



# Metro Fare Review

## Public Engagement Report

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Prepared by

King County Department of Transportation Communications

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## Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>2</b>
First phase of public engagement: how is fare payment working now, what we should prioritize moving forward.....	2
Five initial fare change options developed in response to feedback.....	3
Second phase of public engagement: feedback on two adult fare change options .....	3
Next steps.....	4
<b>Outreach Plan and Activities.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Overview.....	5
Who we wanted to hear from.....	6
Methods for gathering feedback .....	6
How we let people know about their opportunities to participate .....	8
Timeline .....	8
<b>Public Feedback Summary.....</b>	<b>10</b>
What we heard from stakeholders.....	10
What we heard from the general public.....	11
What we heard from employers.....	22
What we heard from people served by community-based organizations .....	26
<b>Measures of Success.....</b>	<b>30</b>
Did we hear from people who reflect those affected? .....	30
<b>Exhibits .....</b>	<b>36</b>
Exhibit A – Stakeholder Engagement.....	37
Exhibit B – Media and Social Media .....	58
Exhibit C – Questionnaire Questions .....	61
Exhibit D – Community-based Organization Outreach .....	88

## Executive Summary

While considering options for fare simplification, Metro conducted an intensive public engagement process between March and June 2017. The purpose was to involve those who could be affected by fare changes and those who interact with our fare payment system. We asked them to help shape fare simplification and longer-term work program goals:

- Coordinate with regional partners and prepare for Next Generation ORCA
- Improve safety for operators and customers
- Speed up operations
- Increase affordability and advance equity and social justice

This outreach informed Metro's recommendation to simplify its adult fare structure by moving to a \$2.75 flat fare, regardless of trip time or whether a trip crosses a zone boundary. In addition to making fares easier for customers to use and understand, this change would help Metro achieve the goals of its work program.

Metro recruited and facilitated a stakeholder advisory group, briefed and interviewed interested groups, conducted two rounds of feedback gathering from the general public, and contracted with community-based organizations to involve the general public, diverse community members, people with low incomes, English language learners, and other populations less likely to respond to online questionnaires. In total, we received more than 12,000 comments either directly in face-to-face outreach activities or through online questionnaires.

At each phase of public outreach, opportunities to give feedback were promoted through print, radio, and television news; Twitter, Facebook, transit alerts, coach posters, street teams, and a network of stakeholders.

### **First phase of public engagement: how is fare payment working now, what we should prioritize moving forward**

From March 23 through April 7, we solicited input in our first online questionnaire and received important feedback:

- One-third of the 4,487 responses indicate that survey responders find it difficult or very difficult to understand Metro's fares.
- Eighty percent indicated the cost to ride is currently affordable.

- Responses from survey responders who indicated they pay their fare with cash said they do so because of infrequent use of our services, ease of paying with cash, lack of desire to pay the card fee, and lack of convenient locations to find or load an ORCA card.
- In addition to simplification, responses indicated that survey responders want us to prioritize improving affordability for low-income customers, increasing ridership, speeding board, and improving safety for customers and operators.

### **Five initial fare change options developed in response to feedback**

Using public feedback from the online questionnaire, stakeholder advisory group, and briefings with interested groups; our policy guidelines; and recommendations from a Regional Fare Forum of elected officials who serve on the ORCA joint board facilitated last fall, we developed five initial fare change options:

- \$2.50 flat fare
- \$2.75 flat fare
- Local and express fares
- Peak fare—low
- Peak fare—high

No changes were considered for youth, seniors, people with disabilities, or people who qualify for ORCA LIFT<sup>1</sup>.

We gathered input from our stakeholder advisory group on the five initial options. The input and additional analysis helped us narrow these options down to two adult fare change options that we took to the public for feedback in a second phase of engagement.

### **Second phase of public engagement: feedback on two adult fare change options**

In our second phase of engagement, we asked the public for input on the \$2.75 flat fare and a \$3 peak-period fare through another online questionnaire. Between April 19 and May 5, we solicited input via an online questionnaire, street teams, and two public meetings on the two options. We also invited employers who participate in employee pass programs to complete an online questionnaire.

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<sup>1</sup> Children 6 years old or younger are not required to pay a fare; youth ages 7 to 18 qualify for a youth fare. People ages 65 and older qualify for a Regional Reduced Fare Permit, or senior fare. People with a disability certified by a medical professional qualify for a Regional Reduced Fare Permit, or disabled fare. People who are 200% or below the federal poverty level qualify for ORCA LIFT.

The questionnaire was completed nearly 6,500 times. Eighty percent of responses indicated survey responders like the \$2.75 flat fare option (strongly or somewhat agree), compared with 28 percent of responses indicating survey responders liked the \$3 peak/\$2.50 off-peak options. Our employer questionnaire garnered 183 responses; 67 percent thought a \$2.75 flat fare would make it easier to manage their transportation benefit account with Metro. In addition, feedback we received from people served by the community-based organizations we contracted with indicated a slight preference for a single, flat fare which was considered easier to understand. Taken together, these responses provided considerable support for Metro's recommendation to move with the \$2.75 flat fare option.

Continued briefings with interested groups, additional meetings with our stakeholder advisory group, and input received from outreach conducted by contracted community-based organizations provided input into additional research and other actions Metro is and will be taking over the next two years. These actions include making sure those who qualify for ORCA LIFT can easily become eligible and take advantage of the discount; improving our Human Services Ticket Program; and exploring Passport transit pass options that will make resources colleges and low income housing developments put towards subsidizing transit passes for students and residents go further. We are also committed to conducting more research to better understand the needs of people with no or very low income.

### **Next steps**

Metro will reconvene our stakeholder advisory group later this summer to provide final details about what is being transmitted from the King County Executive to King County Council. We may continue to solicit input and assistance from stakeholder advisory group members, the community-based organizations we contracted with, and the general public as we conduct additional research and pilot programs that are planned for the next two years. As part of additional research, we will look more deeply where applicable at survey response data from this outreach by race, income, and primary language spoken at home to see if any distinctions in needs or preferences can be identified and further explored.

## Outreach Plan and Activities

### Overview

After the initiation of the Next Generation ORCA project and recommendations from elected officials representing ORCA agencies on a Regional Fare Forum, Metro began to develop a fares work plan for 2017-2018 that will include both work related to preparation for Next Generation ORCA and a more comprehensive assessment of a broader range of fare issues.

Through this work plan, Metro aims to:

- Simplify fares for customers
- Coordinate with regional partners and prepare for Next Generation ORCA
- Improve safety for operators and customers
- Speed up operations
- Increase affordability and advance equity and social justice

In the short-term, Metro focused on the first goal: to simplify fares. Direction from King County elected officials who participated in a Regional Fare Forum in fall 2016 was to look specifically at eliminating Metro's zone and peak surcharges. Eliminating these surcharges and simplifying Metro's fare structure would help bring Metro more in line with other ORCA participating agencies and would reduce the cost and complexity of designing the next iteration of ORCA.

We designed our engagement effort to:

1. Get input from stakeholders and the public on their preferences for simplifying Metro's fares to inform an ordinance on fare change options and inform additional, longer-term fare work program areas of focus that would increase ORCA usage and access to transit.
2. Build an understanding among stakeholders and the public about the tradeoffs of various fare structures and key influencers (such as technology, agency policies and goals, regional coordination opportunities and constraints, and customer data) that inform the options under consideration.

Metro facilitated two rounds of public feedback and a stakeholder advisory group, and contracted with community-based organizations to engage with populations unlikely to participate in our online questionnaires or Metro-hosted meetings. We conducted these activities between February and June 2017. In total, we received more than 12,000 comments on our priorities and fare change options. Who we engaged, how we engaged them, and what we learned are documented in this report.

## Who we wanted to hear from

- Transit riders, including riders who pay with ORCA, Regional Reduced Fare Permits, ORCA LIFT, and cash; young people and older adults; students; Vanpool riders and drivers, and people who use Access paratransit
- Transit advocacy groups
- Schools, colleges, and universities
- Employers
- Transit operators
- Community-based organizations and groups that serve people who use transit
- Elected officials and local jurisdictions throughout King County

## Methods for gathering feedback

- **Stakeholder Interviews** – We began our work and will continue it over the next two years through a series of stakeholder interviews with organizations or groups who have an interest in or serve people who use Metro services. The interviews are designed to build awareness of this effort; gather input on desired outcomes for fares and an accessible, easy-to-use fare payment system that increases access to transit; and understand the current perceived barriers to those goals. Interviewees will be invited to comment on any specific proposals.
- **Stakeholder Workshops** – We convened a group of 20 to 24 representatives from different organizations who reflect all types of transit users, including young people, older adults, people with disabilities, schools/colleges /universities, employers, and people with low or no income. This group met three times, serving in an advisory capacity and not making any formal recommendations or decisions. (See [Exhibit A](#) for a list of advisory group members and meeting summaries.)
- **Stakeholder Briefings** – We visited with 13 groups, including the county’s transportation subarea boards and mobility coalitions comprising elected officials, jurisdiction representatives, and social service providers. We briefed stakeholders on the process, sought their input on our two-year work plan, and solicited their help to engage those they represent in giving feedback through our online questionnaires and public meetings. (See [Exhibit A](#) for a schedule of briefings that were conducted.)
- **Contracted Community-Based Organization Outreach** – We contracted with three organizations that serve populations unlikely to otherwise engage in Metro’s public process. Metro provided questions and ideas for collecting feedback. The organizations gathered input in ways they determined would be

most effective, and provided documentation about their process and results to Metro. Organizations selected for this work met the following criteria:

- Primary work is provision of services to communities of color, communities with low English proficiency, low-income communities, and disabled communities
- Non-profit organization or public entity
- Represent a broad geographic and language distribution in King County
- Ability and willingness to conduct outreach to community members on behalf of Metro

(See [Exhibit D](#) for the engagement guide and questions provided to community-based organizations, as well as reports from each organization. Raw questionnaire data is available upon request.)

- **Online engagement** – We conducted two online questionnaires for the general public. The first, in late March through early April, gathered feedback on rider priorities for fare payment and ways in which current fares and the fare payment system address these priorities. The second, conducted in late April through early May, was designed to share fare-change options, solicit input on a preferred option, and gain insight on additional work Metro should consider to mitigate any adverse impacts of fare changes being considered.

We conducted one online questionnaire for employers who purchase passes for their employees to take public transportation. This questionnaire sought feedback on a preferred fare change option and potential effects of the options being considered on employer purchases and program administration. (See [Exhibit C](#) for the questions asked. Raw questionnaire data is available upon request.)

Please note: our questionnaires were not professionally administered customer research surveys. Results shared in this report reflects the views of a self-selected group of people and may not be a statistically valid representation of Metro ridership or King County constituents as a whole.

- **Public meetings** – During the second phase of outreach, Metro hosted one in-person open house and one live-streamed online meeting designed for the public to learn about the fare options being considered, ask questions, and comment. More than 900 people participated in these meetings live or watched the online meeting after the event. ([Watch a recording of the live-streamed public meeting online.](#))

## How we let people know about their opportunities to participate

During both phases of engagement:

- **A project website** (<http://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/programs-projects/fare-review.aspx>) outlining Metro’s planning and decision making process and inviting people to provide feedback. The website was visited more than 8,400 times.
- **Media and social media** – news releases and social media posts to the Metro Matters blog, Facebook, and Twitter accounts were distributed at the launch of each of the two questionnaires. Social media posts reached 2,800 Facebook and 100,000 Twitter followers, generating 21,000 impressions and 207 clicks on links to the questionnaire. (See [Exhibit B](#) for a list of media coverage and social media metrics.)
- **Transit alerts** – sent at the launch of each questionnaire to encourage riders to provide feedback. Alerts were sent to more than 57,000 subscribers and were both opened by 29 percent of recipients with a click rate of 9 percent.

During the second phase of engagement only:

- **Coach posters** – posters were placed on all buses indicating the two options and inviting people to provide feedback online, by phone or email, or at public meetings.
- **Street teams** – Metro staff visited the Bellevue, Renton, and Northgate Transit Centers at midday to distribute flyers, answer questions, and solicit input from riders. We reached nearly 1,000 riders at these events.
- **Flyers** – 1,200 flyers were distributed at all customer service locations and by Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel ambassadors.
- **E-notifications** – emails were distributed to stakeholder and interest groups, including organizations that serve populations dependent on transit, at the launch of each of the two questionnaires with a request that they spread the word about opportunities to participate.

## Timeline

- **February** – Stakeholder interviews began; stakeholders recruited to participate in advisory group workshops
- **March** – Stakeholder interviews continued; facilitated first stakeholder workshop (March 2); solicited input via first online questionnaire (March 23 – April 7); began stakeholder briefings

- **April** – Facilitated second stakeholder workshop (April 4); community-based organizations began outreach; solicited input via second online questionnaire and two public meetings on two adult fare change options (April 19 – May 5); continued stakeholder briefings
- **May** – Facilitated third stakeholder workshop (May 18); continued and completed stakeholder briefings; continued community-based organization outreach
- **June** – Summarized public feedback, collected summaries/reports from community-based organizations

## Public Feedback Summary

### What we heard from stakeholders

We invited more than 20 organizations to provide feedback to Metro to help shape Metro's two-year fares work program and short-term fare simplification options. Members met in three workshops over the course of the engagement effort.

#### Workshop 1: How should fare change options be evaluated

Participants received an overview of the work program effort, goals, and basic information about Metro's current fares and fare programs. Participants offered feedback on barriers that certain populations face and issues Metro should take into consideration as we plan changes, including:

- Equitable consideration of college students who no longer qualify for a youth fare and might not qualify for ORCA LIFT.
- Shared concern for balancing fare recovery with service needs and an understanding that service will suffer if fares are too deeply discounted.
- Affordable housing, as well as the fixed income of some of our most vulnerable populations, are interrelated with transportation affordability.
- For some people with very low or no income, the ORCA LIFT fare may still be too high. The card replacement fee and minimum load value are also barriers to ORCA adoption and use.

Participants also helped identify criteria by which any fare change options should be considered:

- Increases market share among all rider groups
- Equity
- Safety
- Assures or improves service quality
- Affordability
- Integration
- Simple, ease of understanding
- Responsive to public feedback/preference

#### Workshop 2: Help narrow down adult fare change options

Participants were introduced to Metro's current efforts to increase affordable access to ORCA and transit. Staff then provided an overview of five adult fare change ideas weighed against the criteria shaped by the group and by public feedback gathered in the first online questionnaire.

Participants shared their initial thoughts on each idea, then allocated sticky dots to their preferred fare options. The options were ranked as follows:

1. Option B – flat fare \$2.75
2. Option A – flat fare \$2.50
3. Option E – peak fare high \$3.00
4. Option C – local fare \$2.50, express fare \$3.25
5. Option D – peak fare low \$2.75

Overall, participants expressed concern about how fare changes would affect those just above the income qualifying level for ORCA LIFT, as well as middle income families and low wage earners who have moved away from Seattle to find affordable housing.

### **Workshop 3: Final comments on fare change options, pilots/research**

In this workshop, staff described the analysis they did after the second workshop to narrow down five adult fare change options to the two that were shared for public feedback in the second phase of outreach. They also provided further analysis on both of the final options based on questions and input from the group. Participants had a final opportunity to comment on the two options. Then, staff reviewed Metro's plans to improve affordable access to transit.

Participants expressed support for a pilot program to test the use of ORCA fare media in the Human Services Ticket Program. Several members expressed concern that the needs of college students still weren't fully accounted for. Members said they would like Metro to explore the possibility of a college student fare.

Participants were invited to share any additional thoughts about what Metro should research in more depth over the next two-year work program. They provided several suggestions and ideas for building better awareness of ORCA LIFT and reducing barriers to ORCA use, such as transcreating ORCA LIFT materials, allowing human service ticket providers the option of mailing tickets to program participants in advance of coming into an organization, and providing pass holders to ORCA LIFT enrollers to distribute with ORCA LIFT cards to help prevent card loss.

Workshop participants, agendas, materials, and summaries are available on the project website. Workshop summaries are also included in [Exhibit A](#).

### **What we heard from the general public**

In this section, we are sharing results from the two online questionnaires conducted during our public engagement effort. This does not reflect feedback received from people who participated in community-based organization outreach documented later in this report. As a reminder, these questionnaires were completed by a self-selected group of people and may not be a statistically valid representation of Metro ridership or

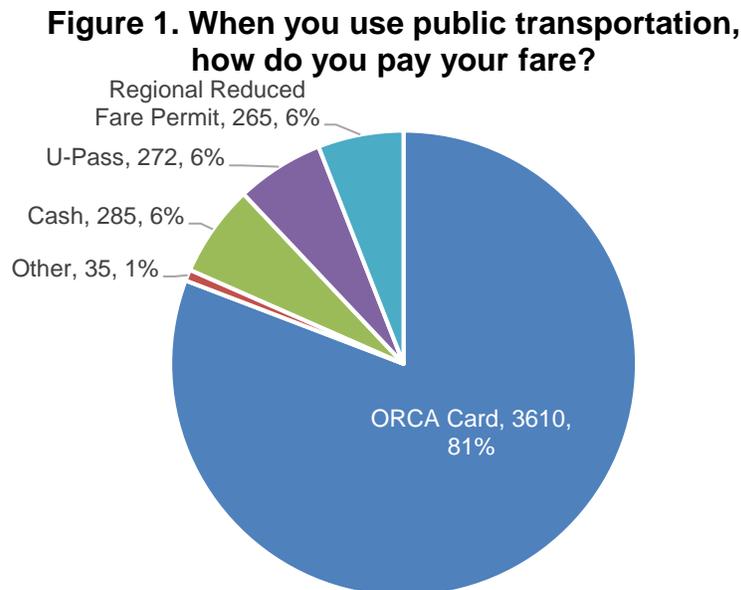
King County constituents as a whole. In addition, we structure online questionnaires to accept multiple responses from the same IP address so assure that people responding in public locations like libraries or at work or multiple people within a household where there is only one computer have the opportunity to respond. It is possible that one person could have taken the survey more than once.

