



King County

Department of Transportation

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February 15, 2013

The Honorable Larry Gossett
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Gossett:

The enclosed document is an update to the King County Metro Transit Final Report: Southeast Seattle Outreach, as required by Ordinance 17259, adopted January 30, 2012. The final report (Phase 2) was submitted to the King County Council on October 31, 2012. However, when the final report was submitted to the Council, Metro was still meeting with the Southeast Seattle Transit Working Group on key service proposals to address transportation needs expressed by the group.

In January, the Southeast Seattle Transit Working Group submitted to Metro Transit a set of recommendations regarding mobility in southeast Seattle. Those recommendations have been added to the final report in this update (pages 3-5).

The recommendations in the final report, along with the working group's recommendations, are key to helping facilitate transit and transportation services in southeast Seattle and other communities throughout King County.

If you have any questions, please contact Betty Gulledge-Bennett, Communications Manager at 206-263-3436.

Sincerely,

Harold S. Taniguchi, Director
Department of Transportation

Enclosure

The Honorable Larry Gossett

February 15, 2013

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We'll Get You There

King County Metro Transit
Final Report: Southeast Seattle Outreach
*Updated To Reflect Southeast Seattle Transit Working Group
Recommendations*

January 2013



We'll Get You There

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Metro Transit Division**

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King County Metro Transit

Final Report: Southeast Seattle Outreach

Background

This is the final report responding to directives in Ordinance 17259, adopted by the Metropolitan King County Council on January 30, 2012.

This ordinance instructed Metro Transit to conduct a southeast Seattle outreach program, in consultation with community groups and the public, that will improve passenger facilities and transfer connections between Metro routes as well as between Metro services and Sound Transit's Link light rail; provide opportunities for increased access to One Regional Card for All (ORCA) fare media; and ensure maximum awareness and use of alternative transit services for people with disabilities, seniors, youth and other southeast Seattle residents who have limited transportation access to jobs, education, health care, nutrition and other human services.

The County Council directed Metro to conduct this outreach in two phases:

Phase 1 shall include but not be limited to engaging in a public outreach program, working with the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to gather community input on additional bus stop locations and pedestrian crossings as well as bus stop improvements, providing information about alternative transit service; implementing strategies and actions to increase access to ORCA fare media; and transmitting a report to the County Council by June 8, 2012 summarizing these activities and projected Phase 2 activities.

Phase 2 shall include completing physical improvements to the relocated bus zone on Rainier Ave S at Stevens Plaza; completing other bus zone improvements identified in Phase 1 for implementation in Phase 2; continuing outreach about transit mobility options and ORCA; convening additional community outreach activities identified in Phase 1; and transmitting a report to the County Council by October 31, 2012 summarizing all Phase 2 activities and identifying future southeast Seattle activities.

The ordinance also directed Metro to engage communities and stakeholders associated with Routes 8, 42, and other routes in discussions about potential service changes. The discussions were to include representatives of the County Council, City of Seattle and Sound Transit.

The ordinance required the transmittal by August 1, 2012 of a report that demonstrates community engagement regarding the strategic plan and related policy, service and ridership changes; the County's understanding of the community's public transportation needs; potential changes in service hours, ridership and productivity of all options; how the potential alternatives measure against the County's fair and just guiding principles and the factors of geographic value and social equity in the Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2011-2021; and that demonstrate that there is no net change in total service hours for any subsequent changes proposed in the engagement process.

Metro requested, and the County Council agreed, that the report due August 1 and the report due October 31 be combined; this is the combined report.

Metro's Phase 2 outreach emphasized listening to community members and representative community organizations. Our outreach was designed to hear from populations considered "transit-dependent," i.e. people who speak limited or no English, people with disabilities, seniors, and other southeast Seattle residents who have limited transportation options to reach jobs, education, health care, nutrition and other human services. While these populations have unique needs, many of the insights gained through our outreach will benefit all riders in southeast Seattle and throughout King County.

Phase 2 Report Overview

Since submitting our first report to the County Council in June 2012, Metro has been working with other agencies and community-based organizations to develop a response to what we heard from transit-dependent riders in southeast Seattle. This report documents changes Metro and other agencies have made, are making, and recommend making in the future to fulfill the Council's directive.

Following the community conversations Metro facilitated in April and May, Metro has been involved in several activities that have resulted in the response detailed in this report. These activities are described in the section "Phase 2 Engagement Activities," below.

The section of this report called "What We Can Do, Should Do" describes things we are doing and can do in the short-term, as well as things we would like to do in the long-term. Our recommendations require varying levels of resources and support, and may or may not be feasible given present financial or policy constraints. However, we believe it is important to document and respond to what we heard from the community regardless of the constraints.

We have organized our work and recommendations into the following categories:

- Service: How can we address barriers or gaps in service with the resources we have now or in the future?
- Stops: How can we structure our built environment to make connection points feel safe and comfortable and to connect people to the destinations they want?
- ORCA: How can we reduce the barriers to getting and using ORCA cards?
- Communications: How can we incorporate what we heard from people who speak limited or no English into our communications with riders?

Phase 2 Engagement Activities

Since Metro completed community conversations in May and April, we have initiated or staffed the following activities to develop the response detailed in this report:

Interagency workshop

The purpose of this workshop was for agency representatives to engage in a conversation about what we can do to address barriers experienced by transit-dependent populations in southeast Seattle. These include barriers to using existing service and ORCA as well as accessing information and resources. Representatives from Metro, Sound Transit, City of Seattle departments of Transportation and Neighborhoods and community-based organizations held a day-long workshop at the New Holly Gathering Hall on July 9. Participants were invited to reflect on what was heard during the community conversations conducted in Phase 1 and share their own experiences serving transit-dependent populations. See Appendix A for a list of participants and workshop notes.

Meeting of Metro's general manager with Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative

On August 22, representatives of the Rainier Beach Community Empowerment Coalition's Transit Justice Initiative met with Metro General Manager Kevin Desmond. The initiative is made up of students from various high schools in southeast Seattle who have been working on transit issues over the past year in the Rainier Beach community. They shared their agenda for improving transit in southeast Seattle and for youth and families. The following are some key themes and outcomes:

- Easier access to youth ORCA cards: The youth promoted the idea of schools selling youth ORCA cards. Desmond and the youth talked about the possibility of conducting a demonstration project, perhaps at Rainier Beach or Garfield high school.
- School district boundary for ORCA card distribution: The current policy is that students who live more than 2.5 miles from school qualify for an ORCA card, but those living within the 2.5-mile

boundary do not. The arbitrary boundary means that many students do not qualify for the school district-provided bus pass. The youth will be advocating to the Seattle School District for a change to the boundary.

- Stop improvements: The youth have received a grant to improve bus stop shelters in Rainier Beach. They would like to create murals for three bus stops and place recycling bins at the stops that would be maintained by local businesses.
- Wayfinding, maps at stops: The youth would like to see better signs at bus stops in Rainier Beach, including maps that show how people can use existing service to reach destinations (similar to the maps created for the In Motion programs) or wayfinding signs that help people get from S Henderson St and Rainier Ave S to Link.

