



Joint Communications Plan

King County Metro and Sound Transit

March 2016 service change and light rail launch

March 2016 will see significant changes in the way transit services are provided in north King County, particularly in the Capitol Hill and Northeast Seattle neighborhoods. Sound Transit will open two new stations (University Link), and King

County Metro will realign its service to provide an integrated bus/rail network that will increase reliability and improve travel time into downtown Seattle. In addition, Metro will also redeploy bus service hours to improve local transit service in those communities.

In order to promote these transit improvements, anticipate and ease rider questions, and make the new service structure as seamless as possible, King County Metro and Sound Transit, along with its partners at the City of Seattle and University of Washington, are collaborating on a joint communications, marketing and outreach plan.

External Objectives

- Rider education. Make it easy for all existing and potential new transit customers to figure out “how to” both ride and use the new system
- Mitigate transition by providing rider information through multiple communication channels
- Communicate transit improvements and attract new riders to the regional transit network
- Drive ORCA and ORCA LIFT adoption

Target Audiences

- Existing bus and Link customers
- Cash riders
- Those needing accessible services
- Those without access to the Internet
- Residents and employers in NE Seattle and Capitol Hill
- UW students and employees

Key Messages

Metro and Sound Transit are teaming up to bring you a better transportation network, with higher performance, better service, quicker trips, more choices and more benefits.

- Link light rail provides frequent service with 8 minute trips from UW to downtown Seattle
- Improved east/west bus connections
- ORCA provides significant value and benefits for bus / rail riders
- More frequent bus service for NE Seattle and Capitol Hill households
- More travel options throughout the network



Communications Phases, Strategies and Activities

Pre-Launch: SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE CHANGES

(January – February)

Strategies:

- Initiating rider education
- Promoting ORCA and ORCA LIFT
- Building excitement

Activities

- Station opening announced
- Pre-launch customer research
- Web, video resources updated
- Coordinated earned media
- Residential mailings
- Digital messaging and outreach
- Free ORCA cards, other incentives (TBD)

Launch: EXECUTING THE CHANGES

(March)

Strategies:

- Intensive, coordinated communications
- Maximize personal interactions with riders
- Celebrate University Link launch

Activities:

- Coordinated earned, social media
- Launch celebration promotion
- Street teams/customer care; joint ST/KCM training
- Free ORCA cards and incentives (TBD)
- On-site ORCA LIFT and ORCA-to-Go
- Targeted promotions, e-notifications, outreach
- On-board bus information and announcements

Post-Launch: ONGOING CUSTOMER CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

(April – May)

Strategies:

- Continued on-site presence
- Targeted customer development

Activities:

- Street teaming/customer care
- On-site ORCA LIFT and ORCA-to-Go
- Free ORCA cards and incentives (TBD)
- Coordinated earned and reactive social media
- Targeted In Motion programs
- Post-launch customer research

