split into two routes in March 2016. The southern part of Route 8 between Rainier Beach and Mount Baker Transit Center will become the new Route 38. The northern part of Route 8 between Mount Baker Transit Center and Seattle Center will continue to operate under its current route number and will

come more often. If the revision Route 106 and the other elements of this proposal are approved, the new Route 38 would be replaced by a revised Route 106 in September 2016.

- **Reduce Route 9X** – Decrease the route so it would operate during peak periods only. This reduction in service would help cover the cost of the proposed changes to routes 106, 107 and 124. During the day and in the evenings at non-peak times, Route 9X riders could use Route 7 and the First Hill Streetcar to travel between Rainier Valley and First Hill. Link light rail will also go to Capitol Hill, stopping near Seattle Central College.

From November 23, 2015, through January 10, 2016, Metro solicited feedback on this proposal via:

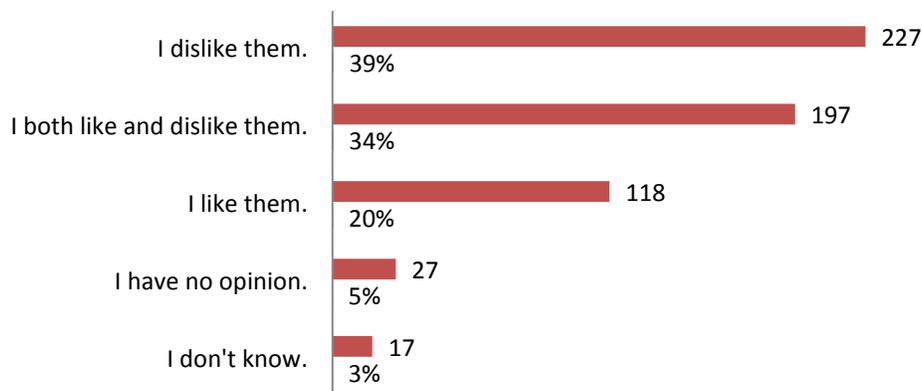
- **An online survey** –674 responses
- **Public meetings** –public open house on Dec. 9 at the Filipino Community Center with 30+ attendees, and Georgetown Community Council-hosted public information session on Dec. 15
- **Trusted advocate* outreach sessions and surveys** –feedback heard from approximately 250 people accessing services along MLK Way through face-to-face conversations and paper surveys of clients
- **Phone, email, and written correspondence** –input received from more than 100 residents as well as official letters from the Greater Duwamish District Council, Georgetown Community Council, International Community Health Services and Transit for All

We received more than 1,000 comments during this outreach period in total.

The information from our online survey results and those who took the time to call or write reveal a tradeoff in service that people find difficult to make. We heard that while people desired more convenient transit access between downtown Seattle, MLK Way, and Renton, they do not wish to see the route(s) they currently use reduced or changed. In the online survey results below, we saw a plurality of participants disliking the proposal.

* The term “trusted advocate” in this outreach process means an organization that Metro contracted with to lead engagement of its community in a public process. These “trusted advocates” have deep connections into their communities as organizers and/or advocates and have demonstrated their abilities to navigate cultural and language distances. They have the confidence of their people.

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS
What do you think of the proposed changes?



In contrast, the results of our trusted advocate outreach indicate that a majority of those accessing services along MLK Way said proposed revisions to routes 106 and 107 would make it easier – less travel time, fewer transfers, shorter distance to walk – for them to access these services and provide new, valuable connections to communities and services between Renton and MLK Way.

The following summarizes **what people liked** about the proposal:

By route

- Increased service on a revised Route 106 through Skyway is needed.
- Increased service connecting 15th Avenue S on Beacon Hill to light rail on a revised Route 107.
- Bringing a revised Route 107 further north would be better than today's routing.
- Increased service as proposed on Route 124 is needed.

In general

- New, one-bus connection between Renton and MLK Way would be great.
- One-bus connection between MLK Way and the International District would make it easier – less travel time, fewer transfers, shorter distance to walk – for populations accessing services along MLK Way.
- Proposed Route 106 would provide better neighborhood connectivity in southeast Seattle between Renton, Rainier Beach and MLK Way.
- Proposal is supported by International Community Health Services, Transportation Choices Coalition, Puget Sound Sage, Asian Counseling and Referral Service, Filipino Community of Seattle, One America, Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Advocating Together for Healthy Communities, and Mothers for Police Accountability.