### **First questionnaire: How well does our current fare system work, where should we focus improvements**

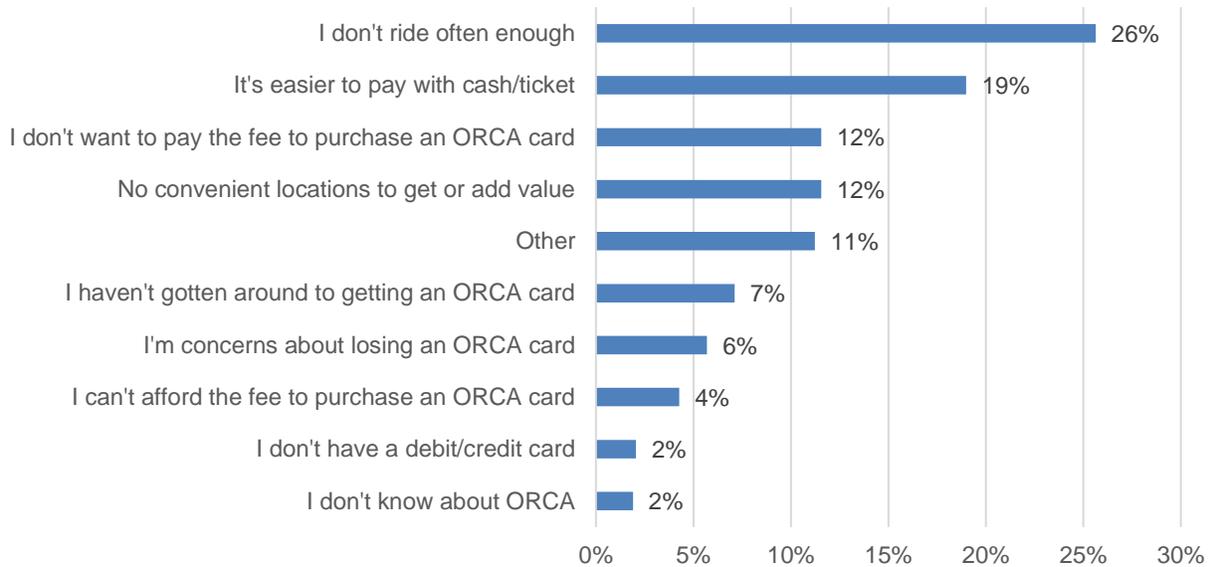
The first online questionnaire was open from March 23 through April 7. We asked about respondents' use of transit, how they pay their fares today, their awareness of fare discounts, how Metro is doing at meeting its policy goals, and how they would prioritize Metro's various fare policies to inform Metro's planning effort. (See [Exhibit C](#) for a set of the questions asked. Full questionnaire data is available upon request.) **At the close of the questionnaire, we had a total of 4,487 questionnaire responses.**

**One-third of all responses indicate that those who took the questionnaire find it difficult or very difficult to understand Metro's fares.**

Figure 1 shows that more than 80 percent of responses indicate questionnaire respondents currently pay their fare with an ORCA card.



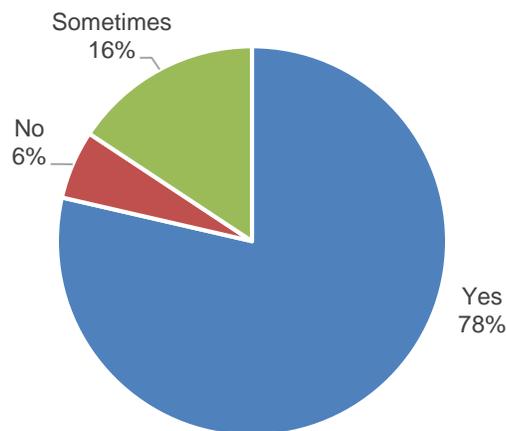
Of these 81 percent who with ORCA, 53 percent pay for their own monthly pass or E-purse. We asked respondents who pay with cash, even if they hold an ORCA card, why they choose cash. See Figure 2 for the results.

**Figure 2. Why do you pay your fare with cash?**

Those who chose “other” indicated the following reasons:

- Don't know enough about ORCA or the benefits of using it, or it's too difficult to understand
- Paying with cash gets them more value—a paper transfer lasts longer, sometimes travel 2-zones with a 1-zone fare, etc.
- Cash is liquid
- Lost their ORCA card or “lost” their money due to infrequent use
- Ride Access not often enough to buy a monthly pass

Figure 3 shows how respondents answered a question about whether they find the cost to ride affordable.

**Figure 3. Is the cost to ride affordable for you?**

Nearly one-fourth of responses indicate questionnaire responders find the cost to ride unaffordable to them some or all of the time. Their reasons why:

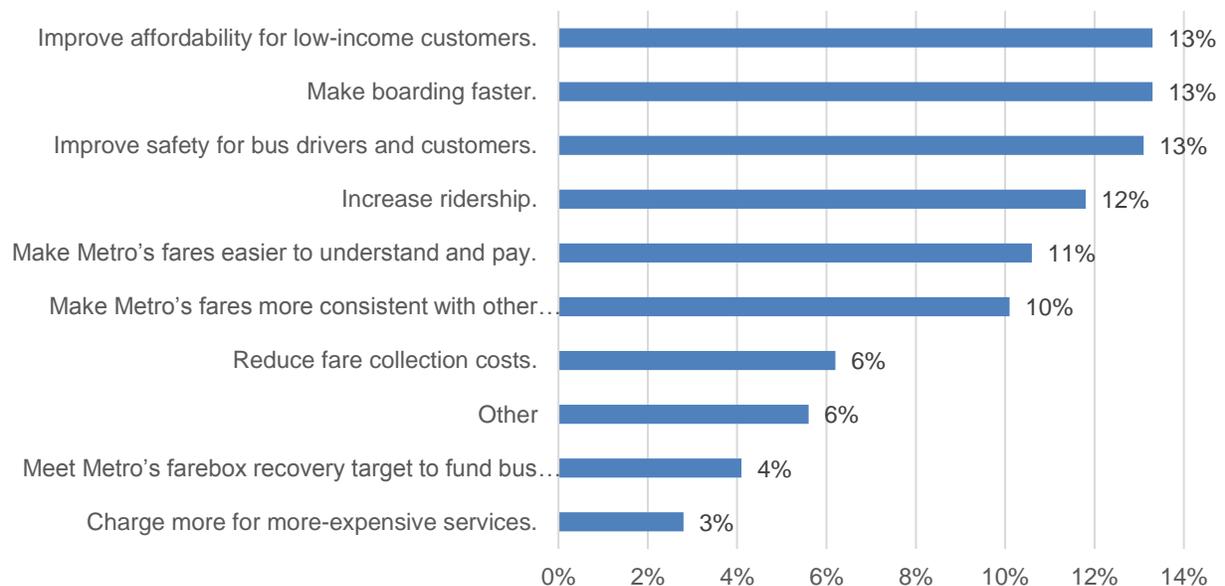
- They travel long distances across county lines, using different modes, or use services that charge a distance-based fare.
- Fares have gone up too much in recent years and they find the fares too expensive.
- Other options, such as driving, are cheaper and faster.
- They have low incomes—includes those who have families, earn minimum wage, feel a monthly pass is too much to spend at once, or are college students, artists, unemployed, youth during the summer, or seasonal workers.
- Their employer pays for their pass, but they could not afford it on their own.

Of the 930 responses that indicated the fare is unaffordable some or all of the time, nearly one-third are somewhat or very unaware of ORCA LIFT.

About 13 percent of the responses are from questionnaire responders who are ORCA LIFT eligible. This was determined by answers to questions of household size and household income to establish whether a responder is at 200% or below the federal poverty level. Please note there were optional questions and not all responders chose to answer them. Of those 574 responses, only 16 percent are using ORCA LIFT to pay their fare.

Figure 4 shows how respondents ranked the importance of Metro's fare policies:

**Figure 4. Which of these policies do you think are most important?**



There were more than 3,000 responses to the question, **“What one thing would you do to improve Metro’s fare payment system?”** In a random sample of 400 responses, the top 10 ideas in order of the number of times mentioned were:

- Simplify fare payment and make it easier to understand—including requests for a flat fare; elimination of zone and peak surcharges; simpler monthly pass options; confusion about various fare products, ways to purchase and use fare media
- Provide more locations to pay fares, including off-board payment options.
- Standardize the fare across agencies, including adding ferries and the monorail to the group of ORCA agencies.
- Eliminate cash payment.
- Make it easier for people with low income, seniors, and youth to get and use ORCA cards.
- Improve the ORCA website and TVM’s – concerns were expressed about the website’s poor user-interface and improvements were suggested to make the website and TVMs more user-friendly.
- Improve fare-related signs, marketing, and communications.
- Make transit free or reduce the fare for certain groups.
- Eliminate transfers.

- Don't change anything, the system is fine as is.

Other top-mentioned ideas that will be addressed in Next Generation ORCA include:

- Having e-purse loaded and available immediately after purchase.
- Ability to use a mobile app to reload ORCA, purchase E-purse or passes, and pay the fare with a smart phone.
- Have more ways to pay fares – via credit card or Apple or Google pay (this will be possible indirectly by adding value to an ORCA account through a mobile app or online).
- Fix “losing” value on ORCA card due to inactivity.
- Provide for “real time” ORCA value updates.

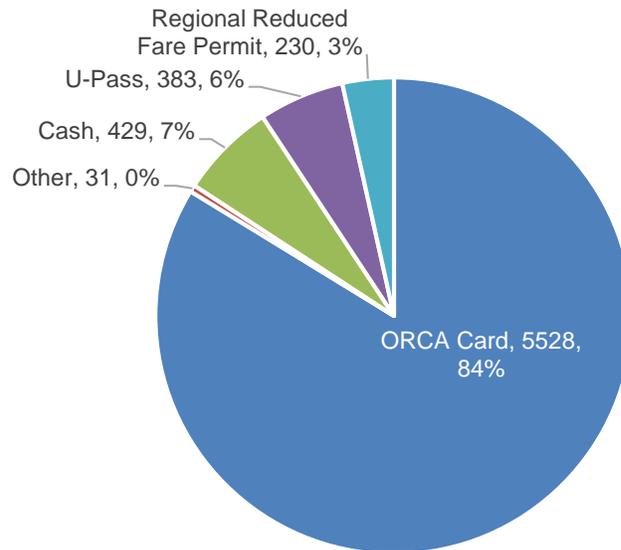
There were some creative ideas to speed up boarding or rethink Metro's fare structure entirely, including moving to “proof of payment” rather than having everyone pay a fare as they board the bus; daily fare capping so that once a person has traveled a certain amount for the day, they wouldn't be charged more than a certain amount; making fares entirely income-based; and making fares entirely distance-based regardless of mode.

### **Second questionnaire: What do people think about two adult fare-change options?**

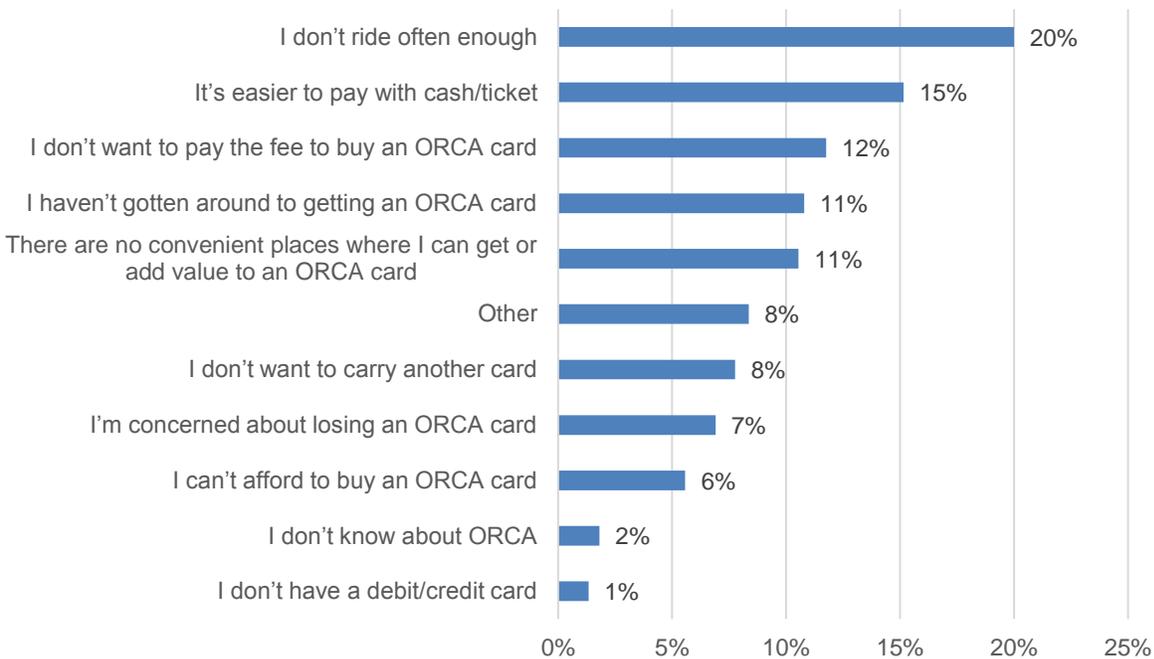
The second online questionnaire was open from April 19 through May 5. We sought input on two adult fare change options—a \$2.75 flat fare and a \$2.50 off-peak/\$3 peak fare. We also asked what might help mitigate any negative impacts of either fare option if it were enacted. (See [Exhibit C](#) for the complete set of questions we asked in this questionnaire.) **We had 6,656 responses to the questionnaire.**

Similar to the first questionnaire, Figure 5 shows that more than 80 percent of responses were from questionnaire responders who use ORCA to pay their fare.

**Figure 5. When you use public transportation, how do you pay your fare?**



Of those 84 percent who pay with ORCA, 56 percent pay for their own monthly pass or E-purse. We asked respondents who pay with cash why they don't use ORCA. See Figure 6 for the results.

**Figure 6. Why don't you use an ORCA card?**

As determined by how responders answered optional demographic questions about their household size and annual household income, about 18 percent of the responses to the second questionnaire are from questionnaire responders who are ORCA LIFT eligible. Of those 1,177 responses, only 16 percent use ORCA LIFT to pay their fare.

We asked questionnaire respondents to indicate whether they agree or disagree with the following statements about the two adult fare options:

- This fare option is easy to understand.
- This fare option would make it easier and faster for people to get on the bus.
- This fare option is equitable for riders.
- This fare option is affordable.
- I would ride the bus more often if this was the fare.
- I like this option.

Figure 7 shows indicates how questionnaire responders feel about the \$2.75 Flat Fare option.

**Figure 7. About the \$2.75 Flat Fare**



- 97 percent strongly or somewhat agree that this option is easy to understand.
- 84 percent strongly or somewhat agree that this fare would make it easier and faster for people to get on the bus.
- 70 percent strongly or somewhat agree that this option is affordable.
- 80 percent strongly or somewhat agree that they like this option.

Slightly more than 300 responses were from questionnaire responders who somewhat or strongly disagreed that the \$2.75 flat fare would be affordable. Figure 8 shows how they would allocate resources to keep transit affordable in the following ways:

**Figure 8. How would you keep transit affordable?**

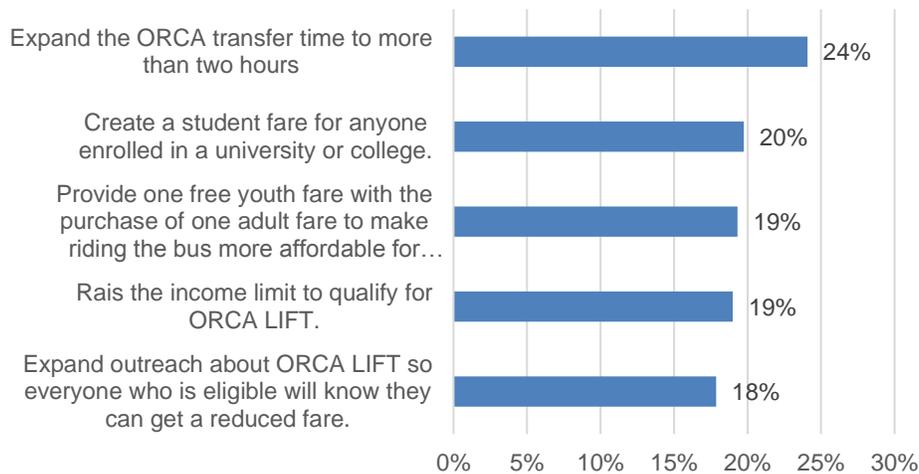
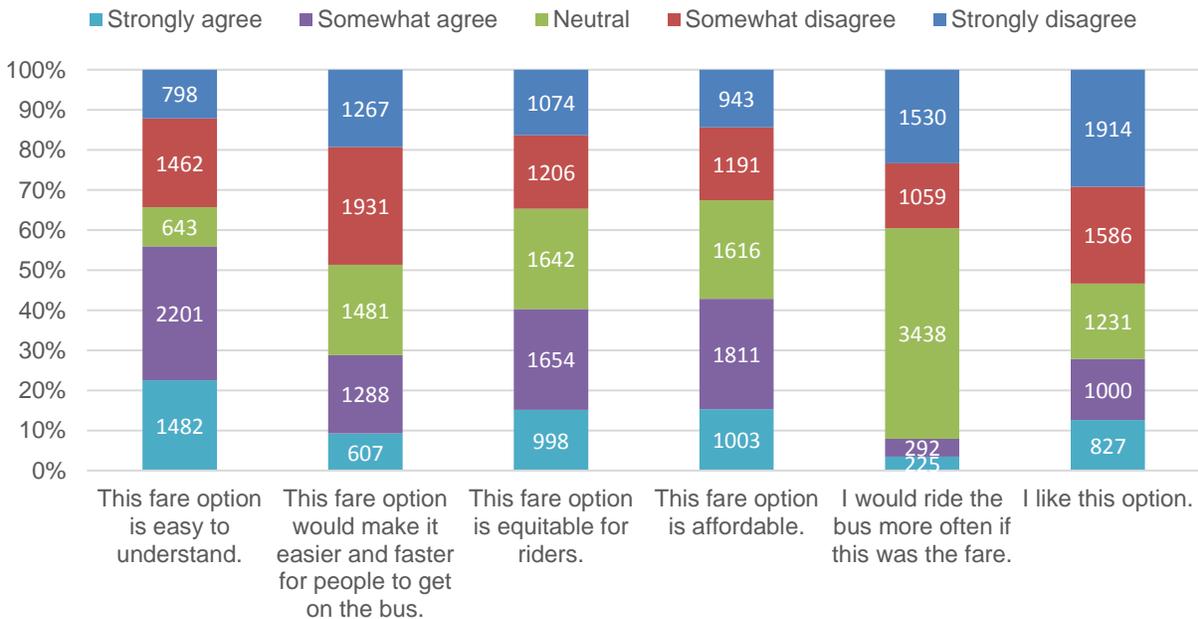


Figure 9 shows how respondents feel about the \$2.50 off-peak/\$3.00 peak Fare option.

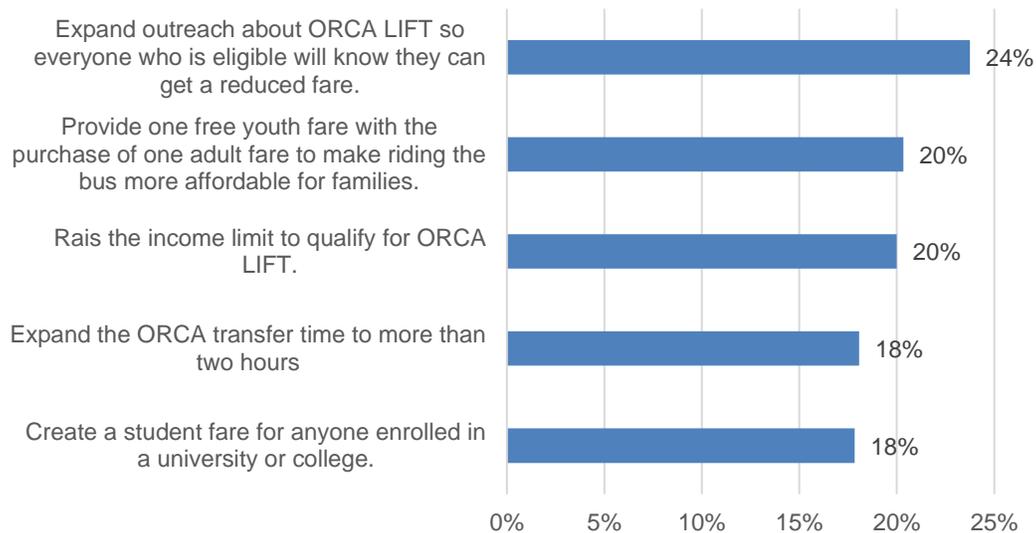
**Figure 9. About the \$2.50 off-peak / \$3 peak fare**



- 56 percent strongly or somewhat agree that this option is easy to understand.
- 29 percent strongly or somewhat agree that this fare would make it easier and faster for people to get on the bus.
- 43 percent strongly or somewhat agree that this option is affordable.
- 28 percent strongly or somewhat agree that they like this option.