Several actions were agreed upon that are reported in the “What We Can Do, Should Do” section of this report.

Ongoing staff meetings

Metro staff met many times over the past several months to identify ways to apply what we learned during the southeast Seattle outreach to projects underway. Metro has also brought together agency partners and staff responsible for work pertaining to concerns raised in the outreach to discuss how our agencies can respond. This work is also summarized in the next section.

Southeast Seattle working group

Background

As part of the Phase 1 outreach, Metro contacted Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS), among other agencies, with a set of questions to gather feedback from under-represented, transit-dependent populations living and traveling between Rainier Beach and the International District via Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. (MLK Jr Way S). ACRS decided to conduct its own survey with a sample of 330 clients. Results of that survey were included in the Phase I report.

On May 25, a letter (included in the Phase 1 report) signed by 35 individuals and community organizations was sent to the King County Executive expressing concerns about the slated elimination of Route 42 and other mobility needs in southeast Seattle, as well as how social equity is being considered in Metro’s service guidelines. A group of representatives met with the Executive and had several follow-up meetings with Metro staff. Their concerns and these meetings were documented in the Phase 1 report.

The Executive directed Metro to continue with community engagement with the 11 community organizations involved in the Phase 1 report. He also directed Metro, in conjunction with ACRS, to form a working group with the organizations that were represented at a May 29 meeting. The purpose was to continue exploring transportation needs in southeast Seattle and identify creative solutions.

Current status of Southeast Seattle Transportation Working Group

The Southeast Seattle Transportation Working Group has held three meetings. In addition to Metro and Executive Office staff members, the group comprises the following representatives from community organizations, associations and coalitions:

Active members:

Elaine Ishihara, Executive Director, Asian Pacific Islanders Coalition Against Tobacco
Hyeok Kim, Executive Director, International District Improvement Association
Celso Tolman, President, Filipino American Political Action Group of Washington, and Board Member, Filipino Community Services
Harriett Walden, Executive Director, Mothers for Police Accountability
Michael Neguse, Board Member, Horn of Africa
Shefali Ranganathan, Program Director, Transportation Choices Coalition
Diane Narasaki, Executive Director, Asian Counseling & Referral Service

Advisory members:

Estela Ortega, Executive Director, El Centro de la Raza

Kip Tokuda, former State Representative, 37th District

Jocelyn Lui, Program Manager, Asian Counseling & Referral Service

The basic concern of the Southeast Seattle Working Group is that southeast Seattle has unique transportation challenges and needs that were created as a result of the installation of Link light rail. Before Link, Route 42 was the “backbone” of the transportation network, serving an area where more than 59 different non-English languages are spoken and where there are high concentrations of low-income immigrants, refugees, elders, people with poor health indicators, and unemployed and underemployed people. The group acknowledges that Link provides fast and direct service to the International District and downtown Seattle; however, Link’s limited number of stops along with barriers to using the ORCA card mean this option does not meet the needs of many residents. Those who use fixed-route bus service experience challenges with transferring from Route 8 to other buses when traveling between Skyway and downtown Seattle. The Working Group maintains that for many what used to be a two-seat bus ride has now become a three-seat ride. The existing southeast Seattle service design is especially hard for people dependent on bus service to get to multiple places throughout the day.

Over the past several months, Metro has presented various ideas to Working Group members that include changing existing services, such as Center Park bus service and the Hyde Shuttle (operated by Senior Services); partnering with participating organizations to operate their own service through Metro’s Community Access Transportation program; applying for grant funds to provide service; and revisiting service changes made during the implementation of Link. Metro and the community discussed the funding constraints of many of the grants that might be used to implement the service options. In revisiting service changes made in 2009, it is important to note that long-term funding decisions will affect Metro’s financial future. These decisions will significantly affect whether any service change that adds costs can be made, and whether service cuts throughout the system, including southeast Seattle, must be made.

Metro has worked with the Working Group to develop proposals that seek to address these concerns. While these proposals are not endorsed by Working Group Members, they are included as Metro recommendations in the “What We Can Do, Should Do” section that follows.

The Southeast Seattle Working Group has provided the following comments and recommendations related to transit service in SE Seattle.

- As Metro implements its strategic plan and service guidelines, we urge Metro to implement the social equity principle in the strategic plan as intended by the Regional Transit Taskforce. It is important that this principle is applied to all aspects of Metro’s service decisions and investments. This group remains concerned that the implementation of this principle has fallen short.
- While Metro has referenced the abundance of transit service in the Rainier Valley, we would like to emphasize that 77% of Rainier Valley residents are people of color, 39% are low income, and tend to be reliant on transit. Further, we remain concerned about the current transit configuration, specifically connections to downtown Seattle, the International District and Skyway, for riders with limited mobility, seniors, and linguistically isolated users of the system.
- Alternative services for riders are not just daunting but difficult to use, especially for users with limited English proficiency.
- The Center Park bus is an important interim service option but the group would like to emphasize that the scope of this solution remains limited and does not fully address the needs of the larger transit-dependent population.
- We are concerned about Metro’s recommendation to restructure service based on incomplete ridership data (Recommendation #4c). As a consequence of Metro’s significant service

restructure in 2009 and decision to truncate the old bus 42, ridership data will not accurately reflect the adequacy of service in this corridor. We urge Metro to explore non-traditional approaches to assess service needs in the Rainier Valley. Any subsequent service restructures should be based on not just ridership but a complete assessment of transit needs in the Rainier Valley.

- We urge Metro, Sound Transit, the City of Seattle and King County to prioritize the addition of a Link station at Graham Street as soon as capital funds are available. Construction of this station, which was originally promised to the community, will improve transit connections in the neighborhood in the Rainier Valley.
- Safety at bus stops and transfer points continue to be an area of concern. We recognize that Metro is aware of these concerns and urge the agency to take immediate steps to ensure safety of riders at these trouble spots.
- We commend recommendations to improve language accessibility of ticket-vending machines and agency websites. However, we want to point out that many riders may lack computer literacy and access to computers and smart phones.
- We do not endorse any efforts to promote ORCA cards at pay day lending and check cashing stores. While we support Metro's efforts to make ORCA cards widely available, we are concerned about this marketing approach and the potential for financial exploitation of low income residents.

What We Can Do, Should Do

Service: How can we address barriers or gaps in service with the resources we have now or in the future?

► Issue #1: Reliable, on-time service

During community conversations, one of the biggest issues raised by riders about service was the desire to have reliable, on-time service.

Recommendation #1: Continue implementing Metro’s strategic plan and service guidelines, which provide a framework for investing in corridors to improve on-time performance and reduce overcrowding.

► Issue #2: Lack of awareness about how to use existing service.

Many riders said they know there is a lot of transit service in the valley, but people don’t really know how to use it. Riders get accustomed to certain patterns that may not be the fastest ways to get from one place to another. Riders often talked about how stops could be used to educate riders about existing service and relay important information.

Recommendation #2.a: Work with local communities to use transit stops to provide important information about service and topics of interest to riders.