The following summarizes **what people disliked** about the proposal:

By route

- Reducing Route 9 to peak-only is a concern. The route currently operates as an express option through Rainier Valley with direct service to First Hill and Capitol Hill. Don't want to trade a quick, one-seat option for a slower, "less safe" two-seat option and no new connections.
- Riders of Route 106 who live in south Beacon Hill will need to transfer to get to downtown Seattle.
- Riders of Route 106 in Georgetown lose a connection to the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel and Skyway/Renton. The addition of trips to Route 124 are not an adequate replacement. In addition, Route 124 feels less safe than Route 106.
- Concern about reliability of service on proposed Route 106.
- Feedback that the proposal provides redundant service between Mount Baker Transit Center and the International District; those resources should be used to provide new or different connections.

In general

- Why create new Route 38 only to replace it six months later? Can revisions to routes 8 and 106 be made at the same time to avoid confusion?
- Criticism as to whether this proposal is consistent with Metro's Service Guidelines.
- Every community affected in this proposal has a high percentage of people of color and with low or no income; doing something to help some of these populations is coming at the expense of doing harm to others.
- With the passing of Seattle's Proposition 1, no community should see a reduction in their service, specifically Georgetown and the Rainier Avenue S corridor.
- Proposal is opposed by Georgetown Community Council and the Greater Duwamish District Council.

This report outlines Metro's approach, activities and the results of our engagement on changes proposed to routes 9X, 38, 106, 107 and 124. Ultimately, the King County Executive is forwarding an ordinance that would reduce Route 9X and extend Route 38 to the International District on weekdays only. This recommendation limits impacts of these changes to Route 9X riders only. Midday riders of Route 9X will continue to have frequent service options to get between the Rainier Valley and First Hill via service provided by Route 7 and the First Hill Streetcar, or with a connection to Link light rail that serving Capitol Hill.

Outreach Plan and Activities

Overview

Since June 2012, Metro has been working with community organizations and listening to transit riders and the general public to find out how Metro can help people get around better in southeast Seattle. We learned that people want better connections between downtown Seattle, Martin Luther King Jr. Way South (MLK Way) and Renton. People also said they want more convenient bus service to stores, services and the many social, health, cultural and religious activities along MLK Way.

Changes are being made in the transit system that affect communities across the Metro service area. Sound Transit's Link light rail began new service to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington on March 19, and Metro has changed bus routes in northeast Seattle and Capitol Hill to work better with Link starting March 26. The First Hill Streetcar is now running between Pioneer Square and Capitol Hill via the International District, Little Saigon, and First Hill. With all of these changes, Metro convened a community advisory group in May 2015 to advise us on how we might reallocate resources to take advantage of these changes and address unmet travel needs in southeast Seattle between Renton, MLK Way, and downtown Seattle.

The community advisory group helped us shape a proposal that we took to the public for feedback starting in November 2015. At first, the public comment period was scheduled to conclude at the end of December 2015. At the request of community members, we extended the public comment period to January 10, 2016. This report summarizes the feedback we received on proposed changes to routes 9X, 38, 106, 107, and 124 through the outreach process.

Background and timeline

The public engagement phase this report summarizes was preceded by four years of outreach and community engagement in southeast Seattle. This period of outreach was built upon the following outreach work including:

- **June 2012** – Route 42 was discontinued
- **Summer – Fall 2012** – Metro hosted conversations with community members and agencies to understand how people are using transit, the barriers they face, improvements that would make it easier to use transit, how people are paying their fares, and the best ways to communicate with English language learners. [Read the report](#) »
- **Fall 2013** – Metro conducted a survey of riders on Route 8 and worked with community organizations to survey other riders.

- **2013 – 2014** – We asked for public feedback on proposed Metro service reductions across the county, and received positive comments on a proposal to extend Route 106 to downtown Seattle via Martin Luther King Jr. Way S and Yesler Way.
- **2012 – 2014** – Metro met with the Transit for All working group.

This report documents the following period of outreach:

- **May – July 2015** – Metro formed a community advisory group, including representatives from Transit for All, to inform a bus change proposal for public consideration.
- **November 2015 – January 2016** – Metro solicits public feedback on the bus change proposal.