Nearly 500 responses indicate that questionnaire responders somewhat or strongly disagreed that the \$2.50 off-peak/\$3 peak fare would be affordable. Figure 10 shows how they would allocate resources to keep transit affordable in the following ways:

**Figure 10. How would you keep transit affordable?**



We also asked respondents for other ideas to make ORCA and transit more accessible and affordable. We grouped answers into themes from those who strongly or somewhat disagreed that the fare option being proposed was affordable. Their ideas ranked in order of number of times mentioned include:

- **Reduce fares** – people offered other flat-fare amounts as well as reduced options for special user groups such as college students, those on low-income routes, youth, event-goers, low income, and seniors.
- **Improve service** – people had many ideas that expressed a desire to have better value for the fare paid, including increasing service frequency and span, investing in bus infrastructure and rider amenities, reducing overcrowding, improving reliability, and improving customer service and service quality.
- **Create disincentives for cash payment, incentives for ORCA payment** – people suggested offering different types of pass options (day, week, month, and annual), giving bulk discounts for number of trips or length of pass, and capping fares (daily or monthly) so riders aren't unfairly charged because they didn't buy the correct pass product; have a higher cash fare or lower ORCA fare; eliminate transfers; or stop accepting cash payments altogether.
- **Free fares, fund transit through different revenues** – whether for certain groups of riders—such as low income, seniors, youth, or disabled—or for all

riders, many people suggested that public transportation should be free for everyone and funded through other revenues.

- **Current fare, cost of living is too expensive** – some people are concerned that the current fares are already too expensive and, combined with increased cost of living regionally, shouldn't be raised any more.
- **Eliminate or reduce ORCA card fee, distribute free cards more liberally** – some people feel the benefit of getting ORCA cards into people's hands outweighs the cost to do it. They perceive the card fee as an unnecessary barrier to ORCA use and adoption.
- **Increase places people can purchase and load ORCA cards**, making it easier to get and use one.
- **Consider other fare structures** – people recommended charging fares by distance, income, or location of the service.
- **Make it easier to pay by cash or credit/debit** – improve transfer technology, make other agencies accept cash transfers, and provide ways for people to purchase tickets for the bus with cash.
- **Improve communication and technology at stops and at large** so people eligible for ORCA LIFT know about it and can get it; people know what the fare is and how to pay; and know easily how much money is left on their ORCA card.
- **Accept the same fare and fare media on all modes** – people expressed frustration at the difficulty and expense when they use multiple modes to travel.

In addition to questionnaire responses, Metro received comments from people in email and by phone, as well as two formal letters from the Seattle Transit Advisory Board and Transportation Choices Coalition. Comments from the general public expressed support for one fare change option over another, provided ideas to speed up boarding or create incentives ORCA use and transit ridership, and documented concerns about any changes to the senior or disabled fare. (Comments and letters are available upon request.)

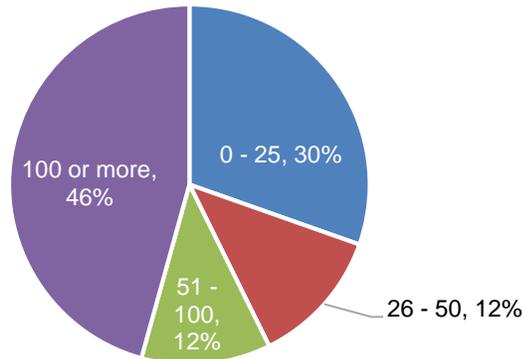
## What we heard from employers

We invited ORCA employer representatives to participate in a questionnaire to provide feedback on the two adult fare change options Metro considered with the general public. Out of 3,600 invited, we received 141 responses to the questionnaire.

## Who we heard from

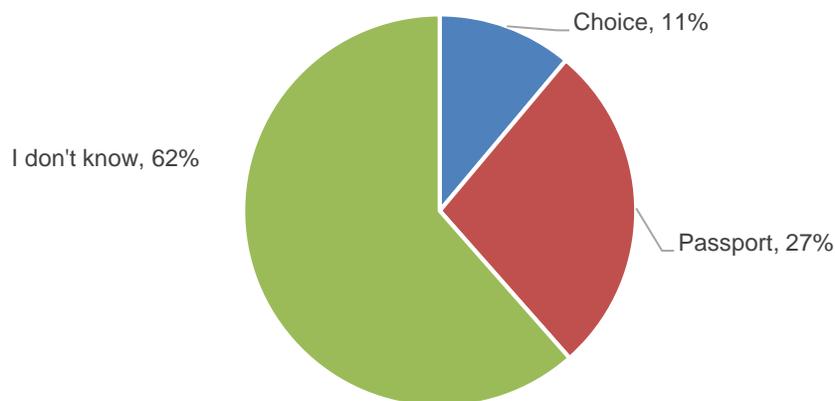
Figure 11 shows demonstrates the size of the organizations we heard from.

**Figure 11. How many employees does your organization provide a transportation benefit to?**



There are two types of employer accounts: Passport and Choice. Employers that have Passport accounts provide employees with an ORCA card that offers unlimited rides. Employers that have Choice accounts purchase ORCA card on which employees can load retail pass products and e-purse. Employees who work for Choice account employers contribute in varying levels depending on the employers benefit program to the product that is loaded on their card through payroll deduction. Figure 12 shows the type of employer account held by the employer representatives that responded.

**Figure 12. What type of ORCA employer account do you have?**



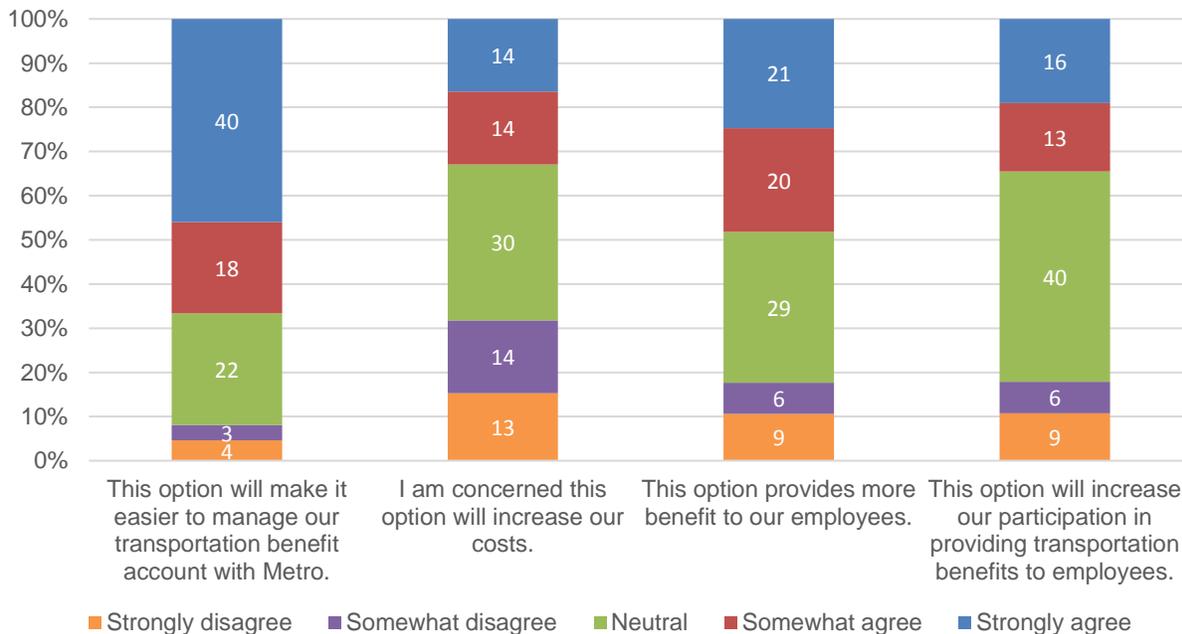
**About the \$2.75 flat fare option**

Sixty-seven percent of responses indicate questionnaire responders strongly agree or somewhat agree that this option will make it easier to manage their transportation benefit account with Metro.

- 32 percent are concerned this option will increase their costs.
- 49 percent think this option provides more benefit to their employees.
- 34 percent think this option will increase their participation in providing transportation benefits to employees.

Figure 13 shows results for all statements responders were asked to indicate their level of agreement.

**Figure 13. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on the single adult fare of \$2.75 (\$99 monthly pass) option:**



**About the \$2.50 off-peak/\$3 peak fare option**

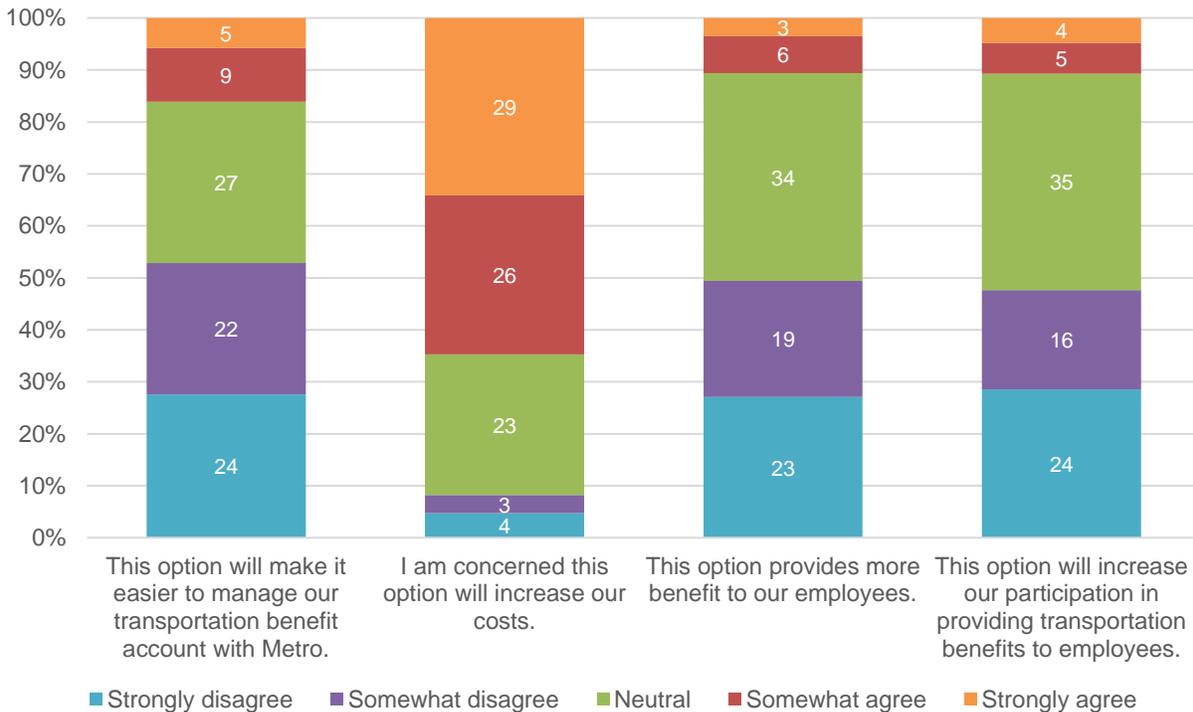
Sixteen percent strongly agree or somewhat agree that this option will make it easier to manage their transportation benefit.

- 65 percent are concerned this option will increase their costs.
- 11 percent think this option will provide more benefit to their employees.

- 11 percent think this option will increase their participation in providing transportation benefits to employees.

Figure 14 shows results for all statements responders were asked to indicate their level of agreement.

**Figure 14. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on the single adult fare of \$2.50 (\$99 monthly pass) with the peak period adult fare of \$3 (\$108 monthly pass) option:**



Thirty-six people responded to the question, “If you could do one thing to improve your experience as an ORCA employer account, what would you do?” We categorized the responses as follows:

- 17 percent would like better volume discounts
- 14 percent recommended administrative changes be made that would make it easier to manage their account, such as:
  - Making auto-renew available – especially for employees who choose a monthly pass option
  - Making it easier to purchase monthly or annual passes
  - Making it easier to order month-to-month

- Making it easier to transfer funds from old to new cards
- 14 percent would like more options such as:
  - The ability to provide a benefit to part time employees
  - Other payment options – both for the employer and for the bus rider (e.g. stop using plastic cards)
- 14 percent said nothing needs to be improved.
- 11 percent would like the web interface for account management improved or other online tools available for easier account management.
- The following comments were made by less than 8 percent of respondents:
  - Concerns about a fare increase
  - Concern about the difficulty of implementing a fare change from an employer account perspective
  - Preference for one option or the other
  - Support for fare simplification
  - Request for more sharing of data so employers can make better decisions about pass purchases.

### **What we heard from people served by community-based organizations**

Metro contracted with three community-based organizations (World Relief, White Center Community Development Association, and Hopelink) to gather input from populations unlikely to participate in our online questionnaires. Their work was not contracted to be statistically valid customer research. As such, the results reflected here are not a statistically valid representation of Metro ridership or King County constituents as a whole.

They collectively reached 311 participants. Ages, languages spoken, race and ethnicity, and incomes vary greatly across questionnaire audiences. For example, World Relief's questionnaire participants largely reported being unemployed, while some from WCCDA and Hopelink reported annual household incomes of over \$60,000, and as high as \$150,000. Similarly, an overwhelming majority of WCCDA's questionnaire participants are under the age of 18: of the 172 respondents, 132 are 18 years of age or under (77 percent), with a median age of 16. On the other hand, more than half of Hopelink's participants are over the age of 40 (61 percent).

Qualitative and quantitative data reveal the themes and concerns of both frequent and infrequent users of Metro services. WCCDA's results in particular reveal notable themes expressed by the youth who participated in WCCDA's outreach. Major themes:

- **About two-thirds of all participants use transit;** of those who ride public transit, most use it 1 or 2 times per week. More than one-third of participants said they *never* use public transit (weighed heavily by WCCDA participants' young age)
- The most common reasons participants choose to drive a car, rather than use public transit are:
  - Driving is easier and more convenient, practical, and flexible.
  - Driving is faster, and buses are not timely.
  - Lack of service and long travel distances in rural areas in eastern and southern King County.
- Suggestions for improving transit include:
  - **Routing and service** – greater frequency, longer service hours, and improved timeliness of buses—particularly express and commuter routes.
  - **Payment and expenses** – affordability and fare increase concerns, complex fare systems, accessibility of payment options; in particular, numerous WCCDA respondents desire free or discounted fares for youth and students.

Major themes concerning participants' fare payment practices include:

- Just **over half (52 percent) of all participants questionnaired use cash to pay their fare**, while just under one-third (30 percent) use an ORCA card—again, this is weighed heavily by responses from participants who *never* use transit.
- The most common themes regarding paying fares with cash:
  - **Cash is seen as the easiest and most convenient payment method.** For numerous respondents, cash is the only payment method to which they have access.
  - **65 percent of participants do not own an ORCA card**, but many indicated that obtaining one would help them move away from using cash as payment. Numerous respondents expressed confusion or hesitance about obtaining an ORCA card, unaware of how or where to obtain or refill cards.
  - **Many participants identified financial barriers to acquiring an ORCA card**, deterred by the upfront costs, lack of any price advantage, and

difficulty of refilling; similarly, respondents also favored bulk daily, weekly, or monthly passes, offered at a discount for frequent riders.

Overall, questionnaire participants reached by all three organizations are comfortable with technology:

- 49 percent of respondents rate their comfort with technology to pay their transit fares at a score of 7 or higher (out of 10, the most comfortable)
- **80 percent of participants own a smartphone**, and 60 percent use their phone to get information about transit.
- Among those who use their phone to get information about transit, at least 67 percent use Google Maps and/or OneBusAway apps (43 percent rely on one or the other).

Due to different questionnaire administration methods and varying levels of detail among the organizations, results for barriers to fare payment and reduced fare options are limited. Not including World Relief data (which was not provided or specified), 15 percent of respondents say they face barriers paying their transit fare; this value would likely be slightly higher if World Relief participants were included. Hopelink also told Metro that the wording of questions about barriers may have been difficult for questionnaire takers to understand. They suggested that in future research, Metro should transcreate questionnaire questions so they are easily understood in culturally and language relevant ways.

World Relief provided feedback regarding participants' awareness of reduced fare programs and opinions on the fare-change options:

- 60 percent of World Relief participants knew about low-income fare discounts; among them, 77 percent believed they qualified, though 65 percent did not know how to access these benefits or participate in these programs.
- To make these programs more accessible, respondents suggested expanding advertising of benefits via web advertisements, Facebook, information sessions, and e-mail notifications (considered better than physical mail, as participants move frequently).
- **A single, flat fare regardless of peak hours or zones is slightly more popular and considered easier to understand** than the Off-Peak/Peak Fare option. According to World Relief, a majority of respondents agree that it would make the bus more affordable and time-efficient, making them more likely to ride:
  - 70 percent of respondents either strongly or somewhat agree that the Flat fare option is easy to understand, compared with 52 percent for the Off-Peak/Peak Fare option.

- 35 percent of respondents strongly like the Flat Fare option, compared with 33 percent for the Off-Peak/Peak Fare option. Alternatively, twice as many respondents strongly dislike the Off-Peak/Peak Fare option (15 percent strongly dislike the Off-Peak/Peak Fare compared to 8 percent who strongly dislike the Flat Fare option).

## Measures of Success

In all of Metro's Have a Say public engagement efforts our process goals are to make sure participants:

- reflect those who will be affected by the change we are considering
- understand what's being planned and how it will affect them
- feel welcomed and have enough time to participate meaningfully
- are aware of and see how public input influences the decision-making process.

To help gauge how well we accomplished these goals, we ask a series of process questions in our online questionnaires. We also compare demographic data collected from outreach participants to rider questionnaire results. This has its limitations. Our public engagement efforts are not designed to be statistically valid customer research so we are comparing results from a self-selected group of people to data that was collected from a statistically valid customer research process. In addition, the public engagement data reported is only reflective of those who chose to answer those optional questions and may not be reflective of questionnaire responders as a whole.

We conduct and provide this comparison to help us balance feedback and input received from multiple channels – for example, online feedback is important as is feedback received from qualitative engagement conducted by community-based organizations. Where there are differences in the feedback, one does not outweigh the other.

We also set goals and conduct this comparison to help us learn and continually improve our engagement efforts. It helps us understand what works, what doesn't, and how we can be as inclusive as possible in assuring those who are affected by a change have the opportunity to help shape the outcome.