Metro could create neighborhood-based “spider” maps that show culturally relevant destinations, service frequencies along major corridors, and the routes providing service. (Similar to InMotion campaign maps or the B Line’s “Little Big Map.”) Specifically, Metro is working with the Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative to demonstrate this idea by creating maps to post in Rainier Beach shelters. Based on how a demonstration goes, Metro could identify other places in the county to implement this approach. Because maps are not text-based, they are more easily understood by communities with many people who don’t speak English well. By basing the maps on feedback from the community about destinations they currently travel to and from, the information will be relevant to the community.

Recommendation #2.b: Explore opportunities to help riders make connections more easily by installing wayfinding signs.

With so much service in Rainier Valley and with Metro moving to a transfer-based system, signage that would help riders know how to make connections would make sense. In southeast Seattle, particular locations where this would be helpful are along S Henderson St between Rainier Ave S and MLK Jr Way S, and the major Mount Baker transfer point near the intersection of Rainier Ave S and MLK Jr Way S. Metro will work with the Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative, SDOT, and Sound Transit to identify specific actions to respond to this recommendation.

► Issue #3: Lack of awareness of alternative services.

During community conversations, it was very clear that there is limited awareness about existing alternatives to fixed-route bus service. When we gave explanations about alternatives, riders wanted to learn more. Riders also expressed concern about barriers to using these services. For people with limited English proficiency (LEP), services that require a phone reservation, such as taxis and the Hyde Shuttle, are daunting and often not pursued.

Recommendation #3: Create an information packet on transportation resources and make it available to community-based organizations.

A resource packet about the Hyde Shuttle, taxi scrip, getting help in native languages, volunteer driving programs, Hopelink’s travel training program for individuals and groups, the Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP) application process, Access paratransit and transportation instruction program for people with disabilities, and Metro’s multilingual video series on how to ride the bus, etc. would be easy to create and make available online and by request to community-based organizations. As a first step we will distribute this information to the organizations that helped with the southeast Seattle outreach.

► Issue #4: Connection between Skyway and International District via MLK Jr. Way S.

Working group representatives maintain that a one-seat ride between Skyway and the International District via MLK Jr. Way S is an unfulfilled need for mobility impaired and linguistically isolated riders who are traveling to services and social, religious, economic, and cultural activities along the corridor.

Recommendation #4.a: Alter the Center Park bus service so that multiple organizations can reserve it to serve clients with mobility challenges.

Metro is working to provide a bus by February 2013 that offers group trips on a fixed schedule. It would operate several times per week between Skyway and downtown Seattle via MLK Jr. Way S and through the International District. Destinations could include agency programs, meals, and shopping. This is being coordinated with a redefinition of service usage and scheduling with Center Park residents and Metro's Accessible Services program.

The bus is equipped to carry six riders in wheelchairs and 12 ambulatory riders. Metro is exploring options that might increase the capacity of the bus to safely carry more than 12 ambulatory riders.

Recommendation #4.b: Explore the potential of a community organization partnership to apply for a grant from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to fund community-based service.

Metro is exploring with community organizations an option to apply for WSDOT funds to support a customized community-based transportation solution for the Skyway-MLK Jr. Way S-International District corridor. The WSDOT funds are available only to nonprofits for serving people with special transportation needs, such as seniors, people with disabilities, and those who have low incomes.

No partner was available to apply for the most recent due date of Sept. 28, 2012. The grant operates on a two-year cycle. The application due date for the next grant cycle is expected to be in September 2014. Options for the next grant cycle could include:

- **Senior Services applying to operate the service.** The new service would complement Senior Services' existing Hyde Shuttle, which only serves seniors and people with disabilities. Funds could also be used to assist with reservations for linguistically isolated populations and to coordinate reservations with community agencies for transportation to activities such as meal programs, ESL classes, and other group events.
- **Metro working with one or more community organizations to apply for grant funds.** Metro may be able to provide vehicles and maintenance. Community organizations would provide drivers and insurance and control routing, scheduling, and ridership.

Recommendation #4.c: Explore ideas for restructuring service between Skyway and downtown Seattle using data, community outreach, and surveys.

Metro will revisit the system changes made in southeast Seattle when Link service was launched, using three years of ridership data, surveys, and public outreach. Metro will involve Sound Transit to help address issues concerning Link station access, ORCA and transfers.

Following outreach and research, Metro commits to developing potential bus route restructures. This will include exploring the idea of adjusting some routes to make resources available to provide service from Skyway to downtown Seattle. Metro will use onboard rider surveys and agency-based participant surveys to complement typical outreach to get public input on potential service concepts. The commitment to do this and the outcome of this process will be highly dependent on the agency's financial situation in the fall of 2014. Any service concept—whether a zero-cost restructure or one that would require additional funding—would be subject to the planning, design, and performance guidelines in Metro's strategic plan, so it would have to attract at least as much ridership as current service, or more if service hours are increased.

Stops: How can we structure our built environment to make connection points feel safe and comfortable and connect people to the destinations they want?

► Issue #5: Safety features at stops.

Riders feel unsafe at certain stops and transfer points and getting to and from stops in certain parts of southeast Seattle.

Recommendation #5.a: Work with the Seattle Police Department’s Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) program to assess stops and transfer points along the MLK Jr Way S corridor.

CPTED looks at areas to identify spaces or elements that may attract crime. The goal of this assessment would be to apply CPTED design principles to identify solutions that would reduce fear and prevent crime at bus stops near Link stations. Solutions could range from simple repairs to adding lighting or redesigning shelters to improve visibility. The assessment would produce a list of actions that Metro, SDOT, and Sound Transit could take. Metro will arrange for a CPTED review.

Recommendation #5.b: Develop a “crowdsourcing” tool that allows riders, businesses and organizations to serve as “eyes on the stop, on the bus.”

Metro should explore ways to engage riders in helping monitor activities and conditions of stops. Similar to block-watch programs, this tool would allow riders to review stops, report suspicious behaviors, and identify broken or dirty facilities.

Organizations and businesses along the MLK Jr Way S corridor could participate by making sure the street is visible through their windows and by posting “stop watch” signs. QR codes at stops could make it easy for smart-phone users to report issues. (Note: a QR code is a bar code that directs the user’s browser to a website when scanned with a mobile phone with the appropriate app.)

Metro, agencies and riders could use information from this tool to identify needs and plan activities in southeast Seattle such as organizing walk- or bike-pools for riders to go to and from stops with others. A pilot program could be conducted in southeast Seattle and potentially expanded to other parts of the county.

Recommendation #5.c: Have transit security patrol areas of concern when available, to identify lighting or environmental improvements that should be made to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime. Provide this information to the jurisdiction responsible for pathways to transit stops.

Metro’s Transit Police will be provided phone numbers at City Light for reporting non-working street lights that serve transit shelters.

► Issue #6: Link and bus stops near Filipino Community Center and surrounding neighborhoods.

Several working group representatives and community organizations requested consideration of a Link station and bus stops to provide access to the Filipino Community Center and surrounding neighborhoods.