Engagement goals

The goals of our engagement were to:

- Test support for a community-generated idea to better connect Renton, MLK Way, and downtown Seattle by revising Route 106.
- Improve access to opportunity for populations and communities who need it most - building on the work of the previous four years to better understand mobility needs and transportation barriers in southeast Seattle by proposing fixed route bus changes that could address some of those barriers.
- Be transparent and clear about the timeline for this work and how it is interrelated with other recent, current and future plans and projects that affect riders in this area.
- Educate the public about ORCA and ORCA LIFT program and the increased mobility options using an ORCA card to pay your fare offers.

Notifications – how we let people know they could participate

- **Metro Have a Say Website content** – Information about the project, the proposed changes, how to provide input (including a link to an online survey), and a timeline for decision making was made available at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/metro/seseattle2015>
- **Media and social media** – The Metro Matters blog, Twitter, and Facebook were used to announce and promote opportunities to give feedback. (A history of blog posts related to our work in Southeast Seattle is available at

<https://metrofutureblog.wordpress.com/category/southeast-seattle/>) (See Appendix E for media coverage and social media statistics)

- **Rider alerts at bus stops** – Metro posted rider alerts describing the proposed changes, detailing opportunities to comment, and project contact information at stops with 50 or more daily boardings serving the affected routes. (See Appendix F for a copy of the rider alert)
- **Mailer to key community locations** – Metro mailed the rider alert and a multi-lingual handout to key locations in the community such as libraries, schools, and community centers with a request to make information available to those served by these locations.
- **E-notifications to route subscribers** – Metro sent a transit alert to email and SMS text message subscribers of routes 8, 9X, 106, 107 and 124 at the launch of the public comment period on Nov. 23, 2015, and when the comment period was extended on Dec. 22, 2015, with a reminder to participate. Approximately 5,120 individuals received these notifications resulting in a 20% open rate.
- **Outreach to stakeholders in the affected area** – At the launch of the public comment period, Metro contacted major employers, neighborhood and district community councils, community-based organizations, social/human/health service providers, and schools in the project area to inform them of the opportunity to participate and provide comment with a request to help engage those they serve.



Feedback methods – how people shared their opinions

- **Online survey** – 674 people completed an online survey to share their opinion about the changes being proposed and how those changes will affect their use of transit. (See Appendix A: Survey Questions and Answers for details.)

- **Public open house** – Metro hosted a public open house on December 9, 2015, from 6-8 p.m., at the Filipino Community Center where people could learn more and comment on the proposed changes. Approximately 30 people attended this meeting. (See Appendix D: Trusted Advocate Session and Public Meeting Notes.)



- **Phone, email, correspondence** – People called and wrote to share their views on the proposed changes. We received more than 100 comments. (See Appendix B: Emails, Phone Calls, and Letters Received.)

- **Trusted advocate outreach** – Metro invited organizations in the project area who serve populations with limited or no English proficiency to engage those they serve in learning about and commenting on the changes. Metro used a set of questions about the proposed changes as a guide to work with each organization to design a culturally-appropriate way to receive feedback from those they serve.

Participating organizations:

- Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS)
- Filipino Community Center
- El Centro de la Raza

Invited organizations that did not participate:

- Lighthouse for the Blind
- Refugee Women’s Alliance
- International Community Health Services
- Oromo Community Center
- Ethiopian Community Center

- **Stakeholder events by request** – Georgetown Community Council and the Georgetown Merchants Association asked Metro to attend an open house they hosted for their community from 6-8 p.m. on December 15, 2015. Metro staff also attended the Georgetown Community Council meeting on January 25 to brief attendees on the proposal, answer questions, and listen to comments.

About our Trusted Advocate Outreach

Approximately 250 people provided feedback on the proposed changes in a series of listening sessions at ACRS and the Filipino Community Center and the offering of paper surveys by El Centro de la Raza. Metro staff facilitated conversation at small and large group sessions in multiple languages at ACRS and the Filipino Community Center. El Centro de la Raza distributed paper surveys to their clients receiving social services along with a description of the proposal. (Read details of each session, participant demographics, conversation notes, and paper survey results in Appendix D.)

About our Community Advisory Group

Metro convened a community advisory group in May 2015. This group met three times between May and July 2015 to help shape the service change proposal, the timeline and the outreach process. The group was not asked to form a consensus, nor did they come to consensus that the proposed changes should be adopted. As such, they do not have any official statements or positions on the proposal. (Meeting notes and handouts are available in Appendix C.)