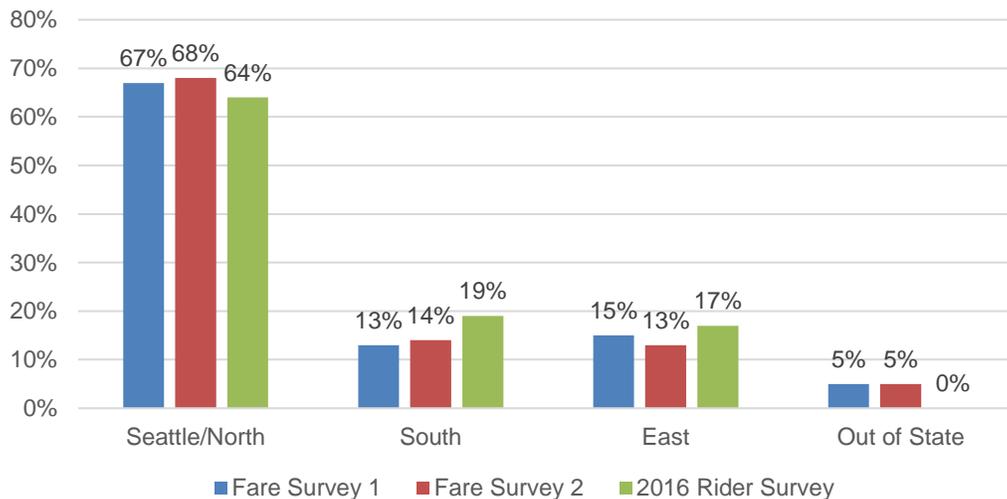
### **Did we hear from people who reflect those affected?**

Demographic data provided by fare questionnaire respondents shown here and are compared to the rider questionnaire, which is a statistically significant representation of Metro ridership. It is important to note that both of Metro's fare questionnaires were online and reflect the input from a self-selected group of people who chose to take the questionnaire. Metro's annual rider questionnaire is conducted by phone and is statistically valid customer research.

In terms of participation from around King County, the Rider Questionnaire tracks ridership by the following regions: Seattle/North, South, and East King County. In our online questionnaire, we asked responders for their. We mapped the zip code

responses from those who chose to provide it to the areas captured in the Rider Questionnaire to produce Figure 15.

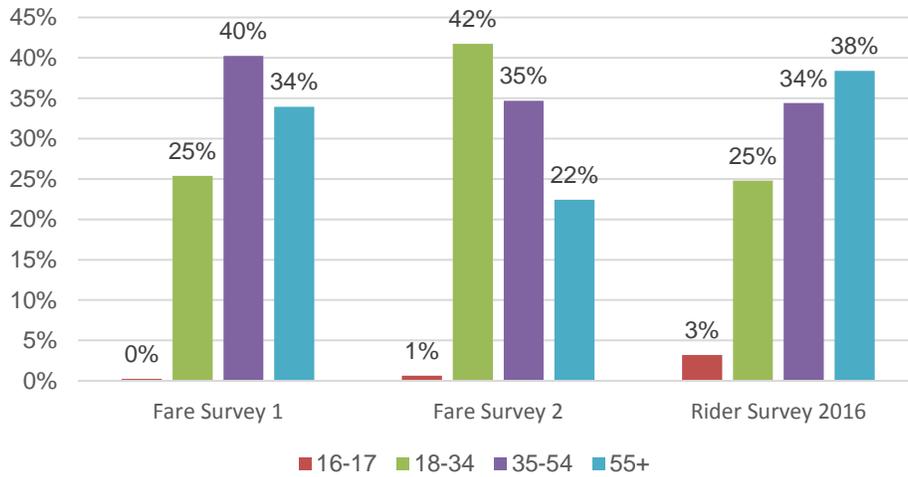
**Figure 15. Participation by subarea**



Participation from around the county in our online questionnaires is consistent with ridership percentages in subareas of the county as reflected in the rider.

Figure 16 shows that, in terms of age, a higher percentage of people ages 35-54 and a lower number of people 55 and older participated in the second fare questionnaire compared to the rider questionnaire. This may be because the second questionnaire sought input on adult fare changes and no changes were being considered for the senior fare.

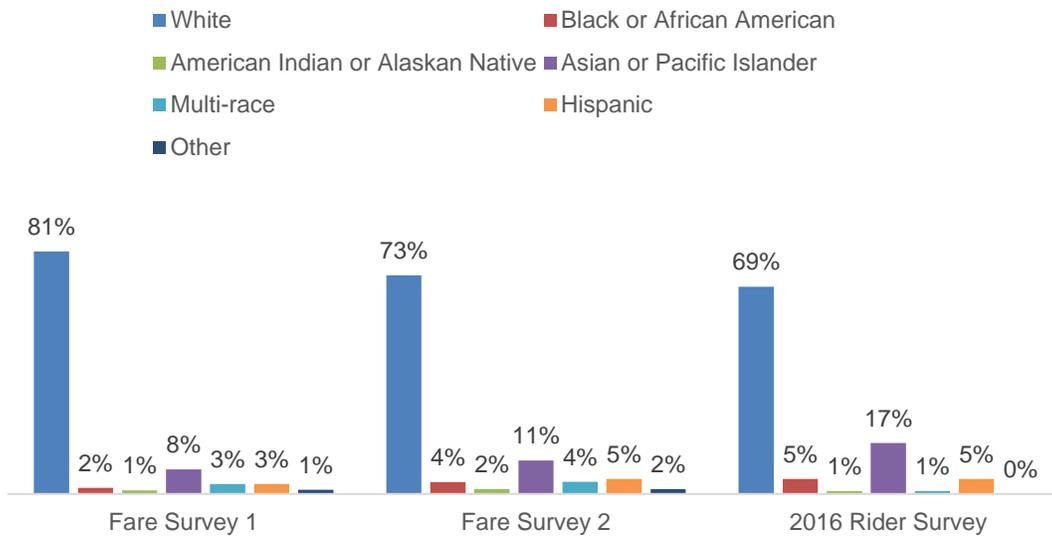
**Figure 16. Age**



**Race/Ethnicity**

Figure 17 shows that, while the first fare questionnaire had a higher percentage of white participants and a lower percentage of people of color, the second questionnaire’s participation rates came closer to reflecting the demographics of Metro’s ridership as captured in the rider questionnaire.

**Figure 17. Race/Ethnicity**



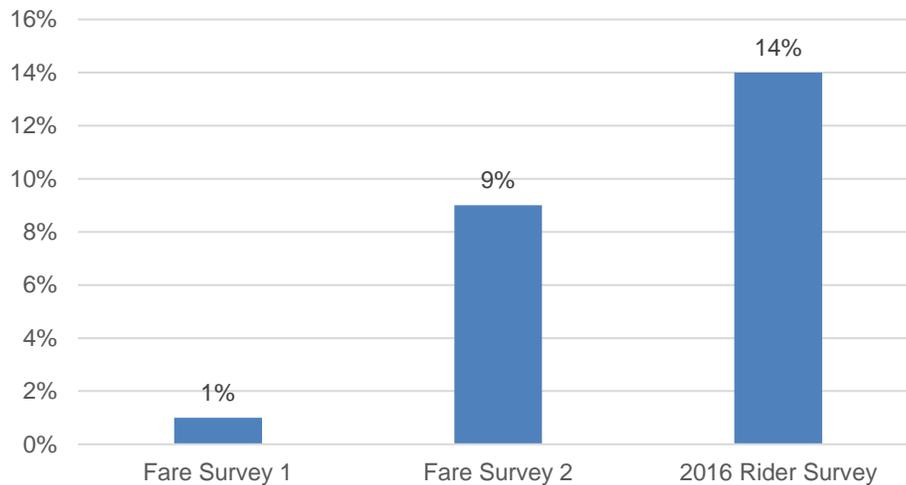
## Primary Language

The rider questionnaire does not track language spoken at home; however, we heard from a number of language groups during the course of this outreach. More than 90 percent of our online questionnaire takers speak English as their primary language at home. Census data suggests that about 26 percent of people in King County speak a language other than English at home. Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, African languages, Tagalog, and other languages made up the 3 to 5 percent of other online questionnaire takers.

In our outreach with community-based organizations we engaged more than 300 people who speak the following languages:

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Cambodian
- Chinese
- Dari
- Ekirondi
- English
- Farsi
- Khmer
- Mam
- Pashto
- Punjabi/Hindu
- Russian
- Samoan
- Somali
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Tagalog
- Tigrinya
- Turkish
- Twi
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Vietnamese

Figure 18 shows that we did not hear from people with disabilities in the same proportion as our ridership. This could be because we recently completed a yearlong public engagement effort with riders with disabilities in which we asked questions about fare payment. We also did not consider any changes to the Regional Reduced Fare Permit or Access paratransit fares.

**Figure 18. Yes, I have a disability.**

### Household Income

In this engagement effort, we were most interested to understand feedback and fare payment practices among people who qualify for ORCA LIFT. This will help us understand barriers people face to our existing discounts, and specific concerns or barriers faced by people who are just above the ORCA LIFT income qualification as we develop more research and pilot programs.

Eligibility for ORCA LIFT is determined by household size and annual household income. By asking both questions—what is your household size, then is your income above or below a certain amount—we were able to determine and analyze results from participants who are “low income.”

Thirteen percent of the first questionnaire respondents would qualify for ORCA LIFT. Eighteen percent of the second questionnaire respondents would qualify for ORCA LIFT. Census data indicates that about 24 percent of King County residents are below 200 percent of the federal poverty level and would qualify for ORCA LIFT.

Participants in our community-based organization outreach were primarily people with low or no income.

### Was information about participation clear and welcoming?

- First questionnaire – 97 percent yes
- Second questionnaire – 95 percent yes

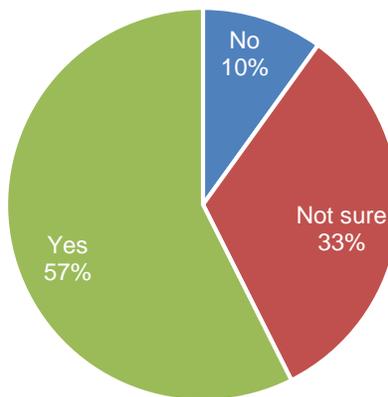
**Were participants notified in time to provide meaningful feedback?**

- First questionnaire – 95 percent yes
- Second questionnaire – 85 percent yes

**Did participants see how input shaped decision making?**

The second questionnaire built on feedback received during the first phase of engagement. In the second questionnaire, Figure 18 shows participants answers to the question: “Regardless of how you feel about the adult fare change options, do you see how public input shaped these choices?”

**Figure 18. Regardless of how you feel about the adult fare change options, do you see how public input shaped these choices?**



## Exhibits

## Exhibit A – Stakeholder Engagement

### Fare Review Stakeholder Advisory Group Members

Ezra Basom	Metro Transit bus driver
Kendle Bjelland	Commute Seattle
Cliff Cawthon	Rainier Beach Action Coalition
Hillary Coleman	Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness
Anne Eskridge	University of Washington, Transportation Services
Juan Flores	Rainier Beach Action Coalition
Augusta DeVries	Bellevue Downtown Association/TransManage
Hope Drumond	Alliance of People with disAbilities
Gail Gustavson	International Community Health Services
Daniel Heldring	Microsoft
Kimberly Heymann	Alliance of People with disAbilities
Jeff Kever	Seattle Central College
Claire McDaniel	Sound Generations
Aaron Morrow	King County Transit Advisory Commission
Daphne Pie	Public Health – Seattle King County
Janelle Rothfolk	Catholic Community Services of King County
Hester Serebrin	Transportation Choices Coalition
Arielle Washington	Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
Katie Wilson	Transit Riders Union

## **Fare Review Advisory Group Workshop #1**

### **Meeting Summary**

March 2, 2017

Washington Hall, the Lodge Meeting Room

153 14th Ave, Seattle

1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### **Participants**

- Aaron Morrow, King County Transit Advisory Commission
- Anne Eskridge, University of Washington, Transportation Services
- Arielle Washington, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
- August DeVries, Bellevue Downtown Association/TransManage
- Claire McDaniel, Sound Generations
- Daphne Pie, Public Health – Seattle King County
- Hester Serebrin, Transportation Choices Coalition
- Hope Drumond, Alliance of People with disAbilities
- Janelle Rothfolk, Catholic Community Services of King County
- Katie Wilson, Transit Riders Union
- Kimberly Heymann, Alliance of People with disAbilities

### **Absent**

- Gail Gustavson, International Community Health Services
- Gregory Davis, Rainier Beach Action Coalition
- Jeff Aumell, Microsoft
- Jeff Keever, Seattle Central College
- Kendle Bjelland, Commute Seattle

### **Welcome and opening remarks: Fares Work Program purpose and goals**

Chris O'Claire, Manager of Strategic Planning and Analysis at King County Metro, welcomed participants and observers to the meeting. She provided an overview of Metro's Fare Work Program being planned with input from the advisory group and the public, including the purpose and goals of Metro's work related to fares. (See page 2 "Purpose" and page 3 "Goals" in meeting slides.)

## Introductions

DeAnna Martin, Community Relations Planner at King County Department of Transportation and meeting facilitator, introduced staff and asked participants to introduce themselves sharing their name; any affiliations they'd like the group to be aware of; and if/when they ride transit how they pay their fare.

## Meeting agenda and purpose, role of advisory group, timeline, and scope

DeAnna when on to review the meeting purposes, which were to:

- Introduce participants to each other and the process; the advisory group's charter, scope, and timeline.
- Build and deepen awareness about Metro's existing fares, fare payment system, and known and unknown issues that need to be addressed in the short or long term.
- Solicit input on criteria by which fare changes considered in the short-term should be analyzed and prioritized.

She reviewed the role of the advisory group and a work program outline for the meetings of the group. (See page 6 "Role of this Group" and page 7 "Timeline" in meeting slides.) She invited participants to practice King County's Guidelines for Multicultural Interactions during each meeting and asked participants to acknowledge their commitment to these guidelines. (See handout.)

Briana Lovell, Transportation Planner and program manager at King County Metro, provided an overview of the Fare Work Program's scope of work and how advisory group feedback would shape the scope. (See pages 8-9 "Scope of our Work" in meeting slides.)

One participant asked whether the pilot program ideas in the short-term would go to King County Council in June. Staff answered that, if they need council adoption, they would, but there are many things Metro can do without council approval.

Another participant asked when would zone and peak surcharge changes go into effect. Staff responded that the changes may go into effect in 2019 or later as they would be tied to the implementation of the next generation of ORCA.

**Existing Conditions: background on Metro fares**

Briana oriented the group to background on Metro's fares. (See pages 10-13 on "Existing Conditions" in the meeting slides for details.) She focused on some high level details from a larger and more in-depth handout distributed to the group. (See handout.)

As she presented, participants provided the following comments and questions:

- Q: What part of revenues for Metro do fares make up? If there are reductions in that, does service get sacrificed? A: Metro has a fare recovery policy target of 30% - meaning that 30% of the operating cost of the service should be recuperated by fares, and a floor of 25%. Vanpool has a 100% fare recovery. Access Transportation has no fare recovery mandate.
- Concern was expressed that the impact of a service "reduction" if revenue goes down would affect the programs that serve to make transit accessible.

Staff noted that there was more detail on policies that relate to fares in the background packet, and would be happy to provide answers to additional questions.

- An Access customer shared that Access Transportation program has potential to be impacted by service and fare changes.
- Concern was shared about the quality of the experience riding the bus and how that correlates to ridership and people's sense of the value they pay for riding.
- Staff shared that aspects of the fare work program that focus on ease of payment and speeding up boarding are related to customer experience as well as cost-efficiencies that can allow Metro to put greater resources toward the service itself.
- Cost of housing is interrelated with transportation in terms of what is affordable for people. Analysis needs to include this. As cost of housing goes up, people move to where it is more affordable. This may mean traveling longer distances.
- There is an equity intersection between fare recovery and service allocation that varies from route to route and by time of day.
- Q: What is an ORCA Passport? A: A participating employer pays all or some percentage of the cost. Q: What's an ORCA Puget Pass? A: A monthly pass some employers reimburse fully or partially. Comment: the product names are confusing.
- Q: On the slide about how riders pay their fares, is this a percentage based on rides or riders? A: It's percentage of rides.

- Q: Is Sound Transit also doing work around this? A: Yes, we are partnering at the staff planning level and on outreach in April to consider changes to make fares simpler. Any changes we make to fares will be discussed with and in alignment with partner agencies. Other agencies considering changes include Community Transit and Pierce Transit.
- Comment on how to increase youth ridership, means we need to redefine the definition of youth to include all students, not just young people.

Staff responded that the current definition of youth is 6 to 18 years old, but that Metro has been in conversation with colleges about how to make it easier for students who qualify for ORCA LIFT to take advantage of the incentives colleges provide for riding transit. There are also differences between grade school and high school level ridership. The entire topic of student fares is worth exploring in pilot projects.

- At the UW, there are food banks on campus. One third of students struggle at some point making ends meet while enrolled at the university. UW is exploring what it means that there's a U-Pass and ORCA LIFT. Are there cost advantages for both the university and students in getting the right ORCA product in the hands of students who are struggling to make ends meet?
- Some youth remain in high school until they are 21 years old.
- On the "How the discounts we provide today affect fare revenue" slide, there were questions about what this data was showing. A: The numbers here reflect the difference between base adult fare and lower fares provided.
- Concern was expressed that this chart shows the "loss" of fare revenue because of discounts instead of showing the "value" of increased ridership because a discount is being offered.
- Q: What was the policy rationale for the Access fare being "closer" to the adult base fare? A: This policy was established long ago when Access was first created. The FTA rules that apply to paratransit fares indicate that the paratransit fare cannot be more than double the adult base fare, which would currently be \$5.00. At \$1.75 Access is still below the adult base fare.

Staff noted that this is intended to show the value of the discount provided through reduced fares, not the lost revenue. Metro could also look at the amount of revenue these discounted fares bring in rather than what they don't.

Staff said they would work to add more of that information to the existing conditions piece and share it with the group.

In response to the slide entitled, “What we’ve heard,” which was followed by an invitation to tell us if anything was missing from the list, participants added:

- There are some who can’t afford the \$3 card to get the Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP); can’t afford the \$5 minimum load on an ORCA card; or can’t afford the \$5 card charge for a LIFT replacement
- People with disabilities receiving the max supplemental security income get \$733 a month. A monthly transit pass is a big chunk out of this monthly budget which covers the cost of housing, food, and transportation.
- The large amount of documentation required for an RRFP or ORCA LIFT is a barrier for people to get it.
- We wonder about clients we give bus tickets to and how many have an ORCA card already, but can’t afford to load it.

### **What guides our work? Discussion of policy and community goals**

Briana provided a quick overview of the policy goals that guide Metro’s work around fares. (See page 14 “What Guides our Work.”)

Participants asked what “easy for customers” means. They advocated that the policy definition should include language access and the ability to travel easily across the county border or multiple modes.

Another participant asked whether the policies were prioritized in any way or whether there is direction about which policy prevails when an obvious tradeoff between them is presented. Staff explained that there is no explicit guidance on fare-related policy tradeoffs, although ultimately King County Council sets and directs these policies.