In July, Metro approached SDOT to ask about re-establishing a bus stop in front of the Filipino Community Center. SDOT will not permit bus stops that are not close to safe pedestrian crossings, i.e. intersections with crosswalks or signals. The Filipino Community Center is equidistant between stops at two safe crossings; a bus stop is not permitted in front of the community center at this time.

Recommendation #6: Explore the possibility of establishing a Link station at Graham Street.

Metro understands from Sound Transit and SDOT that the infrastructure is in place for a station to be built. A Graham Street station was proposed in many conversations throughout this outreach. Community organizations and neighborhood activists concur that a stop at Graham Street would go a long way to healing a community divide that resulted when Link started and Metro restructured service in southeast Seattle.

In addition, the Filipino Community Center is in the early stages of planning a transit-oriented development. A Link station at Graham Street would be an appropriate part of this development. Sound Transit should explore this possibility.

► **Issue #7: Connection points at the intersection of Rainier Ave S and MLK Jr. Way S.**

This is one of the main connection points in southeast Seattle where riders transfer between buses as well as between buses and Link. Many people commented that the stop could be made more inviting, could make transferring easier, and could feel safer. Riders want more pedestrian-friendly ways to cross the streets and make connections.

Recommendation #7: Explore opportunities to improve the design of the connection points in and around Rainier Ave S and MLK Jr. Way S, in particular how the transit center connects riders with the Link Mount Baker Station.

Metro, Sound Transit, and SDOT acknowledge that it is difficult for transit users to navigate between bus stops and the Link Mount Baker Station. Metro completed two bus stop improvement projects in September 2012 in the vicinity of Mount Baker Station and the Mount Baker Transit Center:

- Upgraded the shelter at the northbound Rainier Ave S and S Forest St bus stop (Mount Baker Transit Center) with two new solar lighting systems and a new barrel roof to provide additional security lighting.
- Installed a new southbound bus stop and solar-lit shelter on Rainier Ave S at the Stevens Street Plaza directly in front of the Link Mount Baker Station. This new bus stop opened on Sept. 29, replacing the southbound Rainier Ave S bus stop at S McClelland St, which was simultaneously closed on Sept. 29. The new site provides much better connections with Link, has much improved lighting, and has a more open design for better security. To successfully site this new bus stop and shelter, Metro worked with SDOT, Sound Transit, the planned Art Space development, and Light House for the Blind.

Metro should continue the conversation about what improvements can be made to enhance connections for riders among all the services in this area, especially as future development is planned at the intersections of MLK Jr Way S and Rainier Ave S. A first step would be for the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to make it possible for street vendors to set up commercial activity at Mount Baker Station. Riders report that this kind of activity makes an area feel safer, is more welcoming, and adds a convenience for people waiting to make connections.

► **Issue #8: Rainier Beach stop improvements.**

Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative participants have received grant funding that they wish to invest in improvements to stops in Rainier Beach.

Recommendation #8: Work with community groups to improve local bus stops.

Metro is working with Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative participants to coordinate mural additions and trash/recycling efforts at several stops in Rainier Beach. Metro staff have met with organization representatives and the grant funder to coordinate specifics. The meeting included a walking tour along Henderson between Rainier Avenue South and Renton Avenue South. The group identified issues with lighting, sidewalks, and landscaping that contribute to safety and transit access along this corridor. Metro staff put the organization in touch with City of Seattle representatives who could respond to issues identified. Metro will work with the organization to include murals painted by initiative participants in three bus stops.

This kind of partnership, which would enable the community to take responsibility for the maintenance and features of its stops, helps create a sense of community investment and ownership of their transit service. Metro should remain open to other opportunities for additional partnership efforts in communities around the county.

ORCA: How can we reduce barriers to getting and using ORCA cards?

► **Issue #9: Barriers to getting/using ORCA.**

A barrier to making connections between bus and Link is the low use of ORCA among transit-dependent populations. Even those who are using the RRFP card often do not know about nor use the full ORCA

functionality of their card. Bus riders paying cash fares perceive that Link is too expensive as they are unable to use Metro transfers or the RRFP card that would allow a rider to pay the discounted senior fare.

Distribution of ORCA cards is only one step toward increasing ORCA adoption among southeast Seattle populations. Other barriers to using ORCA include a low trust of technology and lack of understanding about how the card works and where and how to reload value onto it. One-on-one education is needed.

As of the date of this report, more than 200 \$10 ORCA cards were distributed as part of this outreach effort. The cards were provided to participants in the community conversation phase of the outreach.

Recommendation #9.a: Continue to increase the number of retail locations where people can purchase and reload ORCA cards.

In the past six months, Metro has been working with Saars Marketplace and other retailers to allow them to distribute as well as reload ORCA cards for a limited time. Early results indicate that this is successful in increasing ORCA adoption and use. This program may be continued and expanded and should include increasing public awareness about where cards are available.

Recommendation #9.b: Explore new and innovative locations for ORCA card purchasing and reloading.

Riders recommended places like community centers, neighborhood service centers, and schools. These are locations that may have the infrastructure, such as point-of-sale equipment, needed to handle inventory and purchasing, as well as staff who can validate identification for youth and RRFP cards.

An insight from the July workshop was the important role that check cashing and money lending businesses play in the lives of immigrants and refugees, who often do not have bank accounts or credit. They use these stores for daily banking needs, such as to pay bills, send money to relatives in other countries, and cash checks. These stores are uniquely suited to serving LEP populations. Exploring these types of businesses as possible ORCA retailers may help to reach some of the harder-to-reach populations who could benefit from ORCA adoption.

In the meantime, Metro is committed to expanding the locations of retail “ticket reloading units.” As a result of this outreach, Metro is exploring a potential demonstration project with the Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA) in southeast Seattle, where an ORCA ticket reloading unit could be located. ReWA might receive cards with no fare loaded that they could distribute to clients who could add value and reload their cards at ReWA. This distribution could be tied to education about ORCA. ReWA is a natural partner for this demonstration because it is the first stop for many refugees and immigrants in the United States, and a place where they learn important skills, English, and how to accomplish daily tasks. The agency has a “high-touch” approach to working with clients and could distribute cards, educate clients about how to use them, and have the equipment to reload the cards to assure full adoption of the card’s use. Since people in limited-English communities teach one another skills, the education ReWA clients would receive would spread to many. Metro hopes this demonstration can be in place early in 2013.

Recommendation #9.c: Increase use of ORCA through a targeted distribution and education effort.

Metro and Sound Transit are planning to partner with at least three community organizations to conduct a demonstration project that would distribute adult ORCA cards loaded with a time-limited Passport transit pass. These cards would allow unlimited rides for a specific time. We would work with the organizations’ staff to distribute up to 1,000 passes free to recipients with instructions on how to use the pass on buses and Link, how to transfer between buses and Link, and how to reload the passes following the demonstration period. These instructions would be provided in the appropriate language of the participants. Following the demonstration period, an analysis of the usage and reloading activity as well as distribution issues will inform a decision about replicating this approach in Rainier Valley and other areas of the county.

► Issue #10: Limited locations for purchasing ORCA and loading passes are a challenge for transit-dependent populations.