Southeast Seattle Community Advisory Group members:

- Dick Burkhart, former Sounding Board member and Othello neighborhood resident
- Emma Catague, Filipino Community Center
- Joanna Cullen, Squire Park Community Council and Central Area Transit Coalition
- Jeff Keever, Seattle Central College
- Peggy Martinez, Lighthouse for the Blind
- Pear Moraras, International Community Health Services
- Diane Narasaki, Asian Counseling and Referral Service
- Shefali Ranganathan, Transportation Choices Coalition
- Karen Westling, Swedish Hospital

Invited, but unable to participate in meetings:

- Rich Stolz, One America
- Neph Drummer, Seattle University
- Mahnaz Eshetu, Refugee Women's Alliance
- Rebecca Saldana, Puget Sound Sage
- Patrice Thomas, SEED Seattle

About Equity and Social Justice

Routes 8, 9X, 106, 107, and 124 operate in some of the most linguistically-diverse ZIP codes in the region. Metro invested in a combination of trusted advocate outreach, rider alerts with proposal details posted at bus stops, some translated project information,

and the use of multi-lingual phone lines to make this engagement process accessible to English language learners, seniors, people with little or no income, and those who are not electronically connected.

Trusted advocates helped us ensure we heard from people who would be directly impacted by these changes in culturally and language-appropriate ways.

We researched census tract data and took advice from community advisory group members on languages to include in translated materials accompanied by multi-lingual phone lines. The multi-lingual handout (available in Appendix F) included the following languages:

- Amharic
- Cambodian/Khmer
- Chinese
- Hmong
- Korean
- Oromo
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Tigrinya
- Vietnamese

Public Feedback Summary

Who we heard from

Online survey participants

More than 670 people responded to our online survey about the proposed changes.

Ninety-nine percent of respondents identified as riders of buses or light rail. The following percentage of respondents indicated they ride the affected route occasionally (less than once a week), one or two days a week, or three or more days a week:

- 52% ride Route 8
- 42% ride Route 9X
- 50% ride Route 106
- 15% ride Route 107
- 23% ride Route 124

Respondents indicated they use transit for the following reasons:

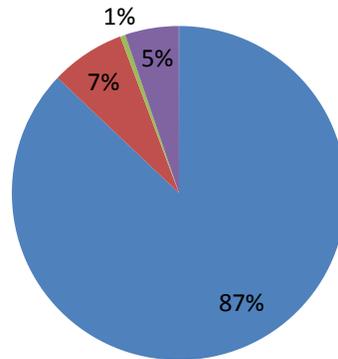
- Eight out of 10 respondents use transit to get to/from work.
- Seven out of 10 respondents use transit for fun, recreational, or social activities and for shopping or errands.
- Five out of 10 respondents use transit for medical appointments and special events.
- Two out of 10 respondents use transit to get to/from school.
- One out of 10 respondents use transit to get to/from church, look for a job, or get to/from a food bank.

The largest number of respondents (one out of three) indicate they live in the Rainier Valley (ZIP code 98118); the second largest number of respondents (one out of five) indicated they live outside of the project area by selecting “other” as their survey answer; and, the third largest number of respondents (almost one out of five) live in the Georgetown/Beacon Hill area (ZIP code 98108).

To help fulfill our goal of educating people about the advantages of using an ORCA card, we asked how people pay their fare. If a respondent indicated that they paid with cash or tickets, they were provided information about the advantages of ORCA, different types of ORCA products, and where to get them. Eight percent of respondents received this educational information.