DeAnna facilitated the group in an exercise to identify criteria or priorities by which any changes to fare payment should be weighed against. The group came up with the following categories: (Note: each bullet indicates a hand-written comment by participants on a post-it note.)

#### *Increase the market share for all markets*

- Does it increase the % of low-income rides?
- Cost recovery goes up through increased ridership via ease of use and good marketing materials
- Does it increase the share of rides taken w/an ORCA unlimited pass?
- Does it expand “market share” of employer passport clients - and landlord subsidized pass programs?

- Does it improve transit access for low-income and very low-income riders?

### *Equity*

- Equity: in distribution, in impact, in services available

### *Safety*

- Look at Muni in San Francisco that does not accept cash payment for a model

### *Assures or Improves Service Quality*

- Speeds up boarding
- Timeliness of service
- Geography of transit service
- Expanded early & evening service even if price point is higher to encourage additional ridership
- Rate/speed of boarding the bus
- On-time service
- Rates provided around public services for low income/disabled
- Dependability and safety of buses and for riders and operators
- Frequency of peak transit service

### *Affordability*

- Cost is not barrier
- Expanded definition of student youth rider fees
- Working families can afford Metro bus pass for children who don't qualify for ORCA LIFT
- Affordability for all income levels
- Greatest intersection opportunity for low-income without cuts to service – higher volume ridership of low income riders
- Reduce costs associated with a student fare
- Impact on people with disabilities, including income

### *Integration*

- Integrated services with integrated rates
- Impact on regional partnership
- Intersects clearly with partner service and zones
- Metro bus tickets can be used for light rail

*Extent to which change requires fare enforcement**Simple, Ease of Understanding*

- Simplicity of employee pass program options
- Simplicity of fare structure
- Ease of understanding or don't have to think about it
- Improve accessibility by using interactive tools like ONEBUSAWAY push this tool so people know about it.
- Put a QR code on cards so people can check balances on go w/smart phone
- Easier to replace lost cards
- Phone app – like Starbucks card
- Increase locations, access to kiosks
- Clear directions for how to access and descriptions of the product/service riders need

*Public Responsiveness*

- Positive response from the community – get their feedback

**Next steps**

DeAnna indicated that the goal input would be used to describe and assess fare options Metro will bring to the group at the next meeting and out to the public for broader feedback in April. She spoke briefly about the public engagement plan as a whole and invited participants to share names of organizations Metro should reach out to as stakeholders – for briefing or contracting with to conduct community-based outreach. She announced that the next meeting would be either April 4 or 5 from 3:30-5:30 and polled the group as to which date they preferred.

**Adjourn**

## **Fare Review Advisory Group Workshop #2**

### **Meeting Summary**

April 4, 2017

King Street Center

DOT Director's Office Conference Room

201 South Jackson Street, Seattle

3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

### **Participants**

- Aaron Morrow, King County Transit Advisory Commission
- Anne Eskridge, University of Washington, Transportation Services
- Arielle Washington, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
- August DeVries, Bellevue Downtown Association/TransManage
- Cliff Cawthon, Rainier Beach Action Coalition
- Daniel Heldring, Microsoft
- Daphne Pie, Public Health – Seattle King County
- Ezra Bason, Metro Transit operator
- Gail Gustavson, International Community Health Services
- Hester Serebrin, Transportation Choices Coalition
- Hillary Coleman, Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness
- Janelle Rothfolk, Catholic Community Services of King County
- Jeff Keever, Seattle Central College
- Katie Wilson, Transit Riders Union
- Kendle Bjelland, Commute Seattle

### **Absent**

- Claire McDaniel, Sound Generations
- Hope Drumond, Alliance of People with disAbilities
- Kimberly Heymann, Alliance of People with disAbilities

### **Welcome and introductions**

Chris O'Claire, Assistant General Manager of Planning and Customer Services, King County Metro, welcomed the group and provided a brief recap of the last meeting and an overview of the purpose and content of this meeting.

DeAnna Martin, Community Relations Planner, King County DOT, introduced staff present and invited participants to introduce themselves. She reminded people of the group guidelines.

### **Background on Metro’s actions to address affordability and access**

Matt Hansen, Manager of Customer Communications & Services, King County Metro, provided an overview of actions Metro is currently taking to increase access to and affordability of transit. (See handout entitled, “Current Metro Activities to Improve Access and Affordability”)

Matt shared that the first round of ORCA LIFT cards will expire this month. The cards will still be usable, but will revert to regular adult ORCA cards so users would end up being charged a regular adult fare. To notify users of the expiration, Metro has:

- Information on all buses to notify riders
- Posters up at all enrollment and ORCA retail locations
- Sent letters to all affected users
- Launched an online renewal process – 300 have already renewed
- Multi-lingual notices have also been produced and distributed to enrollment and retail locations
- The expiration date is also listed on the card itself

Meeting participants asked whether when people renew their ORCA LIFT card their balance can be transferred. The answer is it can. Participants also expressed interest in seeing and getting copies of the materials – posters, brochures – to help spread the message to their constituents.

Regarding a lack of knowledge about the availability of an ORCA day pass, many participants expressed their own lack of knowledge about this product. They asked several questions about how it can be used and where it can be purchased. Participants encouraged staff to make the day pass option more visible to customers perhaps even sending out a general announcement that this option exists. Staff promised to follow up with more detail about the pass, how it works, and how to purchase.

After sharing additional actions related to waving card fees, addressing youth ORCA card access when school is not in session, and college student transit affordability, participants had the following questions and comments:

- How has Metro done in reaching out to college students to increase ORCA LIFT enrollment? Answer: Metro did 14 outreach events at colleges in 2015; in 2016, Metro did 42; these outreach events are a focus.
- Do college freshman welcome packets, does it provide PH and Metro information? Answer: It depends on the school.
- Metro needs to do the ORCA LIFT materials in more languages
- Card replacement fee is a barrier; a \$5 expense for someone with low income is a big deal so getting rid of the fee is a great idea

### **Introduction to fare change options for zone/peak surcharges**

Chris provided some general background on fares and goals of simplifying Metro's fares. Then, she presented five options Metro had developed to consider simplifying fares. (See handout entitled, "Metro Fare Options")

She shared that it's important for Metro to understand the current structure, based on the feedback from last meeting, and that our goal is to make sure transit is accessible to everyone. Fares need to recover 25-30% of the operating cost to provide the service, the rest comes from sales tax. Projecting how a fare change will affect ridership assumes that if fares go up there will be an adjustment to the supply and demand ratio. Metro's fares need to reflect the cost of service. Metro would like to learn from the group whether we have the right options and how we might mitigate any negative effects of any of the options. All of Metro's analyses are not complete at this moment, there is more work to do.

#### About all options – participants:

- Suggested increasing ORCA LIFT eligibility as a way to mitigate the effects on affordable access for those who would experience a fare increase.
- Wanted more detail on what the revenue increases and decreases meant in terms of service impacts or how additional revenue would be spent.
- Asked staff to consider the impacts on families – an increase in the adult fare would have an effect on the whole family when choosing to ride transit.

About Option B – a \$2.75 flat fare

Comments included:

- The increase in fare for off-peak riders could be mitigated by increasing the transfer window.
- This option has a good equity message to reduce geographic and historic inequities.
- Concern expressed about the brunt of the fare increase being born by the middle class.

About Option C – Local fare \$2.50, Express fare \$3.25

Comments included:

- How would Metro classify an express type service? – express really needs to be faster and fewer stops from a customer perspective.
- How does the RapidRide play a part?
- Deep concern expressed about “penalizing” people who live farther away from Seattle.
- Charging people more because they live far away from Seattle could hurt those who are poor and have to live far away because the cost of living is so high – include housing affordability, race, and class in an analysis of the options if possible.
- This option would introduce fare confusion and route confusion – customers would need to re-educated.
- Metro would need a really good explanation of the rationale for this type of fare structure.
- If this option is selected, make sure there is redundancy on the routes selected as Express – meaning a local option that people can pay a lower fare to ride
- There are advantages for operators on many levels; although this option would still lead to questions from riders.

### About Option E – Peak Fare High (\$3.00)

Comments included:

- Both Options D and E seem to have the biggest effect on those who are most likely to be paying their fare with an employer-provided pass and would, therefore, be the least price sensitive.
- There would be operator issues in a logistical sense. Current peak pricing is based on the run (i.e. when the bus leaves the base). If the fare were to change in the middle the run, it seems difficult to implement. For example, there's more involved than just the technology of the ORCA card reader. Operators manually place a fare card into the fare box.

Participants asked:

- Do these fare changes effect businesses?
- When would these changes occur? Answer: estimated at 2019 for this analysis
- Would Metro consider raising the youth age to 20?

### **Feedback, discussion of fare change options for zone/peak surcharges**

Advisory group members were given a set of sticky dots to allocate to the fare options they preferred. The options were ranked in the following way:

1. Option B – flat fare \$2.75
2. Option A – flat fare \$2.50
3. Option E – peak fare high \$3.00
4. Option C – local fare \$2.50, express fare \$3.25
5. Option D – peak fare low \$2.75

In general discussion about the dot allocation, participants made the following comments:

- Concern expressed that now changes are being considered Access riders, yet fare changes are due. Whatever happens with Access riders, this needs to be

consistent with Access fares and make sure it doesn't make it more difficult for riders to use both and transit between the two.

- What would happen with the fare revenue lost or gained?
- How is running the bus cheaper during the day compared to during the peak?  
Answer: Metro's fleet and operations system is based on operating the most service during heavy peak periods. This will flatten out over time as Metro moves more and more towards the Metro Connects Vision. It costs more to operate and maintain our peak service and we're at capacity now.
- Suggestion to charge around events or activities; on different days of the week – e.g. charge a higher fare for routes serving Capitol Hill during late night on Friday and Saturdays.

### **Sound Transit update**

Chad Davis, from Sound Transit, provided a brief update on Sound Transit's fare-related planning effort. He explained that they would be going to their Board in the coming months to get approval and direction to move forward with their planning effort. If approved, planning and related public outreach would occur later this year or early in 2018.

### **Next steps**

DeAnna provided a quick recap of the next steps in the process. Feedback from this meeting would inform a smaller set of options that Metro will be taking out to the broader public for their input. A second round of public engagement, including a second online questionnaire and some public meetings, will take place in mid-April to early May. Outreach with community-based organizations is getting underway to conclude in mid-May. Metro expects to reconvene the advisory group for a third meeting in May once outreach is complete to inform the group of the adult fare change option they intend to recommend to the Executive and to share and get feedback from the group on longer term research and program efforts to address access and affordability and speeding up boarding.

### **Adjourn**

## **Fare Review Stakeholder Advisory Group Workshop #3**

### **Meeting Summary**

May 18, 2017

King Street Center

DOT Director's Office Conference Room

201 South Jackson Street, Seattle

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

### **Participants**

- Aaron Morrow, King County Transit Advisory Commission
- Anne Eskridge, University of Washington, Transportation Services
- Arielle Washington, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
- Ezra Bason, Metro Transit operator
- Hillary Coleman, Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness
- Janelle Rothfolk, Catholic Community Services of King County
- Jeff Keever, Seattle Central College
- Katie Wilson, Transit Riders Union

### **Absent**

- August DeVries, Bellevue Downtown Association/TransManage
- Claire McDaniel, Sound Generations
- Cliff Cawthon, Rainier Beach Action Coalition
- Daniel Heldring, Microsoft
- Daphne Pie, Public Health – Seattle King County
- Gail Gustavson, International Community Health Services
- Hester Serebrin, Transportation Choices Coalition
- Hope Drumond, Alliance of People with disAbilities
- Kimberly Heymann, Alliance of People with disAbilities
- Kendle Bjelland, Commute Seattle

### **Welcome and introductions**

DeAnna Martin, Public and Employee Engagement Manager for King County Metro Transit, welcomed participants and reminded them of the groundrules. She provided a brief overview of where we are at in the planning and engagement process and reviewed the meeting purpose and agenda with the group.

### **How Metro went from five to two options – analysis, final feedback**

Chris O'Claire, Assistant General Manager of Customer Communication at King County Metro Transit, shared that staff had an opportunity to evaluate fares because Metro decided to put a pause on planned fare increases. They stressed that this is the first phase in this process and emphasized the need to make a decision on simplification this year for regional coordination on ORCA Next Generation. A participant asked when the Request for Proposals to identify an ORCA Next Generation vendor would go out. Staff responded this fall.

Jana Demas, Supervisory of Strategic Planning at King County Metro Transit, reviewed the options that were eliminated and why. Participants asked:

- Q: What was the farebox recovery projection if a \$2.50 flat fare option were implemented? A: Below the minimum target of 25%.
- Q: How would each option effect crowding on buses? A: It's hard to say. The modeling we do for projected ridership predicts increase in ridership, but we can't predict or estimate on which routes this will happen. We have a separate planning and investment process to identify where and how to address overcrowding, so if this is a result, we'll be aware.
- Q: Is Metro considering businesses' willingness to work with Metro if this raises their costs? A: Yes, we are always actively working with employers and trying to grow employer participation in providing transit benefits to their employees.

Jana invited any comments or questions on the remaining two options taken out for public comment, a \$2.57 Flat Fare options and \$2.50 off-peak/\$3 peak Fare option. Participants had the following questions and comments about the equity and social justice impacts of each:

- Q: What is does average adult fare mean?
- Q: Did Metro look at eliminating the peak and why having the peak/off-peak difference would affect low income and minority routes more?

DeAnna provided a high level overview of feedback received from the general public on two adult fare change options. (See powerpoint slides for details.) She also provided a summary of results of an employer account questionnaire conducted during the second phase of engagement.

One member asked if participants could receive a copy of the employer results. Staff responded they could and that Metro is preparing a full summary/report of all feedback received.

DeAnna asked whether the group had any additional feedback on the final two options. Participants shared:

- A flat fare is easier to understand for people with disabilities, fixed incomes, seniors, English Language Learners. The \$2.50/\$3.00 fare is more complex.
- From an operator perspective, simplification is good. But, concern was expressed about crowding as it affects speed of boarding and operations. If a simplified fare increases ridership, this could be a result.
- Q: has Metro done any studies about going to a Rapid Ride-type system to see if it makes the system more efficient and cost effective? A: costs would go up in terms of fare enforcement and off board fare payment but it is something we continue to consider.
- The university and colleges are concerned about how the options will affect their cost. They would really like Metro to consider a student class or student rate to address that concern. Since ridership is self-administered by institutions the chance of fraud is low to no.
- Q: Do students qualify for ORCA LIFT? A: Some do, but eligibility is not universal. For example, international students cannot qualify.
- Q: Has Metro run numbers for college student fare? A: not as part of this process. Participants encouraged staff to look at different numbers and to do some analysis.
- Q: How would a student fare be defined and administered. A: through the university or college. Q: Do universities pay the full fare? A: Yes, based on a trip rate determined by when users travel and what services the population uses most. The UW gets a slight discount based on the amount of their pass holders who qualify for youth or senior discounts.
- How do each of these options affect fare enforcement? Will Metro continue to do this? A: it has its challenges; but, fare evasion is only 5% and there are only six routes that have fare enforcement. Those are Metro's Rapid Ride lines.

### **Transit affordability – current and planned efforts, feedback**

Penny Lara, Transportation Planner in Metro's Market Development section, shared work she had done on a grant-funded project to increase ORCA usage among harder to

reach populations. She shared some of the results of what she learned from a questionnaire she conducted during this project – namely that people who speak English as a second language weren't understanding how to use ORCA. She worked to develop some materials and videos that use more imagery than lingo to describe the card and how to use it. She will share the videos when they are complete.

One member encouraged Metro to develop a similar version of the materials with ORCA LIFT fares.

Matt Hansen, Manager of Customer Communication, King County Metro Transit, provided an overview of Metro's efforts to address transit affordability. (See slides for details.)

He asked whether it would be worthwhile to reconvene the student fare group. Seattle Central College and UW would like to reconvene. Seattle Central College just launched an all campus questionnaire asking students if they would be willing to pay for a UW-type program. Their board also increased the amount it will subsidize. Staff will reach out to people who were part of the process and initiate reconvening.

Staff shared that ORCA LIFT is nearing 50,000 enrollees, but there is still more to learn and do. An issue was raised at the first meeting about a replacement fee on ORCA LIFT cards that are lost or stolen. Staff reported that Metro has eliminated that replacement fee.

There is early indication from a Human Service Ticket Program provider questionnaire that agencies would like to buy more tickets if possible.

Participants asked:

- Q: What is the barrier to online enrollment for ORCA LIFT. A: Trying to be as inclusive as possible without being reckless and creating conditions that would make it easier for fraudulent activity.
- Q: Will the cost of the fare for the human service demonstration be the same price as for nonprofits. A: Yes, would offer LIFT passes at 10% of price.
- Q: Can school cards continue to work after school year (even if no subsidy). A: Metro is in process working with school districts on this issue. The earliest a change could be made is summer of 2018.
- Q: What does "registered seniors" mean? There is confusion between seniors and drivers when they use a human service ticket to pay their fare. It would help

if Metro used the same signage and consistent terms in all fare-related information.

- Comment: it's confusing that youth don't need proof, but seniors do.
- Q: Could the taxi scrip program be used as a filler for the last mile home as an incentive to get Access paratransit users to transit. People living far away often wonder how they get to transit.
- Q: What is the timeline for completing the human service ticket program provider questionnaire and acting on the results? Participants would like to see the results of the questionnaire.
- Comment: SDOT has said they approve combo tickets being used on Seattle streetcars. Q: Has progress been made with communication between SDOT and Metro to confirm and implement this?
- Q: Can human service ticket program providers use day pass/combo tickets for their clients? It would also be helpful to be able to mail tickets to a client to get to the agency without having to fill out forms in advance. Q: Is there a way to lessen requirements? And, is there an easier way to associate Regional Reduced Fare Permits to business accounts? A: no, but staff wish there was.
- Q: Why do ORCA LIFT cards need to be physically replaced at time of re-enrollment? Why can't the card continue to be used if someone's eligibility continues? A: It's a vendor issue, but trying to change this with ORCA Next Generation.

DeAnna invited participants to help inform Metro's next efforts to research the needs of hard to reach populations in order to understand barriers to fare payment and identify action steps to address those barriers. Participants made the following comments:

- Metro should better utilize space on the bus to educate people about how to use ORCA. Make information about where to reload card more available. Could there be a bigger effort to put posters on buses and give concrete places to go?
- The \$5 card fee is also problematic. Metro thinks of customers as well off (park & ride, etc) but there are a lot of people who don't fit description. There is also a high percentage of "unbanked" riders who need to use cash. Metro should do more advertising on how you can use ORCA in an unbanked way.
- It's hard for a lot of people to put aside money to put on a card. Some fear where personal information associated with the card goes and who has access to it.

- LIFT is unfortunate name. It sounds too much like LYFT.

DeAnna paraphrased these comments to say Metro should be researching why people aren't using ORCA and paying with cash.

- What about people who end up paying more over time because they cannot afford the up-front costs of a monthly pass? There should be a monthly and day pass fare cap to help people who can't afford a monthly pass all at once so that if they reach that monthly pass amount, they won't be charged more than that. There was a lot of support for this idea among participants.
- Comment: Some people get assistance at different times, so having a monthly base operate on a 30 day schedule (rather than starting at the beginning of the month) might help.
- The fare cap idea would help with this.