Riders told us they get ORCA products now by going to Metro’s customer service office on Second Ave S

and S Jackson St. They complained that the hours and the long distances people have to travel make access to information and fare media a challenge. People identified three major barriers:

- Since few use the Internet, purchasing ORCA products online or by mail is not easily understood or practiced.
- Those not proficient in English find an additional barrier using the phone to ask questions and purchase ORCA products.
- Low use of bank accounts and credit means many people cannot purchase and reload ORCA cards using credit or debit.

Recommendation #10.a: Increase availability of all ORCA products, especially youth and RRF card products and passes.

Metro is purchasing “mobile customer service” technology that will enable staff to travel to different locations where they can sell and give cards to customers on the spot.

Through southeast Seattle outreach, Metro has identified several community organizations and high schools that staff intend to visit on a regular basis. Some preparation will be involved to assure that riders interested in purchasing youth or RRF cards have the necessary documentation required for the purchase. The goal is to rotate this service to multiple locations throughout the county. Southeast Seattle will offer Metro valuable experience to make this work successfully around the county.

The Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative asked Metro to consider having schools sell and reload youth ORCA cards. Schools already have proof of age and the necessary infrastructure to make this work. However, given agency limitations, including the lack of an inventory control system, this idea is a recommendation for the long-term. As Metro develops the ability to work in the community with the new mobile ORCA card sales unit, Metro will work with the area high schools to bring this service to the school. This will allow students who live within the 2.5mile radius to purchase and load a student ORCA card.

Recommendation #10.b: Create an ORCA youth application.

The ORCA system has one form that people use to order ORCA cards or add value by mail. People must go online, download and print the form, and mail it along with payment. This order form has check boxes to indicate whether someone is ordering or revaluing an adult or youth card. Most members of the public are unaware of this mail-in option and find the form confusing. Metro will work with ORCA to explore the development of a brochure/order form for youth that explains how to get and use a card.

Recommendation #10.c: Create a large-print RRF application and translate RRF applications into other languages.

An RRF brochure/application is available to download from Metro’s website. The type is extremely small and difficult to read. Printed versions are not widely distributed or available. The PDF version online should be replaced by a large-print version so that when people download and print the application, it is more legible to seniors and people with vision disabilities. The brochure/application should also be translated into other languages, perhaps focusing on the county’s Tier 1 and Tier 2 languages to start. Printed versions in languages other than English should be made available to community organizations serving LEP populations.

► Issue #11: LEP populations have limited experience using web or ticket vending machines.

In general, riders who do not speak English well have very little experience using the web or ticket vending machines (TVM) to purchase or reload ORCA cards. Even though the ORCA website offers translated information in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, Korean, and Tagalog, and TVMs offer translated information in Spanish and Chinese, many riders are unaware of this.

Recommendation #11: Conduct end-user testing that includes soliciting feedback from limited-English-proficiency populations in the programming of the new TV screens and signs on machines.

Sound Transit is in the early stages of updating both the exteriors and the screen flows of its TVMs to

make the machines more intuitive and user-friendly. The planned improvements will include clearer information, in multiple languages, about ticket and pass products available at the machines, including ORCA cards. The planning and design process will include end-user testing to better ground the changes in actual rider experience. Sound Transit is also making near-term changes through temporary signage to inform riders that ORCA cards are available from TVMs.

Communications: How can we incorporate what we've heard from populations with limited or no English proficiency into our communications with riders?

► Issue #12: Communication barriers.

Some of the key lessons from this outreach are:

- LEP populations learn about most things through word of mouth—especially from their youth and case workers or staff at social service and community-based organizations
- Language barriers often prevent people from using phone-based help to reserve service or get customer service support
- There is little awareness about alternative services, such as the Hyde Shuttle, taxi scrip, and Access
- Depending on the language group, some communities feel that translated information is valuable and appreciated
- The Internet is a non-starter for communicating important information especially if the site does not support languages other than English; Internet access varies widely and many do not know how to use it
- Face-to-face communication is the preferred way to reach most LEP populations.
- Rider alerts at stops and on buses in English are often not understood by LEP populations, despite the Interpreter graphic that is placed on most Metro publications offering translation service.
- Community-based organizations play a critical role as communicators of information.

In the short term, these lessons can be applied as opportunities arise. In the long term, the lessons learned should be incorporated into Metro standard procedures to ensure that we communicate well with all riders.

Recommendation #12.a: Improve and expand distribution of the King County Mobility Coalition's community travel video series.

Metro will add new languages to the King County Mobility Coalition's community travel video series and expand the distribution of the videos to more locations.

Recommendation #12.b: Incorporate the lessons learned into communications for Metro's September changes—pay-on-entry, service changes, and start of the RapidRide C and D lines.

In preparation for this service change, we translated Metro's "How to Ride Guide" into additional languages, placed advertising in major Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese newspapers, and emailed information and materials to nearly 700 organizations that serve transit-dependent populations. Many of these organizations requested additional information to distribute. Metro staff members boarded buses with many limited-English riders to distribute information, and organized information tables at community and social service organizations countywide that serve LEP populations.

Because of the complexity of the service changes, the best way for riders to learn how to use the new system was to go online or call Metro's customer service line and speak with a customer service representative. We developed a brochure in 13 different languages (see appendix) that explains how to get help in native languages via Metro's customer service phone line. These brochures were distributed during street team outreach, on buses, and at info tables. In the future, the translated text used in this brochure can be used in many ways. It can also be shared with Sound Transit and Senior Services, which operates the Hyde Shuttle, as both use similar phone systems.

Recommendation #12.c: Better connect limited-English riders with support in their own language, especially by making it easier to use interpreter services via Metro’s customer service number.

At present, when riders call 206-553-3000 they hear a lengthy recorded message that explains how the phone system works. Only when a rider reaches a customer service agent can she or he request an interpreter, at which time the customer service representative places the called on hold while she or he gets an interpreter on the line.

Metro is updating its phone system to new technology that will be more adaptable and easily programmed by Metro staff as customer-service needs change. Staff involved in the southeast Seattle outreach will make recommendations about programming new phone system to better accommodate customers seeking interpretation. This new phone system is to be implemented in winter of 2013.

Recommendation #12.d: Create an education program that brings staff into the community to connect face-to-face with clients of community-based organizations on an ongoing basis.

Participants in every community conversation Metro hosted said this was the best way to communicate with them and asked when we were coming back. Topics that interested these riders include safety and tips for how to stay safe riding transit, ORCA and fare media, and alternative transportation resources. Community outreach specialists at Metro and Sound Transit will explore the possibility of partnering to conduct regular visits to social service and cultural organizations throughout the county, focusing on different topics during each visit. The education program could be marketed on Metro Online so community partners could easily request staff visits.

Recommendation #12.e: Host an annual community partner meeting, continuing the “community conversation” approach for LEP communities when doing engagement in the future.