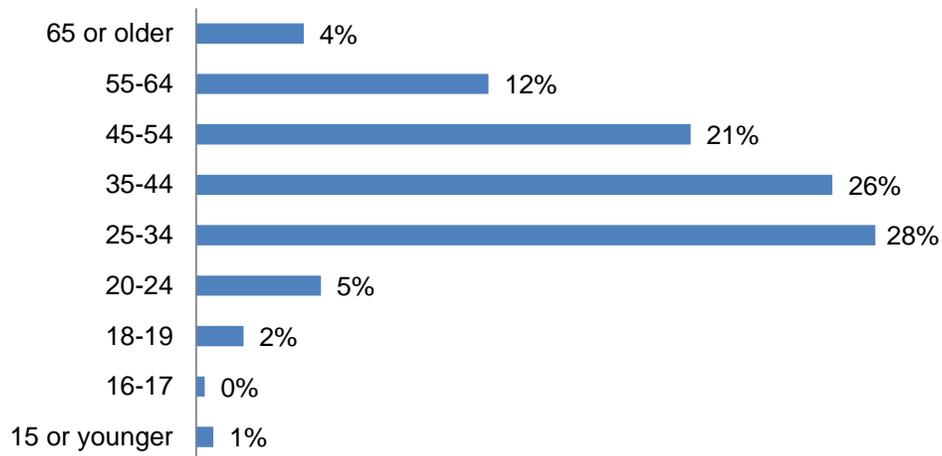
How do you usually pay for the bus or light rail?

ORCA Cash Ticket Other



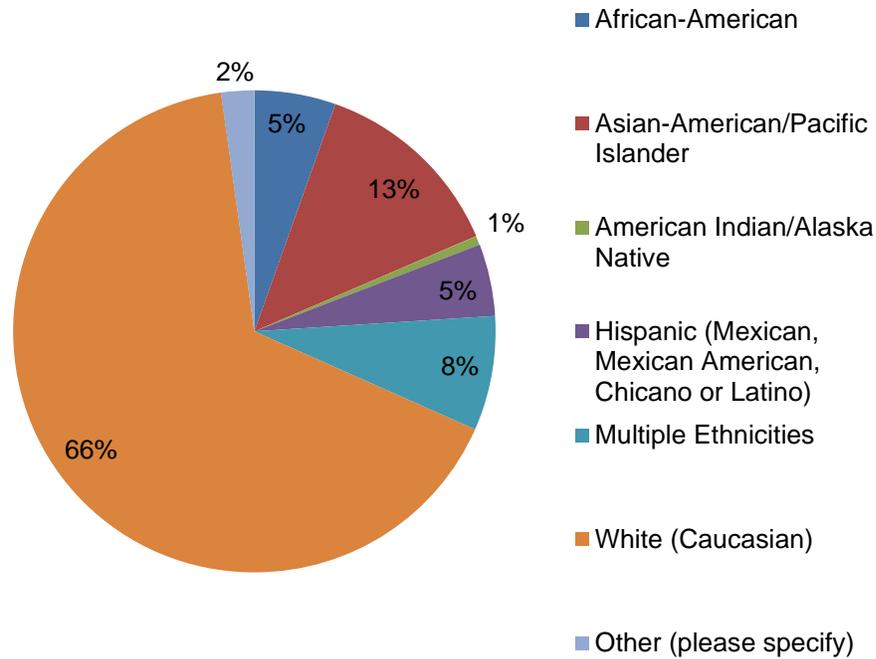
Respondents in the online survey who chose to answer demographic questions tell us they reflect the following ages, disabilities, race/ethnicities, primary languages, household incomes and transit dependency:

What is your age?



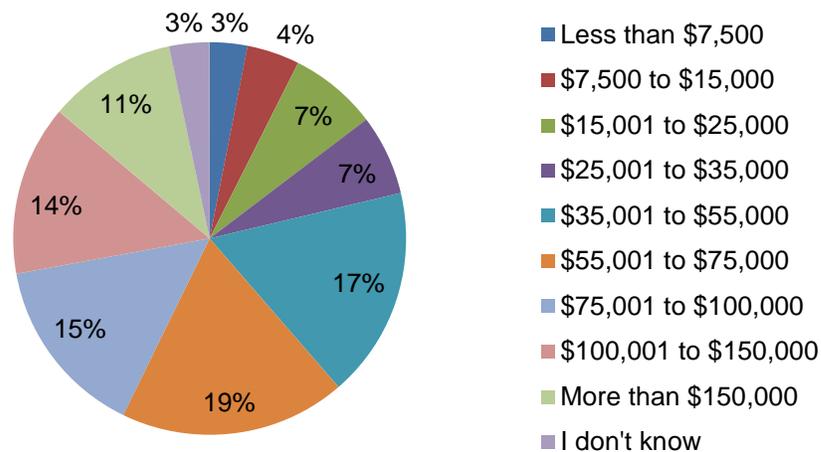
Twenty five percent indicate they have a disability (mobility, vision, hearing or cognitive).