DeAnna asked whether there was anything else Metro is missing that should be considered. Participants offered the following comments and questions:

- The human service ORCA pilot idea is a good one.
- Metro should investigate a Calgary-style low income transit pass that is offered on a sliding scale.
- Very curious about barrier for \$5 fee. Is this actually a barrier or is that just perception?
- Catholic Community Services does lots of replacement cards (10-15/week). At \$3 replacement fee per card, this adds up for them. They could use that money in other ways to provide service. It would be great to have a lanyard or something to give to clients because stuff gets stolen all the time (lost, misplaced, etc) and to help prevent this.

## **Next Steps**

Staff asked whether the group would be interested in being assembled again for an update and/or to provide additional feedback. DeAnna shared a revised timeline for next steps. Staff originally expected that a fare simplification ordinance would go to King County Council in June, but now it's looking more like that would happen in August.

## **Adjourn**

**Stakeholder Briefings**

Seashore Forum	March 7, 2017
South County Mobility Coalition	March 9, 2017
Eastside Transportation Partnership	March 10, 2017
ORCA LIFT enrollers monthly meeting	March 13, 2017
Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative	March 28, 2017
South County Area Transportation Board	April 18, 2017
King County Transit Advisory Commission	April 18, 2017
Seattle Transit Advisory Board	April 26, 2017
North County Mobility Coalition	April 27, 2017
King County Mobility Coalition-Access to Work and School Committee	May 9, 2017
King County Mobility Coalition	May 16, 2017
UW U-PASS Student Advisory Board	May 18, 2017
UW Transportation Committee	May 22, 2017

## Exhibit B – Media and Social Media

On March 23, 2017, Metro issued a news release ([http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/news/20170419\\_Fare\\_Proposals.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/news/20170419_Fare_Proposals.aspx)) to announce the fare review process and invite community members to take an online questionnaire. Metro issued a second news release April 19 ([http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/news/20170419\\_Fare\\_Proposals.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/news/20170419_Fare_Proposals.aspx)) to announce a second online questionnaire and second round of outreach on two options for fare simplification. Both releases were distributed via email to mainstream news outlets, blogs, and ethnic media, and posted to the King County Metros' website. Coverage included KIRO-TV, Q-13, the West Seattle Blog and the Seattle Transit Blog.

Metro also provided embargoed materials to the Seattle Transit Blog, which published an exclusive report on the morning of April 19 to announce the second online questionnaire on two fare options – A \$2.75 flat fare or peak period fare of \$3 and off-peak fare of \$2.50. ([Seattle Transit Blog: Metro proposes doing away with zoned fares](#))

A link to the questionnaire was posted on Metro's Facebook page and reached more than 2,800 people. Metro also hosted an online forum via Facebook live that drew XX participants to ask questions of staff. Metro tweeted four times about the fare review process to more than 100,000 followers. The tweets included links to the questionnaires and press releases, and generated more than 21,000 impressions and 207 clicks onto links to the questionnaire.

King County Metro four tweets went out to more than 100,000 followers with links to the online questionnaires and to the press releases. The tweets generated a total of more than 21,000 impressions and 207 clicks to the questionnaire links in the tweets. (examples of tweets below)



**King County Metro** 🚌 @kcmetrobus  
Metro seeks public comment on 2 options for simplifying bus fares.  
[http://kingcounty.gov/about/news/public-feedback.aspx?pd\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.peakdemocracy.com%2Fportals%2F262%2Fissue\\_4828#peak\\_democracy ...pic.twitter.com/KBOHQMH7s5](http://kingcounty.gov/about/news/public-feedback.aspx?pd_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.peakdemocracy.com%2Fportals%2F262%2Fissue_4828#peak_democracy...pic.twitter.com/KBOHQMH7s5)

**King County Metro** 🦋 @kcmetrobus

Metro is exploring options to simplify bus fares - take our online survey by May 5 and give us feedback.

<http://metrofutureblog.wordpress.com/2017/04/21/have-a-say-on-simpler-bus-fares/> ...



**King County Metro** 🦋 @kcmetrobus

Metro invites customers to take this survey as we consider ways to simplify bus fares:

[http://kingcounty.gov/about/news/public-feedback.aspx?](http://kingcounty.gov/about/news/public-feedback.aspx?pd_url=https://www.peakdemocracy.com/portals/262/Issue_4735#peak_democracy...pic.twitter.com/nkR2G4bXge)

[pd\\_url=https://www.peakdemocracy.com/portals/262/Issue\\_4735#peak\\_democracy ... pic.twitter.com/nkR2G4bXge](https://www.peakdemocracy.com/portals/262/Issue_4735#peak_democracy...pic.twitter.com/nkR2G4bXge)



**King County Metro** 🦋 @kcmetrobus

Metro seeks public input on ways to simplify bus fares.

[http://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/programs-projects/fare-review.aspx ... pic.twitter.com/VgVHrRtAAQ](http://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/programs-projects/fare-review.aspx...pic.twitter.com/VgVHrRtAAQ)

## Media coverage

Seattle Transit Blog: Metro proposes doing away with zoned fares, 4/19/17

<https://www.seattletransitblog.com/2017/04/19/metro-to-do-away-with-zoned-fares/>

Seattle Transit Blog: Metro fare proposals lack cash disincentives

<https://www.seattletransitblog.com/2017/04/22/metro-fare-proposals-lack-cash-disincentives/>

King County Metro considers simplifying bus fares, 3/29/17

<http://www.kiro7.com/news/local/king-county-metro-considers-simplifying-bus-fares/507272153>

West Seattle Blog: Metro bus fares: New questionnaire, asking you about 2 options for 'simpler' fares, 4/19/17

<http://westseattleblog.com/2017/04/metro-bus-fares-new-questionnaire-asking-you-about-2-options-for-simpler-fares/>

West Seattle Blog: Questions for you – Metro launches questionnaire, hoping to simplify fare-paying

<http://westseattleblog.com/2017/03/questions-for-you-metro-launches-questionnaire-hoping-to-simplify-fare-paying/>

Curbed: King County Metro looks to simplify transit fare, 3/24/17

<https://seattle.curbed.com/2017/3/24/15055080/king-county-metro-fare-overhaul>

CHS Capitol Hill Seattle: Metro wants feedback on simplifying fares, 3/27/17

<http://www.capitolhillseattle.com/2017/03/metro-wants-feedback-on-simplifying-fares/>

Time for a Fare Overhaul? Metro seeking comment this spring, 3/24/2017

<https://www.seattletransitblog.com/2017/03/24/time-for-a-fare-overhaul-metro-seeking-comment-this-spring/>

## Exhibit C – Questionnaire Questions

Please note: raw questionnaire data with personal identifying information removed can be provided upon request.

### Public Questionnaire 1 – Online from March 23 through April 7

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**Metro Transit wants your input on ways to simplify fare payment. Please tell us what you think by April 7.**

### Introduction

Today, Metro customers are faced with a complex fare structure, including a surcharge during peak commute hours, and another surcharge for trips that cross a zone boundary during those same peak hours. **This system can be difficult for customers to understand**, and it doesn't align with the fares of our partner agencies who also use the ORCA farecard system.



**As we prepare for the modernization of ORCA technology, Metro and the other ORCA agencies are looking for ways to simplify fares** and make them more consistent across agencies. Metro is also exploring ways to speed up boarding, improve driver safety, help increase ridership, and help reduce barriers to using transit for vulnerable populations.

As we develop these fare options and longer-term projects, we'll reach out to our riders and organizations—such as employers, schools, and public service agencies—that provide farecards to the people they serve.

**We want to make sure our work on fare payment over the next two years will reflect our customers' needs and desires.**

**That's why, this month, we're asking the public to give us feedback on ways we could change our fares.**

We also want your feedback on longer-term, fare-related projects. Next month, we'll ask for feedback on a specific set of fare change options with a follow up questionnaire and a series of open houses.

If you need this questionnaire in an alternate format, please contact DeAnna Martin, community relations planner, at 206-477-3835 or [deanna.martin@kingcounty.gov](mailto:deanna.martin@kingcounty.gov).

**To stay informed about this project, sign up for updates at the end of the questionnaire or visit Metro's website:**

**<http://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro.aspx>**

## Your personal transit use

During a typical week, how often do you ride the following types of transit?

	never	less than once a week	one or two days a week	three or four days a week	five or more days a week
King County Metro Transit buses					
Sound Transit Link light rail service					
Sound Transit Sounder service					
Sound Transit Regional Express bus service					
Bus service provided in a county that borders King County (e.g. Community Transit, Pierce Transit, or Kitsap Transit)					
King County Water Taxi					
Washington State Ferries					
Seattle Streetcar					

<b>Metro Access paratransit</b>					
<b>Metro Vanpool or Vanshare</b>					
<b>Private employer-provided shuttle (example: Microsoft Connector)</b>					

**If you use transit, for what purpose(s) do you ride public transportation? (Check all that apply)**

- To/from work
- To/from school
- To/from volunteering
- To/from shopping or errands
- To/from appointments
- To/from recreation, social, religious, or cultural events
- To/from special events
- To/from airport
- Not applicable, do not ride public transportation
- Other

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## Personal fare payment

**When you use public transportation how do you most commonly pay your fare (choose one):**

- ORCA card
- Regional Reduced Fare Permit
- U-Pass
- Cash
- Transit Go mobile ticket
- Metro Access monthly pass

- Metro Monthly Vanpool Pass and Transportation Voucher
- Human service ticket
- Not applicable, do not ride public transportation

**If you selected ORCA, what type of ORCA product do you have?**

- ORCA Monthly Pass that I pay for
- ORCA E-purse that I pay for
- ORCA employer-provided pass
- ORCA employer-provided E-purse
- ORCA pass provided by my college or university
- ORCA school-provided pass (high school and middle school students)
- ORCA LIFT Monthly Pass
- ORCA LIFT E-purse
- ORCA youth pass
- ORCA youth E-purse
- ORCA Regional Day Pass
- I use multiple products depending on my trip purpose

**If you selected ORCA, how do you usually purchase your ORCA pass or put money in your e-purse?**

- My employer, school or social service agency does it for me
- Online
- Auto-load
- At a retailer
- Ticket vending machine
- Metro Customer Service Office

**If you selected Regional Reduced Fare Permit, do you pay by:**

- Cash
- Monthly Pass
- E-purse

**If you selected Cash, why do you pay your fare with cash? (check all that apply)**

- I don't ride often enough

- It's easier to pay with cash/ticket
- I don't have a debit/credit card
- There are no convenient locations where I can get or add value to an ORCA card
- I'm concerned about losing an ORCA card
- I can't afford the fee to purchase an ORCA card
- I don't want to pay the fee to purchase an ORCA card
- I haven't gotten around to getting an ORCA card
- I don't know about ORCA
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Your experience with paying fares

### How easy to understand are Metro's fares?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Difficult
- Very difficult
- Not applicable

### How easy is it to pay your fare?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Difficult
- Very difficult
- Not applicable

### How satisfied are you with your ability to pay your fare when transferring between different agency's services?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not applicable

**How confident are you that you are paying your fare in a way that is most affordable to you?**

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not confident
- Not applicable

**Is the cost to ride affordable for you?**

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

**Why?**

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**How aware are you of the following Metro reduced fare options and programs?**

	very aware	somewhat aware	somewhat unaware	very unaware	not applicable
<b>Regional Reduced Fare Permit for people 65 and older or people with disabilities</b>					
<b>Youth fare for children ages 6-18 (children age 5 and under ride for free)</b>					
<b>ORCA LIFT reduced fare for income-qualified adults</b>					
<b>Metro’s Human Service Ticket Program, which sells</b>					

discounted bus tickets to participating human and social service agencies to provide to their clients					
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**What one thing would you suggest to improve Metro's fare payment system?**

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### As we plan changes, what's most important to you?

As we consider fare changes in the next two years, Metro will evaluate options based on the policies adopted by the King County Council (see below).

**Which of these policies do you think are most important? You've got 10 points to 'spend' on the options below. Place a number next to each option, totalling 10 overall.**

\_\_\_ Make Metro's fares easier to understand and pay.

\_\_\_ Make Metro's fares more consistent with those for Sound Transit buses, Link light rail, and Seattle Streetcar.

\_\_\_ Meet Metro's farebox recovery target to fund bus service

\_\_\_ Make boarding faster.

\_\_\_ Reduce fare collection costs.

\_\_\_ Improve safety for bus drivers and customers.

\_\_\_ Charge more for more-expensive services.

\_\_\_ Increase ridership.

\_\_\_ Improve affordability for low-income customers.

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

(Total should be 10)

### Demographic questions (optional)

This information will be used for analysis only, including to make sure we are hearing from a representative cross-section of our community. The information will not be shared or used for any other purpose other than to understand who King County is hearing from.

**What is the zip code where you live?** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Are you currently... (check all that apply)

- Employed or self-employed full-time
- Employed or self-employed part-time
- A middle school student
- A high school student
- A college or university student
- A homemaker
- Retired
- Currently not employed

#### Do you...

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
Have a valid driver's license?			
Have access to a vehicle for personal use?			
Have children under 18 living at home?			

#### What gender do you identify as?

- Male
- Female
- I'd rather not say

**What is your age?**

- 15 or younger
- 16-17
- 18-19
- 20-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or older
- I'd rather not say

**Please choose one or more races you consider yourself to be:**

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Multi-race
- Hispanic (Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, or Latino)
- Rather not say
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the primary language you speak at home?**

- English
- Amharic
- Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.)
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Ukranian
- Vietnamese
- I'd rather not say

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**If you have a disability that affects your mobility, please indicate which kind (check all that apply)**

- Mobility
- Vision
- Hearing
- Cognitive
- None
- Other

**Including yourself, how many people live in your household?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8+
- I'd rather not say

**[ Depending on household size, respondents were asked whether their annual household income was above or below a certain amount. If above, they were asked what their household income range was using the following ranges ]**

- \$15,001 to \$23,760
- \$23,761 to \$32,040
- \$32,041 to \$40,320
- \$40,321 to \$48,600
- \$48,601 to \$56,880
- \$56,881 to \$65,160
- \$65,191 to \$73,464
- \$73,465 to \$81,870
- \$81,871 to \$100,000
- \$100,001 to \$150,000

- \$150,001 or more
- I don't know
- I'd rather not say

## Process and staying engaged

### How did you hear about this questionnaire? (check all that apply)

- News media
- Metro Matters blog
- Metro email or text alert
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Friend or family member
- My employer
- My elected official or city
- An organization I'm involved with
- Other

### The notice to learn more and participate was clear and welcoming:

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral / no opinion
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

### Do you feel you were notified in time to provide meaningful feedback?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

### Please share any additional feedback you have about our outreach.

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## Thank you!

Please provide your email if you would like to sign up to receive updates on this project.

*(Please note this email will only be visible to project staff who will use it to contact you about this project. Your questionnaire answers will not be associated with your email account.)*

Your email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Public Questionnaire 2 – online from April 19 through May 5

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### Introduction

**Metro's current adult fare structure is complex.** It includes extra charges for travel during weekday peak commute hours and for trips that cross a zone boundary during those peak hours. This can confuse riders, slow down boarding, and lead to fare



disputes that jeopardize driver safety. Our fare structure is also different from those of other transit agencies that use the ORCA fare card system.

For these reasons, Metro is exploring options to simplify our fare structure and make it consistent with other agencies. While this process may lead to fare changes, it is also possible that the current Metro fare structure will not be changed. **Our goal is to make**

**transit more accessible for everyone.**

About 4,500 people took our first questionnaire. We learned that customers support changing Metro's fare structure. One-third of all respondents want fares that are easier to use and understand. Bus drivers told us simpler fares would speed up boarding and travel time, and would help keep drivers and passengers safe by reducing fare disputes. We also heard that we should consider the increasing number of people living outside the Seattle zone boundary, in suburbs where housing is more affordable. [View the first questionnaire results.](#)

We used this feedback to develop two new fare options. We tried to balance several goals: simplify our fare structure, increase ridership, improve safety, decrease travel time, reflect the cost of service, and reduce barriers to using transit for vulnerable populations.

### Now we're asking for public feedback on the two adult fare options:

- A single adult fare of \$2.75, good any time for any distance

- A peak-period adult fare of \$3.00 and an off-peak adult fare of \$2.50, with no extra charge for two-zone travel.

*No fare changes for youth, senior, disabled, ORCA LIFT, or Access are being considered.*

With either option, Metro is planning or already taking actions to make ORCA and transit more accessible and affordable for vulnerable populations.

**We invite you to complete this questionnaire.**

If you need this questionnaire in a different format, please contact DeAnna Martin, community relations planner, at 206-477-3835 or [deanna.martin@kingcounty.gov](mailto:deanna.martin@kingcounty.gov).

## Your personal transit use

During a typical week, how often do you ride the following types of transit?

	never	less than once a week	one or two days a week	three or four days a week	five or more days a week
King County Metro Transit buses					
Sound Transit Link light rail service					
Sound Transit Sounder train					
Sound Transit Regional Express buses					
Bus service provided in a county that borders King County (e.g. Community Transit, Pierce Transit, or Kitsap Transit)					

<b>King County Water Taxi</b>					
<b>Washington State Ferries</b>					
<b>Seattle Streetcar</b>					
<b>Metro Access paratransit</b>					
<b>Metro Vanpool or Vanshare</b>					
<b>Private employer-provided shuttle (example: Microsoft Connector)</b>					

**For what purpose(s) do you ride public transportation? (Check all that apply)**

- To/from work
  - To/from school
  - To/from volunteering
  - To/from shopping or errands
  - To/from appointments
  - To/from recreation, social, religious, or cultural events
  - To/from special events
  - To/from airport
  - Not applicable, do not ride public transportation
  - Other
- 
- 

## Personal fare payment

**When you use public transportation how do you most commonly pay your fare (choose one):**

- ORCA card
- Regional Reduced Fare Permit
- U-Pass
- Cash
- Transit Go mobile ticket

- Metro Access monthly pass
- Metro Monthly Vanpool Pass and Transportation Voucher
- Human service ticket

**If you selected ORCA, what type of ORCA product do you have?**

- ORCA Monthly Pass that I pay for
- ORCA E-purse that I pay for
- ORCA employer-provided pass
- ORCA employer-provided E-purse
- ORCA pass provided by my college or university
- ORCA school-provided pass (high school and middle school students)
- ORCA LIFT Monthly Pass
- ORCA LIFT E-purse
- ORCA youth pass
- ORCA youth E-purse
- ORCA Regional Day Pass

**If you selected ORCA, how do you usually purchase your ORCA pass or put money in your e-purse?**

- My employer, school or social service agency does it for me
- My employer, school or social service agency adds a subsidized amount
- Online
- By phone
- By mail
- Auto-load
- At a retail store
- Ticket vending machine
- Metro Customer Service Office

**If you selected Regional Reduced Fare Permit, do you pay by:**

- Cash
- Monthly Pass
- E-purse

**If you selected Cash, why don't you use an ORCA card? (check all that apply)**

- I don't have a debit/credit card
- There are no convenient locations where I can get or add value to an ORCA card
- I'm concerned about losing an ORCA card
- I can't afford to buy an ORCA card
- I don't want to pay the fee to purchase an ORCA card

- I haven't gotten around to getting an ORCA card
- I don't know about ORCA
- I don't want to carry another card
- I don't ride often enough
- It's easier to pay with cash/ticket
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**We're considering two options to make buses faster, safer, and easier to use.**

We have identified two adult fare options that could simplify fares and achieve one or more of our goals related to fares.