The success of bringing together community-based organizations, transit agencies, and transportation planners is clear from events like the interagency workshop Metro hosted in July, which generated many of the recommendations in this report. Participants learn valuable information from one another about resources that are available in the community, how those resources work or don’t work for riders, how transit agencies can do better, and how all of us can cooperate with one another to meet the needs of transit-dependent populations. These gatherings strengthen relationships, helping us work collaboratively with one another. Metro community relations staff will consider hosting an annual community partner meeting to foster such collaboration. This would also deepen trust so that when Metro asks community partners to share transit information to their clients, the request is backed up by a mutual interest and relationship.

Recommendation #12.f: Improve the “rider alert” system so it better communicates changes, hot topics, and opportunities to influence change to all riders, especially limited-English-speaking populations.

While Metro does a good job of communicating about service changes through our “Rider Alert” system that posts information at stops, this system could be improved. Riders who speak limited or no English cannot understand most rider alerts. These alerts should be translated into the major languages of the area and they should specify alternative options for riders. For example, instead of just telling riders about a route that is going away, it should tell them what other route they should take. This same approach should be used when Metro is engaging riders in gathering feedback about changes so that riders directly affected by a proposed change have an opportunity to comment.

At times, it may be important to alert riders to criminal activity in an area and to offer tips for how to help and stay safe. Metro Transit Police officials have been approached by the Seattle Police Department to partner with them in getting safety information out to riders in the past. Metro should respond to these opportunities to relay important safety information to riders, especially when that information empowers riders with information to stay safe or contribute to a solution.

Recommendation #12.g: Explore opportunities for Metro to hire more bilingual staff and empower current bilingual staff in communications efforts.

Nothing beats engaging with people in their own language. Hiring staff members who can speak multiple languages could improve Metro’s capacity to serve its diverse ridership. Another possibility is to identify existing multilingual staff members and define a process for tapping their language skills, as the City of

Seattle does now. Either of these approaches raises issues that likely would have to be addressed in personnel policies and planning, so they are ideas to be explored in the long term.

Recommendation #12.h: Foster ways for every Metro division to embrace the diversity of our ridership, especially our transit-dependent riders.

A number of Metro departments are already identifying ways to incorporate what has been learned during phase one of this outreach into work underway. Examples are too numerous to summarize in this report. However, every department could and should continually adapt and improve our day-to-day business and operations to respond to and meet the needs of transit-dependent populations. Every interaction with our customers and attempts to communicate with our customers should begin with the premise that we are serving people from many cultural backgrounds, income levels, and ages. As a first step, this report will be shared with Metro staff members who are responsible for programs and services touched on in this report.

Next Steps

Many of the recommendations can be implemented as demonstrations in southeast Seattle and then can be considered for expansion to other parts of the county.

Metro's next steps are to continue working with Sound Transit and SDOT to implement recommendations in this report. In October and November, staff will return to the community groups we met with in Phase 1 of this outreach to share our recommendations and gather feedback to help refine and/or implement them in ways that will meet riders' needs.

Summary of recommendations, timeline

Service		
Recommendation	Who	Estimated timeline
Wayfinding/maps at stops – Rainier Beach demo	Metro transit route facilities, service planning; SDOT; Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative	Now – spring 2013
Alternative services info packet – Rainier Valley distribution, posted online	Metro market development, accessible services, community relations	Now – spring 2013
Center Park bus service change	Metro operations, service planning, accessible services, community relations; Center Park; working group participants	Launch in Feb. 2013
Explore partnership for WSDOT grant funding	Metro market development; working group participants	Application due in September 2014
Southeast Seattle service restructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis/outreach • Council adoption • Service change implementation 	Metro service planning, accessible services, community relations	TBD pending Metro's future financial situation

Stops		
Recommendation	Who	Estimated timeline
CPTED review at key transit stops along the corridor	Metro transit route facilities, Seattle Police Department, SDOT, Sound Transit	Now – spring 2013
Transit security patrols as available	Metro transit police, SDOT	Ongoing
Mount Baker Transit Center, Mount Baker Link station design/ future development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southbound stop • Future stops 	Metro, Sound Transit, SDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete • Ongoing
Explore possibility for future Graham Street Link station	Sound Transit	Unknown
Improvements to Rainier Beach stops by Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative	Metro Transit route facilities, Rainier Beach Transit Justice Initiative	TBD

"Eyes on the stop, on the bus" crowdsourcing tool	Metro marketing and service information, community relations	2013
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ORCA		
Recommendation	Who	Estimated timeline
Mobile customer service site visits in Rainier Valley	Metro fare media sales	2013
"Ticket reloading unit" demonstration with ReWA	Metro fare media sales, market development	2013
Targeted card distribution/education effort	Metro market development, Sound Transit	2013
Exterior, screen flow improvements to TVMs	Sound Transit	2013-2014

Communications		
Recommendation	Who	Estimated timeline
Add languages, increase distribution of multi-lingual travel video series	King County Mobility Coalition, Metro market development	Now
September service change communications	Metro marketing and service information, customer information, communications, market development	Complete
Phone system upgrade, improvement to more easily connect callers who do not speak English well with an interpreter	Metro customer information technical resources and solutions	Launch winter 2013
Education program, rotating topics	Metro market development, community relations, sales and customer services, transit police; Sound Transit	2013
Annual community partner meeting	Metro community relations	Summer 2013
Rider alert improvements	Metro marketing and service information	Ongoing
Cultural awareness, bilingual staff	Metro all sections	Ongoing

Appendices

- A. July Workshop Participant List and Notes
- B. September Service Change Multilingual Brochure for Accessing an Interpreter Via Metro Customer Information Office

Appendix A: July Workshop Participant List and Notes

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Southeast Seattle Solutions Workshop
NewHolly Gathering Hall

July 9, 2012

Breakout Group Notes

- Service: How can we address barriers to gaps in service with the resources we have now or in the future?
- Stops: How can we structure our built environment to make connection points feel safe, comfortable, and connect people to the destinations they want?
- ORCA/fare media: How can we reduce the barriers to getting and using ORCA cards?
- Communication: How can we incorporate what we've heard from limited or no English proficiency populations into the ways we communicate with riders?

Address barriers and gaps in service

Group Participants

Transportation Choices Coalition, Refugee Women's Alliance, Puget Sound Sage, Harborview, Metro Service Planning

(Number key: 1 = doable in the short-term, 2 = mid-term, 3 = long-term)

Some context –Throughout their conversation, the group pointed out important factors that affect service allocation in southeast Seattle. Such as:

- Metro is moving away from 1-seat rides... Challenged populations were already transferring, now it's 3 transfers to get to important social service and cultural destinations.
- Southeast Seattle is the most diverse in the county... Many people don't speak English as their first language; most transit-dependent population in the county.
- Funding is a factor... With more money, it would be nice to maintain infrequent all-day service throughout the county.

How to better connect the International District to MLK? – The group acknowledged that Link offers a good connection, but expressed concern that the transfer from Route 7 to 8 is hard. One answer is to improve the frequency of routes so transfers can be from frequent to frequent service and people don't have to wait long. Metro's service planning staff explained why it's important for Metro to keep doing what they are doing, i.e. consolidate service along major corridors. Riders would like the 8 to be more reliable. Currently, it spans too large an area and it is late by the time it gets to one end or the other. This is a high priority to fix. (2) It is important to the community to continue to invest in Route 7 as a "bus rapid transit" line a.k.a. RapidRide. Better connectivity east-west to the north-south corridors is also needed. (2-3) The group's conversation evolved to...