Do you consider yourself...



Ninety three percent speak English as their primary language at home. Four percent speak Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.). And, one percent or less speak Vietnamese, Spanish, Korean, Oromo, Tigrinya, Cambodian, Somali, or Tagalog.

What is your annual household income?



Thirty percent of respondents do not have access to a car or truck, while the other seventy percent have access to one or more.

Trusted Advocate outreach participants

Asian Counseling and Referral Service and the Filipino Community Center facilitated eight listening sessions. Metro staff were invited to help explain the proposed changes and answer questions. Agency staff facilitated and provided interpreting services for each session. These sessions engaged more than 200 people currently accessing services or attending events at either location. Sessions were facilitated in Tagalog, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Lao, Mien and Korean. Attendees ranged in age, although a majority were seniors.

El Centro de la Raza provided paper surveys along with a description of the proposed changes to clients receiving social and health services at their on-site clinic. We received approximately 30 completed surveys. Participants ranged in age and spoke the following languages: Spanish, English, Chinese, French and Vietnamese.

What we heard

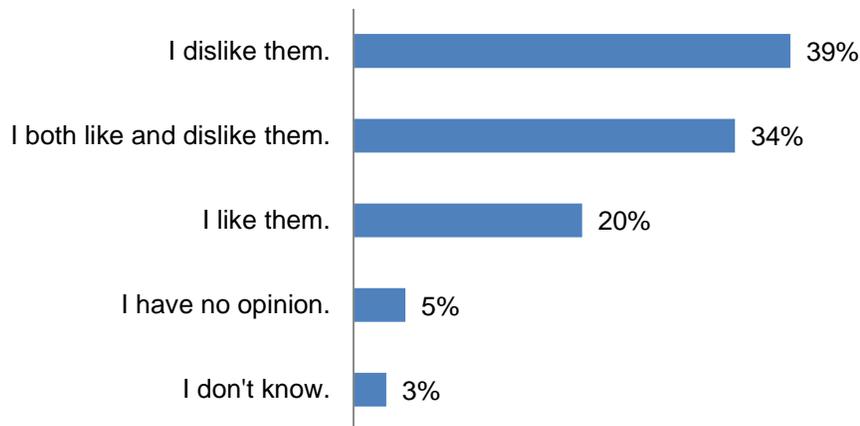
One important note about the feedback we received on this proposal relates to the change proposed to the new Route 38. At the time of outreach, the county had recently decided to split Route 8 into two routes and create new Route 38 to run between Mount Baker Transit Center and Rainier Beach as part of a bus restructure to accompany new light rail service to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington. Route 8 will be split and new Route 38 starts operating on March 26.

In the service change proposal for southeast Seattle we asked for feedback on an option to delete new Route 38 service in September of 2016 and replace it with service on a revised Route 106. Some comments and survey responses we received showed that not all people understood that the decision to split Route 8 and create new Route 38 had already been made. Comments specifically related to this are not a focus of this report.

What people think of the proposed changes

We asked outreach participants what they thought of the changes as a whole. In general, online survey participants and commenters supported the idea of providing better connections between Renton, MLK Way, and downtown Seattle. However, many current riders of routes 9X and 106 north of Rainier Beach said they were unwilling to see their bus routes reduced or changed to meet this need.