*No changes are being considered for youth, seniors, riders with disabilities, ORCA LIFT, or Access.*

**Single adult fare of \$2.75.**

No extra charges for peak or two-zone travel. Ride any time, any distance for \$2.75.

**Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on the single adult fare of \$2.75 option:**

	strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree
This fare option is easy to understand.					
This fare option would make it easier and faster for people to get on the bus.					

<b>This fare option is equitable for riders.</b>					
<b>This fare option is affordable.</b>					
<b>I would ride the bus more often if this was the fare.</b>					
<b>I like this option.</b>					

**Off-peak adult fare of \$2.50. Peak period adult fare of \$3.00.**

No extra charge for two-zone travel. Keep the current extra charge for peak travel (between 6-9 a.m. and 3-6 p.m. weekdays) to reflect the higher cost of providing service in peak travel times.

**Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on the off-peak adult fare of \$2.50 with the peak period adult fare of \$3.00 option:**

	<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>somewhat agree</b>	<b>neutral</b>	<b>somewhat disagree</b>	<b>strongly disagree</b>
<b>This fare option is easy to understand.</b>					
<b>This fare option would make it easier and faster for people to get on the bus.</b>					
<b>This fare option is equitable for riders.</b>					

This fare option is affordable.					
I would ride the bus more often if this was the fare.					
I like this option.					

Our goal is to make transit more accessible for everyone. That's why Metro is exploring programs that could reduce any impacts of this proposed fare change on affordability and transit access. We are considering if we can include these potential solutions in our long-term plan.

**Please allocate your 10 dots to the options that would help keep transit affordable:**

- + - Expand the ORCA transfer time to more than two hours
- + - Provide one free youth fare with the purchase of one adult fare to make riding the bus more affordable for families
- + - Create a student fare for anyone enrolled in a university or college
- + - Raise the income limit to qualify for ORCA LIFT
- + - Expand outreach about ORCA LIFT so everyone who is eligible will know they can get a reduced fare

**What other ideas do you have for ways to make ORCA and transit more accessible and affordable?**

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### Demographic questions (optional)

This information will be used for analysis only, including to make sure we are hearing from a representative cross-section of our community.

**What is the zip code?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you currently... (check all that apply)**

- Employed or self-employed full-time
- Employed or self-employed part-time
- A middle school student
- A high school student
- A college or university student
- A homemaker
- Retired
- Currently not employed

**Do you...**

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
<b>Have a valid driver's license?</b>			
<b>Have access to a vehicle for personal use?</b>			
<b>Have children under 18 living at home?</b>			

**What is your age?**

- 15 or younger
- 16-17
- 18-19
- 20-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or older
- I'd rather not say

**Please choose one or more races you consider yourself to be:**

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Multi-race

- Hispanic (Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, or Latino)
- Rather not say
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the primary language you speak at home?**

- English
- Amharic
- Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.)
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Ukranian
- Vietnamese
- I'd rather not say
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**If you have a disability that affects your mobility, please indicate which kind (check all that apply)**

- Mobility
- Vision
- Hearing
- Cognitive
- None
- Other

**Including yourself, how many people live in your household?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8+
- I'd rather not say

[ Depending on household size, respondents were asked whether their annual household income was above or below a certain amount. If above, they were asked what their household income range was using the following ranges ]

**What is the correct range for your annual household income?**

- \$15,001 to \$23,760
- \$23,761 to \$32,040
- \$32,041 to \$40,320
- \$40,321 to \$48,600
- \$48,601 to \$56,880
- \$56,881 to \$65,160
- \$65,191 to \$73,464
- \$73,465 to \$81,870
- \$81,871 to \$100,000
- \$100,001 to \$150,000
- \$150,001 or more
- I don't know
- I'd rather not say

## Process and staying engaged

**How did you hear about this questionnaire? (check all that apply)**

- News media
- Metro Matters blog
- Metro email or text alert
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Friend or family member
- My employer
- My elected official or city
- An organization I'm involved with
- Other

**Do you feel the notice to learn more and participate was clear and welcoming?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you feel you were notified in time to provide meaningful feedback?**

- Yes

- No
- Not sure

**Did you participate in Metro’s first questionnaire seeking input on ways to simplify fares?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**Regardless of how you feel about the adult fare change options, do you see how public input shaped these choices?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**Please share any additional feedback you have about our outreach.**

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To stay informed about this project visit Metro’s website or provide your email here

Your email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you**

Please select Next> to ensure that your response is submitted

**Employer questionnaire**

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## Metro Fare Simplification - ORCA Employers

## Welcome

**Metro's current adult fare structure is complex.** It includes extra charges for travel during weekday peak commute hours (6 – 9 am and 3 -6 pm) and for trips that cross a zone boundary during those peak hours. This can confuse riders, slow down boarding, and lead to fare disputes that jeopardize driver safety. Our fare structure is also different from those of other transit agencies that use the ORCA fare card system.

For these reasons, **Metro is exploring options to simplify our fare structure** and make it consistent with other agencies. While this process may lead to fare changes, it is also possible that Metro may keep its current Metro fare structure. **Our goal is to make transit more accessible for everyone.**

Earlier this month, Metro solicited feedback from customers about how we can meet these goals. About 4,500 people took our first survey. We learned that customers do find Metro's fare structure complicated and support simplifying fares. One-third of all respondents want fares that are easier to use and understand. Bus drivers told us simpler fares would speed up boarding and travel time and help keep drivers and passengers safe by reducing fare disputes. We also heard that we should consider the increasing number of bus riders with low income living outside the Seattle zone boundary, where housing is more affordable.

We used this feedback to develop two new fare options. We tried to balance several goals: simplify our fare structure, increase ridership, improve safety, decrease travel time, reflect the cost of service, and reduce barriers to using transit for vulnerable populations.

**Now we're asking for public feedback on the two adult fare options:**

- A single adult fare of \$2.75, good any time for any distance. A \$99 monthly pass would be valid for all travel on Metro.
- A peak-period adult fare of \$3.00 and an off-peak adult fare of \$2.50 with no extra charge for two-zone travel. A \$108 pass would be valid for travel on Metro during peak hours, and a \$90 pass would be valid for off-peak travel.

*No fare changes for youth, senior, disabled, ORCA LIFT, or Access are being considered.*

Either option could affect the cost and decisions you make as an employer to provide the most cost-effective transit benefit to your employees. We want to understand how these options might affect you. Your perspective is important as we determine what fare simplification options to recommend to the King County Executive this summer.

**We invite you to complete this questionnaire by May 12.**

If you have questions about this process or the options, please contact DeAnna Martin, community relations planner, at 206-477-3835 or [deanna.martin@kingcounty.gov](mailto:deanna.martin@kingcounty.gov).

Metro Fare Simplification - ORCA Employers

Tell us about your organization

1. How many employees does your organization provide a transportation benefit to?

- 0 - 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 100 or more

2. What type of ORCA employer account do you have?

- Choice
- Passport
- I don't know

Metro Fare Simplification - ORCA Employers

Your feedback on the options we're considering

3. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on the single adult fare of \$2.75 (\$99 monthly pass) option:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
This option will make it easier to manage our transportation benefit account with Metro.	<input type="radio"/>				
I am concerned this option will increase our costs.	<input type="radio"/>				
This option provides more benefit to our employees.	<input type="radio"/>				
This option will increase our participation in providing transportation benefits to employees.	<input type="radio"/>				

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on the single adult fare of \$2.50 (\$99 monthly pass) with the peak period adult fare of \$3.00 (\$108 monthly pass) option:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
This option will make it easier to manage our transportation benefit account with Metro.	<input type="radio"/>				
I am concerned this option will increase our costs.	<input type="radio"/>				
This option provides more benefit to our employees.	<input type="radio"/>				
This option will increase our participation in providing transportation benefits to employees.	<input type="radio"/>				

5. If you could do one thing to improve your experience as an ORCA employer account, what would you do?

Thank you for providing us with your feedback. Metro will use feedback from customers and employers to make a recommendation for fare simplification to the King County Executive early this summer.

If you wish to be kept informed about the next steps in this process, please check [Metro's project website](#).

## **Exhibit D – Community-based Organization Outreach**

### **Contracted Community-Based Organization Outreach Guide**

#### Overview

As part of the development of Metro’s two-year fare work program, Metro is conducting an intense multi-phase public engagement process to shape a near-term ordinance that will look at eliminating the zone and peak surcharges, as well as a longer-term set of pilot projects and programs that will make fares easier to understand and pay, improve transferring between different agency’s services, speed boarding of buses, increase affordability of transit, and improve safety for bus operators.

Public engagement will involve online questionnaires at two points on the planning process, as well as public open houses when there are fare change options for the public to consider and weigh in on. It’s also important that this work be informed by harder to reach populations consistent with King County’s Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan.

To this end, Metro is contracting with community-based organizations (CBO’s) to engage in a qualitative way with populations unlikely to otherwise engage in Metro’s public process. This guide includes a set of questions and topics we’d like to learn more about to inform our work plan.

#### Metro’s role

- Metro staff are available to serve as a resource to conversations with these client populations
- Provide compensation for the staff coordination and administration of outreach activities and reimbursement for direct expenses associates with outreach activities, such as interpretation, food, supplies, or printing of materials

#### Community-based organization’s role

- Determine the best methods for hearing from affected populations
- Facilitate input gathering to collect feedback on the questions and topics provided
- Document and share their process and results with Metro
- Provide an invoice to Metro at the end of the outreach period for compensation

### Timeline

- **April** – finalize agreements and feedback scope with participating CBO's
- **May through June** – CBO's conduct engagement activities
- **June** – CBO's submit reports summarizing feedback, invoice for payment

### Deliverable

Summary report documenting activities, numbers reached, any demographic information of participants, and feedback received – due by May xxx

### Questions

#### Transit use

1. Do you currently take transit?

If yes, which forms of transit do you take?

- King County Metro Transit Buses
  - Sound Transit link light rail (or other services)
  - King County Water Taxi
  - Metro Access paratransit
  - WA State Ferries
  - Transit service in other counties (Pierce Transit, Community Transit, Kitsap Transit)
2. How often?
3. Do you drive a car? If yes, why do you drive instead of taking transit?
4. What could King County Metro do to make taking transit a better option for you?

#### Current fare payment practices

5. How do you pay your fare?

5a. If paying fare with cash, do you have an ORCA card? Yes, No, Don't know

5b. If paying fare with cash, why?

- Don't ride often enough to purchase a pass
- Easier to pay with cash/ticket

- Don't have a debit/credit card
- Don't want to use a debit/credit card for payment
- No convenient locations where I can get or add value to an ORCA card
- Concerned about losing an ORCA card
- Don't want to pay the fee to purchase an ORCA card
- Can't afford the fee to purchase an ORCA card
- Haven't gotten around to getting an ORCA card
- Don't know what an ORCA card is
- Don't know how to get an ORCA card
- Don't know how to load value to an ORCA card
- Don't know how to use an ORCA card
- Don't know that there is an e-purse on the card

5c. In the future, Metro might move away from cash-fare payment. Could this work for you if you...?

- Could get an ORCA card right now?
- Could get an ORCA card and not pay \$5/\$3 fee?
- Had ORCA information translated into the language of your choice
- Could add value using an app on your phone
- Could pay your fare using your phone
- Didn't have to use a card at all
- Could replace the card more easily
- Could be guaranteed that you wouldn't lose any value if you lose your card
- Could keep your travel history anonymous
- Had a lower fare
- Had more convenient bus service
- If your fare could be subsidized
- Could purchase an annual **or** 3 month pass

5d. If you use an ORCA card, how do you refill or top-up your card?

#### Barriers to Fare Payment & Reduce Fare Options

6. Do you face any barriers paying your fare?
7. What type of fare do you qualify for?

Today's options:

- Adult
- Youth (Ages 6-18)
- Reduced fare senior (Ages 65+)
- Reduced fare disabled (disability verified by a doctor)
- Low income (200% of federal poverty level or below)

Talking points:

Did you know that transit agencies are required to offer discounts for seniors and people?

*If not, tell them:*

Metro offers a reduced fare of \$1.00 for people who are ages 65 and older or people who have a disability.

- Are you 65 or older?
- Do you think you would qualify for a discount due to a disability? – do you carry a red/white/blue Medicare card?

Metro is one of the few transit agencies in the country that offers a discounted fare (\$1.50) for people with low or no income. Do you think you would qualify?

*If they don't know:*

Are you getting basic food or Apple Health benefits?

(If qualified for reduced fare senior, reduced fare disabled, youth, or low/no income)

Awareness of and participation in existing fare discounts/programs

*RRFP, ORCA LIFT, youth, Human service ticket program, taxi scrip program*

8. Were you aware of these fare discounts or programs before today?

- **If eligible and aware and not participating**, why not?
- **If eligible and participating**, what's working and what are the barriers (for RRFP and youth we would like to know barriers to using the ORCA card for fare payment?)
  - How can we help people become aware and access these discounts and programs?

(if regular Adult fare payer) Fare change preference

*If conducting this questionnaire orally, please switch up the order in which you describe each option to avoid order bias.*

9. Metro is considering two options for adult fare changes:

**Single fare \$2.75** (No zone or peak surcharge; travel any time, any distance for \$2.75)

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

(answer choices: strongly agree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree)

- This fare option is easy to understand.
- This fare option would make it easier and faster for people to get on the bus.
- This fare option is equitable for riders.
- This fare option is affordable.
- I will ride the bus more because of this fare option.
- I like this option.

**Off peak fare of \$2.50. Peak period fare of \$3.00.** (No zone surcharge. Keep peak surcharge (same as today) between 6-9 a.m. and 3-6 p.m. to reflect the higher cost of providing service in peak travel times.)

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

(answer choices: strongly agree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree)

- This fare option is easy to understand.
- This fare option would make it easier and faster for people to get on the bus.
- This fare option is equitable for riders.
- This fare option is affordable.
- I will ride the bus more because of this fare option.
- I like this option.

*If they answer “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” to the affordability question or the ridership question, ask:*

Metro's goal is to make transit more accessible for everyone. That's why they are exploring the possibility of implementing programs that could mitigate this proposed fare change's impacts on affordability and transit access. We could explore the viability of the following ideas and potentially incorporate that into our longer-term work plan.

10. Of the following options, which two do you think would work the best for you:

- Expand the transfer window to more than two hours
- Provide one free youth fare with the purchase of one adult fare to make ridership more affordable for families
- Create a student fare for anyone enrolled in universities or colleges
- Increase the income threshold to qualify for ORCA LIFT
- Expand outreach about ORCA LIFT to ensure everyone who qualifies will understand they could use the program

11. What else do you think Metro should consider to increase access and affordability?

Comfort with technology

12. Do you have a Smart Phone – yes, no, don't know

13. Do you use your phone to get information about transit? If yes, how (Google maps, OneBusAway etc.)?

14. How comfortable are you with using technology to pay your fare? – scale (1-10)

Demographic information

15. Age

16. Race/ethnicity

17. Primary language spoken at home

18. Annual household income

*If people are eligible for certain discounts, but don't know about them. Please make sure they receive information about them and how to get them.*

Materials available to handout

- Regional Reduced Fare Permit application

- ORCA LIFT brochure, enrollment locations
- ORCA brochure
- Current fares cheat sheet

## **World Relief Summary Report**

### Who We Questioned

We questioned 31 people, covering a variety of languages including: Arabic, Turkish, Pashto, Dari, Russian, Ukrainian, Twi, Urdu, and English. The median age of those we questionnaired was 36, with the youngest being 23 and the oldest 55. A majority of the participants reported being unemployed with no income. The highest annual income recorded was \$2,000. 90% of these participants own a smartphone; of these individuals, 96% use their devices to get informed about public transit. A vast majority use Google Maps and much smaller percentage use OneBusAway. On a scale of 1 to 10 the median comfort level in using their smart phones to pay for transit was a 8.35.

### Results

Of the 31 individuals questioned, every one of them utilizes the transit system. Most take the bus almost always or sometimes and do not drive. Those who reported driving instead of taking transit raised concern about the timeliness of the bus system, the safety of the buses, and lack of shelter at bus stops when it is raining. Thirteen individuals said they use an Orca card, sixteen reported using bus tickets given to them by World Relief, and two use cash to pay their bus fare.

Those who do not use an Orca card said they did not know how to get one, found it more convenient to pay with cash/tickets, or do not want to pay the fee to obtain an Orca card. When asked what would make moving away from cash payments work for them, individuals reported that getting an Orca card now, paying using their phones, or avoiding the initial fee would make an Orca card more accessible.

Individuals who do use and Orca card mostly refill it at a bus station.

A majority of the participants did not know about the senior and disabled discounts, but zero of them qualified. However, 60% did know about the low income discounts and 76.67% believed they qualified though 65% reported not participating in these discounts because they do not know how to access them. We asked what would make these discounts more accessible to participants and they voiced that more advertisements, online availability (such as ads, orientations, and Facebook updates), as well as email notifications would be a good way to educate the majority of transit users. They stressed that email is better than a home address because they often move around and change home address, but their emails are constant.

90% of those questioned said they pay the regular fare. When asked about the \$2.75 no zone or peak surcharge fare, 44.44% strongly agreed that it was easy to understand, 25.93% somewhat agreed, and 11.11% strongly disagreed. A majority of participants agreed that it would make the bus more affordable and time efficient while making them more likely to ride the bus. 34.62% reported strongly liking this option, while 7.69% strongly disliked this fare. When questioned about the second fare option, 29.63% strongly agreed that it was easy to understand, 22.22% somewhat agreed, 7.41% somewhat disagreed, and 11.11% strongly disagreed. 33.33% reported strongly liking this fare option and 14.81% strongly disliked this option.

In response to being asked how else Metro can make transit more accessible, expanding the transfer window and creating a student fare were the most popular responses.

At the end of the questionnaire we asked for any other responses to this issue or concerns about the transit system. We got a variety of responses including:

“The change time during the weekend is one hour, it should be less.”

“I am concerned about the safety of my wife and children when we ride the bus. Sometimes there are drunk and violent people.”

“I wish the bus drivers were more informative on discounts.”

“They should use Facebook to inform us about different programs.”

“We need a bus stop closer to Buena Casa Apartments in Kent. We have to walk a long ways to take the bus and there is no shelter.”

“I do not like waiting for buses when it is raining because there is no covering at the bus stop.”

## Hopelink Outreach Summary

### Overview

King County Metro sought feedback to shape a near-term ordinance that would look at eliminating the zone and peak surcharges, as well as a longer-term set of pilot projects and programs that would make fares easier to understand and pay, improve transferring between different agency's services, speed boarding of buses, increase affordability of transit, and improve safety for bus operators.

King County Metro requested a partnership with Hopelink to administer a short questionnaire and garner feedback from diverse community groups and organizations, taking advantage of Hopelink's network of community organization partners in east and north King County.