How to help people get from their front door to a major corridor? – If Metro is moving in the direction of concentrating service on major corridors, then, alternative services should emphasize connecting people to those corridors where frequent service is concentrated. Ideas included:

- Use alternative services, such as Hyde Shuttle, to get people from their front door to major bus or light rail stop.
- Expand the southeast Seattle service boundary of the Hyde Shuttle to include the International District, and provide more resources so this service can be provided to more people.
- Use DART service to create more accessible service to major connection points.
- Use jitneys – perhaps along MLK to 5th and Jackson and along Jackson up to 12th. Concentrate this service where there is no fixed route service. Could be run by refugees/immigrants as a start-up business. If this service comes at the expense of fixed route service, there are labor issues to be considered.
- Use subsidized taxi service to address gaps in service during certain times of day.

How to help people use the service that is available in culturally and language-appropriate ways?

The group identified that a barrier might not be the actual service that's available, but rather people's awareness about the service and how to use it. They spent some time talking about how agencies could help linguistically isolated and transit-dependent populations access existing fixed route and alternative services. Keys to doing this are:

Signage:

- Implement real-time information at stops. Post schedules at all stops.
- Put signage in more than 1 language at Light rail stops – change TVMs' first screen so it is in multiple languages like bank ATMs

- Identify existing service that connects light rail and educational, business districts in Rainier Beach; promote/advertise, make it easy for people to know what buses connect them safely and to where. (1-2)
- Put “overlay” maps at stops and on buses; use the RapidRide B line’s little/big map as a model. Emphasize images instead of text. (2)
- Overlay maps should include fixed route options and alternative services for reaching destinations. Destinations should reflect the community using the service.
- Implement signage project so buses have number and destinations, not just number on them. (1)

Promotion to build awareness:

- Better educate community about alternatives. (1)
- When investments in facilities or service are made, promote why this is happening and announce them to the community. (1)

Translation/Interpreter services: All agencies need to reduce barriers for LEP populations to using alternatives that rely on phone-based reservation systems. One idea was to connect Metro’s ability to provide interpreter service with Hyde Shuttle reservation system; this could be a bigger partnership with other agencies and organizations. (2-3)

Culturally-relevant stops and transfer points are important to keep in mind – A more culturally-relevant transfer point for people who live in southeast Seattle is 5th and Jackson, not at the Mount Baker Transit Center. The Filipino Community Center is not well served by bus or transit stops. Since they are planning a transit-oriented development near MLK and Graham, agencies should look at establishing a Link station/stop at Graham and situating bus stops accordingly. (3)

Funding is critical – On a final note, the group talked about the need to advocate for and pass a longer-term funding solution for public transportation. (3)

Make connections convenient, safe and inviting

Group participants

Rainier Beach Empowerment Coalition, Seattle DON, BikeWorks, Seattle Greenways, Rainier Beach Youth Transit Justice Group, KCDOT Communications

“Build it and they will come” – the group identified a number of ways to make connection points more inviting places.

1. Components of a ‘perfect’ stop: adequate lighting, visibility into and out of shelter, surrounding land use pattern supports ‘eyes’ on the stop location, and the surrounding environmental design integrates crime prevention best practices
2. Install more rider amenities at Mt. Baker Transit Center such as lighting and covered areas so people feel comfortable waiting in the dark and/or inclement weather
3. Install longer benches at busy connection points so people have a comfortable place to wait
4. Install recycling containers and larger trash receptacles at busy transit stops/stations and increase frequency of trash pick-up
5. Reinstate the ‘adopt a stop’ program with a focus on recruiting community partners
6. Install more newspaper outlets at busy connection points
7. To ensure bus drivers see riders waiting at a stop, fix broken stop signs, install lighting and/or reflective flags that can be waved to alert the driver

8. Locate bus stops before intersections to keep traffic moving and provide more direct connections for riders
9. Install bigger bike racks on buses to encourage people to ride to connect with transit
10. Establish competitions for the best transit stop/station where best is measured by cleanliness, # of security incidents, # of riders, etc
11. Expand the shelter enhancement program to integrate community artwork into more transit stops
12. Real time information is being installed on Rainier for the Route 7—expand to the MLK corridor for the 8/36/50/106 to encourage connections
13. Support additional parking facilities at light rail stations as an interim land use

“Safety, safety, safety” – the group spent a lot of time brainstorming ways to improve safety at or near transit stops and stations using environmental design and rider awareness.

1. Engage a broader coalition of public, private and non-profit partners to address funding issues for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) start-up enterprises such as the Othello Market
2. Install blue emergency lights at stops so riders can notify the appropriate security personnel of an emergency
3. Establish a walk pool/walk bus program to make the walk to/from a destination safer
4. Establish a ‘Safe Routes to Transit’ program that is modeled after the ‘Safe Routes to School’ program. (Refer to Seattle Greenways program map for ideas)
5. Provide incentives for experienced bus operators to select more challenging routes such as the 7, 8, 36, and 106.
6. Establish safe pedestrian crossings at transit stops/stations to discourage people from crossing the street illegally (Note: Rainier/McClellan southbound stop will be relocated to the plaza located directly below the Mt. Baker Link Station.)
7. Inventory the pedestrian improvements (lighting, sidewalks, pedestrian pass-throughs, street crossings) within ¼ mile of each transit stop and ½ of each station to identify areas that need additional work and coordinate with our partners to finance and build the necessary improvements
8. Enable riders to text security personnel if they see suspicious behavior (make bus stop number visible or post a QR code to help identify exact location)

“Eyes on the stops/stations” – the group acknowledged that it’s not enough to install amenities such as lighting, benches, shelters etc.— more eyes are needed to monitor the activity at transit stops/stations to create a safe and welcoming environment.

1. Establish a rider review program where riders get badges to review stops, report suspicious behavior, identify broken /dirty facilities, provide feedback on transit planning projects, etc. Riders with a certain number of badges would be eligible for monthly/annual prizes like free bus tickets. This program would encourage riders to be more engaged in their surroundings and improve connection points.
2. Have a more visible security presence in crime ridden areas (Note: Sound Transit may locate an office in the Artspace Development being constructed adjacent to the Mt. Baker Transit Center, which will improve security presence at this transit hub)
3. Enable commerce activity (newsstands, coffee carts, food vendors/grocer) at busy connection points to serve customers and provide ‘eyes’ on the transit stop/station
4. Work with businesses located near transit stops/stations to de-clutter their windows and create more ‘eyes’ on the stop/station.
5. Establish ‘Route/corridor Watch’ groups modeled after Block Watch groups to increase safety. The program could be advertised with stickers on shelters similar to the way neighborhood block watch groups post signs in windows and on light poles.