**ONLINE SURVEY:
What do you think of the proposed changes?**

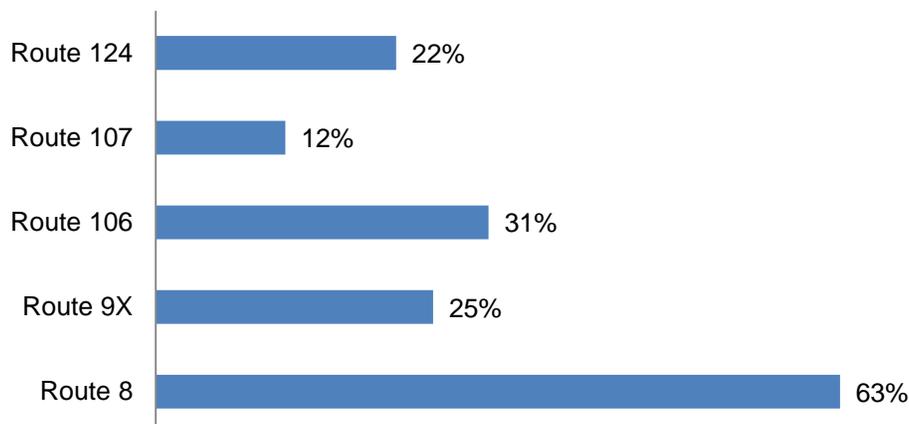


In contrast to online participants people accessing services along MLK Way and on Beacon Hill who travel from all over the county to find culturally-appropriate services shared a different perspective. They said the proposed changes to Routes 106 and 107 would make their transit use more convenient because of shorter travel times, fewer transfers and shorter distances to walk from a stop to their final destination. A majority of those we spoke with said the revised 106 and 107 in the proposal would better connect them to places where they have access to opportunity. There was a general sense – even if the changes didn’t affect the person we were speaking with – that these changes would be better for their “community.”

What people like about the proposed changes

One hundred eighteen online survey respondents liked the proposed changes. They lived in the Central Area, North Rainier and Mount Baker (ZIP code 98144), Rainier Valley (ZIP code 98118), Georgetown and Beacon Hill (ZIP code 98108), Capitol Hill and the Central Area (ZIP code 98122), and Skyway (ZIP code 98178).

ONLINE SURVEY: LIKE THE PROPOSAL
Ride the following routes occasionally or more



They told us the top destinations (mentioned ten or more times) they travel to by transit are:

- Downtown Seattle
- Capitol Hill
- University of Washington

When asked why they like the proposed changes, they us told in order of preference that these changes will:

- Improve reliability of their service
- Increase their options
- Provide them with buses that come more often
- Provide connections to new destinations and better connections to light rail

In particular, people on Beacon Hill who live along 15th Avenue South said they would appreciate more frequent connections to light rail and new connections by one bus between south and north Beacon Hill neighborhoods and businesses.

Riders using Route 106 south of Rainier Beach said they would welcome the bus coming more often. Riders on Route 124 said this route is in need of more service to address overcrowding and reliability issues.

People we spoke with at ACRS and the Filipino Community Center tell us that being able to take one bus route from Renton or the International District to reach these locations will save them time, reduce the number of buses they take to complete their trip, and reduce the distance they have to walk once they get off the bus or light rail to reach their final destination.

Their experiences and thoughts are documented in Appendix D. They describe today's reality for many historically underserved populations who rely on transit to access opportunity – such as food, jobs, training, healthcare and affordable housing. They live in the south part of the county where housing is more affordable, they travel by 2 or 3 buses to reach the lunch program or behavioral health class they participate in at ACRS, and it takes them two hours or more to make the trip. Their trip may be too long for them to make the trip within the two hour transfer window.

We heard about how participants' families are moving south. From some, we heard about how attendance at the programs they frequent has dropped since bus options between Skyway, MLK Way, and downtown Seattle were reduced.

Their stories are confirmed by the organizations that serve them and represent them in advocating for policies that make transit service more equitable.

The following organizations wrote to Metro to express their support for the service change proposal:

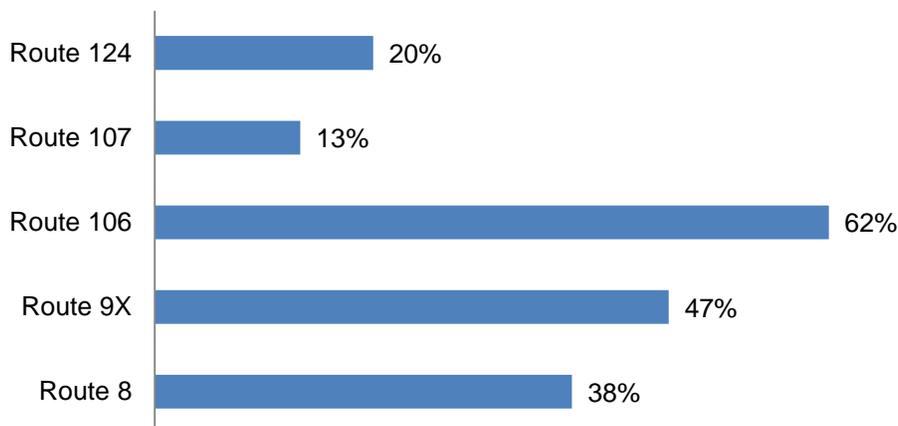
- Asian Counseling and Referral Services
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Puget Sound Sage
- One America
- International Community Health Services
- Filipino Community of Seattle
- Mothers for Police Accountability
- Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Advocating Together for Healthy Communities

They shared data about how communities of color and people with low or no income are moving south. They shared details about the thousands of people they serve every day in the International District and along MLK Way whose access to their locations would be improved by the proposed changes.