### Outreach Methodology

Due to the limited timeframe for conducting outreach, the Hopelink Mobility team integrated questionnaire administration into existing outreach efforts as well as easily coordinated outreach sites, including all five Hopelink Centers. The outreach locations and dates are as follows:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Type</b>
Rainier Valley Community Center	04.19.17	Seattle	LGBTQ Senior Resource Fair
Auburn Library	04.29.17	Auburn	KCLS Assistive Technology Fair
Hopelink Kirkland	05.01.17	Kirkland	Food Bank/Social Services
Hopelink Redmond	05.02.17	Redmond	Food Bank/Social Services
Hopelink Shoreline	05.03.17 05.16.17	Shoreline	Food Bank/Social Services
Hopelink Sno-Valley	05.04.17	Carnation	Food Bank/Social Services
Issaquah City Hall	05.05.17	Issaquah	<i>Metro with Dave</i> Tour

Hopelink Bellevue	05.10.17	Bellevue	Food Bank/Social Services
	05.16.17		
Miller Community Center	05.10.17	Seattle	LGBTQ Senior Resource Fair
Sno-Valley Senior Center	05.12.17	Carnation	Senior Center

From these locations, we received 107 questionnaire responses as well as garnered feedback from relevant stakeholders throughout the outreach process.

### Questionnaire Instrument

The Outreach team administering the questionnaire used the same instrument provided in the King County Metro “Contracted Community-Based Organization Outreach Guide” to ensure consistency with the other community-based organizations conducting outreach. There were several limitations to the questionnaire design which resulted in confusion and disinterest from respondents. We have included lessons learned on the questionnaire instrument throughout this summary in order to strengthen response rate and accuracy in future Metro outreach efforts.

### Analysis of Questionnaire Results:

#### *Key Takeaways*

- **Awareness gap:** There is a significant awareness gap on the types of fares offered and eligibility criteria.
- **Redeeming eligible fares:** Many expressed disinterest in obtaining an ORCA LIFT or RRFP card given the burden of going in person to King Street Center. Greater promotion of ORCA To-Go and the services available will be key in bridging this gap.
- **Outreach to limited English proficient populations:** due to the short timeframe, we decided not to provide interpreters at our outreach events. There were severe language barriers when explaining options to LEP populations. To bridge awareness gaps, promotional materials should be translated in culturally-appropriate languages and interpreters should be on-site at outreach events. There is also an opportunity to look at word choice and tailoring marketing based on cultural differences. There were several individuals who did not understand a word or the word did not translate effectively in their native language. In one

example during outreach in Sno-Valley, individuals were having trouble understanding the term "public transit" but understood the term "bus" instead.

- **High use of cash:** Convenience was a large factor for why many respondents choose cash instead of ORCA card, whether that is due to infrequency of use or barriers to registering.
- **Uncertainty** is a noteworthy factor when selecting fare payment methodology. One stakeholder in Snoqualmie Valley acknowledged the older adults' uncertainty in the remaining balance on an ORCA card. Using cash takes away uncertainty so they always know to bring enough to ride the bus.
- **Adding funds to an ORCA card** was a barrier for several respondents who live day-by-day and do not have the funds to load prior to using the Metro system.
- **Peak versus Non-Peak:** One Hopelink center manager strongly preferred the single fare option (\$2.75). They stated it would be easier to distribute human services bus tickets since there would be a level of certainty that the payment matches the cost.

#### Breakdown of Questionnaire Results

- **Use of public transit:** 77 people currently take public transit compared to 30 that do not. Bellevue Hopelink had the most people (23 out of 24 individuals) currently using public transit. The Redmond and Carnation/Sno-Valley Hopelink Centers had the least amount of people currently using public transit.
- **Driving a car:** Individuals were more likely to drive a vehicle in Redmond (15 drove vs. 6 individuals who do not drive) and Sno-Valley (8 drivers vs. 2 non-drivers). At all outreach centers, there was this underlying theme that you needed a car to get around the East and North areas of King County. This could be more a re-occurring theme because we were tabling at food banks, where it may be hard for individuals to carry all their items on the bus.

Consistent themes people gave regarding why they drove instead of taking public transit:

- "Time constraints and convenience"
- "Sometimes driving is easier than taking 3 buses and 3 hours for more than 1 doctor appt."

- Many people referenced needing a car for the job or work duties. Many people also mentioned the challenge of taking kids on the bus and how it wasn't really feasible to get to the bus stop, get on the bus, and travel with children on King County Metro buses.
- Other individuals stated that locations were not accessible or buses were not in their neighborhoods. Specifically in Sno-Valley, many people stated there were simply no routes to choose from.
- **What could KC Metro do to make transit a better option for you?** Several themes surfaced regarding what KC Metro could do to make transit a better option for individuals in North and East King County. Frequency of bus routes, location of the routes, and the need for more rural routes were mentioned regularly. There were also several suggestions around lower fares and making transit more affordable.
- **How do you pay your fare?** Our questionnaire results seem to match KC Metro's own results, showing that 1/3 of questionnaire respondents use or prefer cash as their fare payment.
- **Why pay with cash?** Most people who said they paid with cash say they use cash because it is "convenient" and "easier". Unfortunately, people did not elaborate as to why it is easier or convenient. Some people alluded to the fact that it is an extra step to load an ORCA card if you already have the cash. A few people stated that they used cash because "extra trips outside of budget" and "no choice". This may suggest that individuals do not have enough money to put on an ORCA card and are simply getting and using cash whenever they have it.

One person stated that, "there is no advantage to the card, no price break. Just inconvenience". Others said they don't ride regularly enough to make it worthwhile to get an ORCA card. Several respondents did not realize they qualified for a cheaper ORCA card (ORCA LIFT or RRFP). Once they were aware of this, they seemed more likely to look at obtaining an ORCA card.

- **What would encourage you to use payment methods other than cash?** Most people said that they would be encouraged to use a different payment method other than cash if it was more convenient and/or easier for them. Many people said they would use a different payment method if they were offered a discount or if the price was cheaper. A few people seemed confused about the question and were unsure what other options KC Metro meant. The question was worded ambiguously and was a bit vague for people to grasp. Perhaps if other options were listed out, people would have been able to give more specific answers.

- **If you use an ORCA card, how do you refill or top-off your card?** There were many answers ranging from online to light rail stations to grocery stores. There were a few people that referenced the Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP) and how it was difficult to go downtown for older adults. Several people also expressed frustration with various grocery store machines being down or not working; making it more difficult for them to load their ORCA card.
- **Do you face any barriers paying your fare?** This question was extremely confusing for people. Many individuals did not answer this question either because they were unsure what “barrier” meant or because of a language barrier. Those that did answer often put “yes” or “no”, but did not elaborate.

Of the individuals that answered “no” to this question, their answers did not correlate with their other answers. For example, there were several individuals who stated that they could not afford to pay for their fare or desired a cheaper bus ticket, but when it came to the barrier question, they stated they did not have any barriers.

Of the individuals who listed barriers to paying their fare, affordability was at the top of the list. People stated “unemployment”, “no income”, “lack of \$”, and “no job at time”. Several other people acknowledged that they did NOT have a barrier because their school, work, or human service organization subsidized their bus pass.

- **What type of fare do you qualify for?** Again, the wording of this question caused confusion. Many individuals marked more than one option, but had questions regarding what they qualify for versus what is the best option for them. Several people marked options that they were not eligible for. Other people, based on their answers, could have been eligible for a cheaper fare and were not aware of it. One individual (self identified as 75 years of age) marked that he was not eligible for a RRFP (65+) because he was not 65. It looks like he was confused by how the options were laid out for him.

Several Hopelink locations at specific food bank times have been identified as outreach locations for ORCA To-Go and ORCA LIFT. Many people did not seem to know what options they qualified for and what the benefits of these options were. There were also language barriers at each Hopelink location. It would be beneficial to have an interpreter with the identified language during food bank hours to make sure individuals fully understand the options that are available to them.

- **How comfortable are you using technology to pay your fare?** People were confused by this question because they were unsure of what type of technology was available. It would have been helpful and perhaps produced more detailed answers to offer some suggestions people could choose from. Several people even seemed to think that the technology would be paying the fare and they would not have to.

In some instances, respondents had questions about the 1-10 scale. They understood what 1 and 10 meant, but the in-between numbers were more ambiguous.

- **Other observations:**
  - Many individuals did not speak English or were limited English proficiency (LEP). This made it extremely difficult to administer the questionnaire and to obtain useful results. This was also apparent when going through and analyzing the questionnaire results. There were many people who exhibited a language barrier, but then marked “English” on their primary language question. The language barrier also showcased a gap in an individual’s understanding of their options, particularly related to what ORCA card they were eligible for and how it worked.
  - Several individuals did have family members with them that were attempting to translate the questionnaire, but certain language and ideas just did not translate effectively. For future outreach efforts, it is imperative to get materials and questionnaires translated in the language needed for that location.
  - There were also many cultural barriers related to giving personal information. Several individuals did not want to divulge any information (whether personal or not) because of immigration and/or cultural concerns. This also related to their views on obtaining and using an ORCA card. Many expressed concern that they would be tracked and people would know where they were going.
  - Some outreach team members ended up giving the questionnaire verbally to several people because the questions were hard for them to understand as written. Perhaps less complex questions or questions that pinpoint what information is most important to KC Metro. For example, the question of why people opted to use cash instead of an ORCA card or another method did not really get at the heart of why. People simply put “easier” or “more convenient”, but we still don’t know why it is easier or more

convenient to use cash. I talked with a few people who did not seem to understand the benefits of an ORCA card. Once I explained to them how it could be easier, they seemed more open to the idea.

**White Center Community Development Association Outreach Summary**



# **White Center Community Development Association**

## **2017 Metro Fares Survey Report**

White Center Community Development Association  
605 SW 108th St, Seattle, WA 981  
[www.wccda.org](http://www.wccda.org)  
206-694-1082

## Summary

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This report presents key findings from the 2017 White Center Community Metro Fares Survey administered by the White Center Community Development Association. The survey asked about transit habits, technology usage, and priorities the topic of fares. A total of 172 adults and youth completed the survey in person in throughout the months of April and May 2017.

## Methods

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The 2016 Metro Fares Survey was conducted from Saturday April 29th through May 26, 2016. The survey was administered in person for resident who live or work in White Center. Staff from the White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA) and its partner organizations recruited respondents from diverse backgrounds and provided language interpretation when necessary. Outreach strategies were tailored to capture a survey sample that approximates the demographics of the neighborhood. We did outreach at 13 different programs and events. WCCDA program participants were also asked to complete the survey.

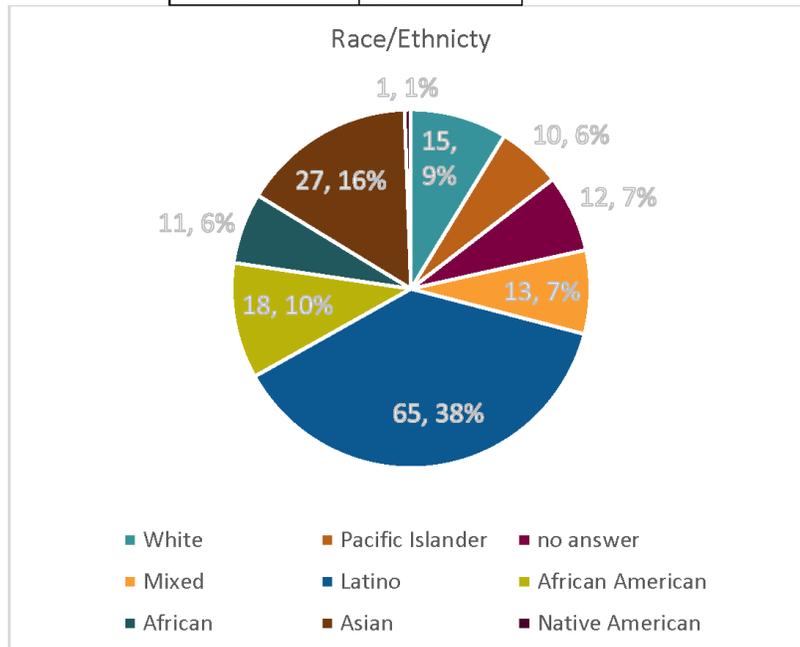
Month	Day	Day of the Week	Location	Languages
April	29	Saturday	White Center Cambodian New Year's Festival	English, Khmer
May	2	Tuesday	CDA Staff Meeting	English
May	3	Wednesday	WCH Coffee Hour  WC Library Tabling  Evergreen High School	>English, Spanish, Vietnamese, & Somali  >English, Spanish  >English, Spanish
May	6	Saturday	Renter Canvassing	English, Vietnamese
May	8	Monday	Cascade Middle School Lunch Hours	English

<b>May</b>	10	Wednesday	Greenbridge Tabling Before & After Admin Class	
<b>May</b>	11	Thursday	Evergreen Health Fair Tabling	English, Spanish
<b>May</b>	12	Friday	Seola Gardens Play and Learn 1 Seola Gardens Play and Learn 2	Spanish Somali
<b>May</b>	16	Tuesday	Greenbridge Job Fair	English, Somali, and Vietnamese
<b>May</b>	17	Wednesday	White Center Library Tabling FEEST/Evergreen Greenbridge May Resident Council Meeting	English, Spanish Youth Vietnamese and Khmer
<b>May</b>	18	Thursday	Mt. View Coffee Hours Seola Gardens Foodbank Distribution	English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Somali
<b>May</b>	19	Friday	Greenbridge Play and Learn Bus Stop Canvassing	Vietnamese English
<b>May</b>	22	Monday	Cascade Coffee Hour	English, Spanish, Somali English

## Respondent Demographics

A total of 172 people took the surveys: 36 adults completed the Metro Fares Survey, and 136 middle and high school students completed the Metro Fares Survey. Respondent

Race/Ethnicity	Respondent
AFRICAN	11
AFRICAN AMERICAN	18
ASIAN	27
LATINO	65
MIXED	13
NATIVE AMERICAN	1
NO ANSWER	12
PACIFIC ISLANDER	10
WHITE	15
TOTAL	172



## Key Findings

### Themes and results

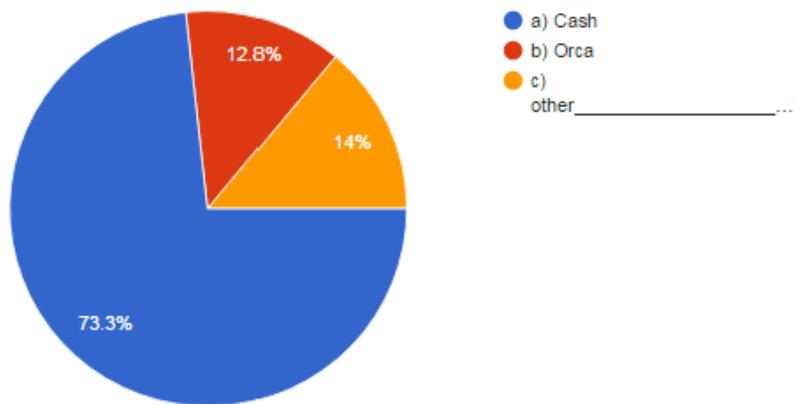
- Adults and youth were asked the open-ended question, "What Could King County do to make taking transit a better option?" Top themes from adult and youth responses are ranked by prevalence.

Rank	Theme	Selected Quotes
1	Improved Route/Frequency through WC	<p>"Provide a rapid ride, more routes with less stops"</p> <p>"Faster route to downtown"</p> <p>"More &amp; better routes from maple valley to renton and Issaquah"</p> <p>"Better routes-between SW &amp; SE Seattle to South King County"</p> <p>"be more on time # 128"</p> <p>"Express buses during peak times"</p>
2	Fares	<p>"ability to used debit card and more routes"</p> <p>"cheaper no double fares more bus stops in white center"</p> <p>"Make more Orca card reload stations available"</p> <p>"Give more students free bus tickets"</p> <p>"Give us Orca card for free"</p>
3	Sanitation and Safety	<p>"Cleaner, when I did ride the bus it was really dirty, kids scared"</p> <p>"let people know the bus is full on App or bus "</p> <p>"Make it safer, I feel like there's so much drug involving things that happened on the bus"</p> <p>"It doesn't feel safe"</p> <p>"make it more clean"</p> <p>"More/visible security around the bus area"</p>
4	Miscellaneous	<p>"Mass access bus"</p> <p>"Have more accessible bus routes"</p> <p>"More options for if ya have a large bag or something with you. for grocery shopping and such. If the bus is crowded it makes it difficult"</p> <p>"provide info in other languages"</p>

## Other results

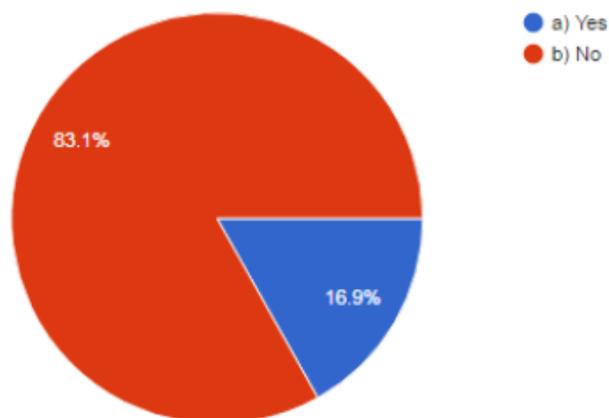
### How do you pay for your fare?

172 responses



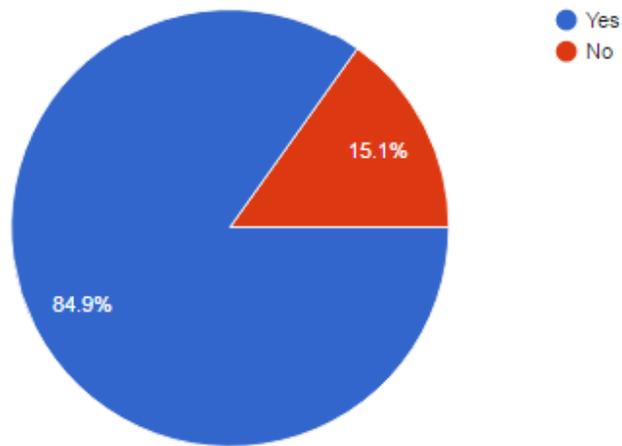
### Do you have an Orca card?

172 responses



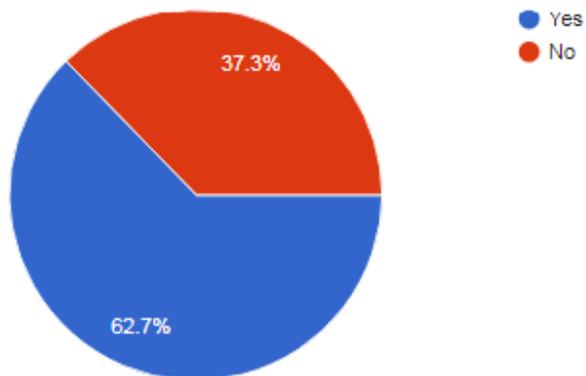
### Do you have Smart Phone

172 responses



### Do you use your phone to get information about transit?

169 responses



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