6. Expand the presence of undercover security personnel on transit and at transit facilities—and make sure to get the word out to communities that these operations are underway (similar to the DUI patrol announcements that can be seen on I-5)

Reaching out to people – Here are just a few additional communications ideas the group came up with:

1. Establish a youth transit education program—they are often the information source for families with limited English proficiency
2. Produce a youth-friendly rap video to explain how to put a bike on the bus (see Kansas City's recent video)

Reduce barriers to get and use ORCA

Seattle DON, KC Metro Market Development, KC Metro Facilities, Sound Transit, East African Services, Rainier Beach Community Empowerment Coalition

Everyone has their story about problems with ORCA – Participants each had something to say about their challenges with ORCA.

- Youth have stories of being confronted by fare inspectors on Link who ask to see an ID in addition to showing a youth ORCA card during an inspection. This deters young people from riding Link because they don't face that same scrutiny from bus drivers. As one person said, "Sound Transit is 'scary' when the only face you associate with it is the fare inspector."
- Youth who live within the 2.5 mile radius of their school do not qualify for an ORCA card through the school district. Without a youth ORCA card, youth can't get a youth fare on Link. To avoid paying full adult fare, some will take Link without paying and risk getting caught.
- Another group member shared her husband's experience tapping his card twice because he wanted to make sure he had paid, then learning that tapping twice negates your fare while receiving a ticket from a fare inspector. When contesting his ticket, he had to go to Bellevue during work hours for his hearing.
- Many immigrant communities do not have bank accounts or do not use credit cards for religious reasons. Seniors in East African communities who are past the age of driving do not have driver's licenses. More recent immigrants are the least likely to be oriented to using technology to purchase or learn about things.
- Some immigrant communities have an inherent mistrust of government due to problems with governments back home.
- For seniors, disabled, and youth, card and pass access needs to be simplified while still following the rules... Currently, they can only obtain ORCA downtown or via mail, not online because the process requires a photo and identification for proof of age. Disabled people need a healthcare provider signature. Hours for the downtown customer service office are too restrictive.
- The Seattle school district turns off cards in summertime. The card is blocked and cannot be used as an e-purse. New cards are distributed in new school year.

"ORCA products should be accessible in places I regularly do business" –As one participant put it, "I shouldn't have to go out into the middle of the street onto a light rail platform to reload my ORCA card." Locations for adding money to e-purse are not well-known. There are a few locations/stores where you can add money to cards. Ideas for where ORCA products should be available were:

- Mobile customer service terminal – could make site visits to places like New Holly Community Center
- ORCA reloading stations for youth cards should be located at schools which have records of date of birth, etc.

- Community centers, libraries (where city staff could verify proof of age), alternative locations for purchasing/reloading ORCA cards
- If community-based organizations could direct senior to locations where they are already going like MoneyGram in Safeway
- Promote the developers of TOD projects like Othello Station to become business accounts for loading/re-selling ORCA cards.
- Could equipment be changed so that fare inspectors could tap ORCA cards and count towards fare payment when they are doing an inspection?

Ticket Vending Machines (TVM) should be improved so they are easier to use –

- Make TVM's have the same set up as ATM machines where the first screen asks "what language?" Could display a flag or list of languages.
- Visual and/or auditory cues for TVM's and other kiosks
- Better signage at TVM's
- Signage could help user understand what s/he can and cannot do at the TVM machines , including information on setting up automatic withdrawal
- Sound Transit has been doing outreach at Westlake Station where they provide a handout and walk people through how to use the TVM. Keep it up!

Can't do one thing and expect it to work everywhere –Various immigrant and LEP communities are organized differently. This presents a challenge in terms of outreach communication and education about the system.

- Many local Somali residents are not literate in their own language.
- Get grant funding through Department of Neighborhoods to work with Metro and Sound Transit to educate the public on obtaining, loading, and using ORCA cards.
- Re-establish something like the Residential Transportation Coordinator – give someone the skill set to educate users about ORCA TVM's.

Zone fare payment needs some work, too – The group noted that zone fare payment policy also makes transitioning to ORCA a hurdle for cash paying customers.

- Metro's rules about when to tap on/off are confusing. (This will change in September when agencies transition to pay-on-entry.)
- Consistency of fare policy/zone structure between Metro and Sound Transit would help.
- Only month-to-month passes are available. It would help to have annual and day passes available for individuals as well.
- For Regional Reduced Fare Permit ORCA card users, it would help to incentivize reloading cards.

Communicate with *all* of our riders

Group participants

Transportation for Washington, Seattle DON, KCDOT Communications, KC Metro Customer Service, Sound Transit Customer Service

Keeping riders with limited English proficiency informed

1. Improve customer information phone system for people trying to access an interpreter (current system takes too long)
2. Expand the 'Orange Card' program (people with limited English proficiency write out where they need to go on the card and give it to the bus driver so he/she can help the person navigate the system)

3. Install interactive trip planners at transit centers/stations that support multiple languages. Touch-screen maps would allow riders to select where they are and where they want to go and the system would suggest preferred routings (similar to Google transit routing).
4. Post call boxes at transit centers/busy connection points that provide information such as rider alerts, FAQs, how tos, etc. Offer multi-language support and/or graphical prompts for people with limited English proficiency
5. Add multi-lingual support to ORCA website
6. Translate ORCA rider information into top ten languages and make available to people with limited English proficiency
7. Recruit multi-lingual volunteers to answer questions on the bus and at transit centers/ busy connection points
8. Strengthen relationships with ethnic media outlets and make information available in the host language
9. Re-program ORCA TVMs to support additional languages and post how-to information in multiple languages at the TVMs
10. Service change communications:
11. Translate rider alerts
12. Recruit community partners for street teaming and to staff info tables at key community locations
13. Set-up multi-lingual phone banks
14. Provide store clerks with resources to assist LEP customers purchasing ORCA products

Providing real time information

1. Install interactive trip planners at transit centers/stations that support multiple languages. Touch-screen maps would allow riders to select where they are and where they want to go and the system would suggest preferred routings (similar to Google transit routing).
2. Post route maps on the bus showing what route the rider is on, stops, major destinations, and busy connection points
3. Make real time arrival information available at transit centers/busy connection points for people with or without smartphones (article reference: <http://www.fastcompany.com/1648672/redesigning-the-bus-stop-teagues-traffic-20-makes-transit-more-friendly>)
4. Provide a 1-800 number where people can type in their route/bus stop number and access real time arrival information (caution for safety/security)
5. Cross-post Metro/Sound Transit/ORCA information at transit facilities and on buses/Link/streetcars

Strengthening community relationships

1. Post comment boxes and bulletin boards at transit centers/busy connection points to encourage continuous community input and the actions being taken by Metro/Sound Transit to address what's been heard
2. Regularly attend events and activities where LEP communities and vulnerable populations gather
3. Schedule regular face-to-face check-ins with community partners
4. Work with schools to integrate travel training into their community service hour requirement
5. Expand travel training program with community partners—reinforce multi-system training
6. Utilize trusted advocates model to relay information out to the community

B. September Service Change Multilingual Brochure for Accessing an Interpreter Via Metro Customer Information Office