What people dislike about the proposal

Two hundred twenty five online survey respondents told us they dislike the proposed changes. They live in Rainier Valley (ZIP code 98118), Georgetown and Beacon Hill (ZIP code 98108), Rainier Beach/Skyway (ZIP code 98178), and the Central Area (ZIP code 98144).

ONLINE SURVEY: DISLIKE THE PROPOSAL
Ride the following routes occasionally or more



They told us the top destinations (mentioned ten more times) they travel to by transit are:

- Downtown Seattle
- First Hill
- Capitol Hill
- International District
- Rainier Beach
- Georgetown
- South Lake Union

When asked why they dislike the proposed changes, we heard most frequently:

- Do not reduce Route 9X, this route needs more service not less

Following this top concern were others – listed in order from most commented on to least – where people said the proposed changes would:

- Increase the number of times I have to transfer to get where I need to go
- Make it harder to get to Georgetown
- Increase my travel time and the number of people on my bus
- Eliminate service where I need to go
- Remove my access to the downtown core/Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel
- Duplicate other service
- Cause hardship
- Be discriminatory or create social justice issues
- Cause me to feel unsafe taking the bus or transferring between services
- Have negative impacts on seniors or people with disabilities

We heard the following concerns by route:

Route 9

- Reducing Route 9 to peak-only is a cut to valuable service needed in the Rainier Valley
- The route currently operates as an express option through Rainier Valley with direct service to First Hill and Capitol Hill, connecting employees and patients to First Hill hospitals, as well as employees and students to Seattle University and Seattle Central College at all hours of the day
- Desire not to trade a quick, one-seat option for a slower, “less safe” two-seat option and no new connections

Route 106

- Riders of Route 106 who live in south Beacon Hill will need to transfer to get to downtown Seattle
- Riders of Route 106 in Georgetown lose a connection to the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel and Skyway and Renton
- The addition of trips to Route 124 is not an adequate replacement for a loss of service in Georgetown
- Route 124 feels less safe than Route 106
- Concern about reliability of service on proposed Route 106

In general, people expressed the following sentiments that were not route specific:

- This proposal provides redundant service between Mount Baker Transit Center and the International District; those resources should be used to provide new or different connections
- Why create the new Route 38 only to replace it six months later? Can revisions to routes 8 and 106 be made at the same time to avoid confusion?
- Criticism as to whether this proposal is consistent with Metro’s Service Guidelines
- Every community affected in this proposal has a high percentage of people of color and with low or no income; doing something to help some of these populations is coming at the expense of doing harm to others
- With the passing of Seattle’s Proposition 1, no community should see a reduction in their service, specifically Georgetown and the Rainier Avenue South corridor

These comments were supported in letters we received from the Georgetown Community Council and the Greater Duwamish District Council, which both said they opposed the proposal. In addition to concerns about reductions in service to their communities, the two organizations said they would like to be a part of the conversation to figure out how to address every community’s needs. They are especially concerned that this proposal pits communities against each other for limited resources.

Ideas for change

Many of the people we heard from could see the value in increasing transit service and options for communities in the south part of the county to access services and activities along MLK Way. There were some who felt extending Route 106 north of the Mount Baker Transit Center on a different pathway – possibly along Yesler or Boren to South Lake Union instead of to the International District – would make these proposed changes less redundant and provide new connections that don't exist today. Others wouldn't mind reductions in Route 9X service, if there were better east-west options for Rainier Valley residents to connect with light rail service. These and other service restructure ideas were documented and shared with Metro service planners.

A contrast could be noted to distinguish outreach participants who felt their service should not be changed, only increased, and those who felt like improvements to the network might be warranted. The latter advocated for a longer, more inclusive, multi-phase engagement process to restructure service so all communities would have the opportunity to fully participate and more communities' needs could be taken into consideration.