



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

November 12, 2014

Motion 14246

Proposed No. 2014-0226.2

Sponsors McDermott

1 A MOTION accepting a low-income fare program
2 implementation plan, as required by Ordinance 17757,
3 Section 4.A.1.

4 WHEREAS, Ordinance 17757 revised rates of fare and instituted a program for
5 low-income transit fares, and

6 WHEREAS, Ordinance 17757, Section 5, provides the authority to the director of
7 transportation to implement and administer a low-income transit fare program using the
8 existing smart card One Regional Card for All, also known as ORCA, system with the
9 eligibility threshold for the low-income fare set at two hundred percent of the federal
10 poverty level, and

11 WHEREAS, Ordinance 17757, Section 4.B, provides that the executive is to
12 transit to the council by June 1, 2014, a low-income fare implementation program plan,
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Ordinance 17757, Section 13, created a low-income fare program
15 implementation task force that will review the implementation plan and submit a report to
16 the council and executive by August 15, 2014;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

18 The King County Council acknowledges acceptance of the low-income fare
19 program implementation plan, which is Attachment A to this motion.
20

Motion 14246 was introduced on 6/16/2014 and passed by the Metropolitan King
County Council on 11/10/2014, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague,
Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski and Mr.
Upthegrove
No: 0
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Phillips, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: A. Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Plan dated October 2014



Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Plan

October 2014 Update

Acknowledgements

The Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Plan was prepared by a project work team with the guidance of a project steering committee and advice from the Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Task Force.

Steering Committee members

Chris Arkills, Government Relations Officer – Transportation, Executive Office
 June Belefond, Regional Health Educator, Public Health
 Mike Berman, KCIT Service Delivery Manager, Metro
 Brian Brooke, Research, Policy & Development Director, Sound Transit
 Kelli Carroll, Senior Principal Legislative Analyst, King County Council
 Lance Dauber, Captain, Metro Transit Police
 Kevin Desmond, General Manager, Metro
 Shelley De Wys, Budget Analyst, Performance, Strategy and Budget Office
 Betty Gulledge-Bennett, Manager, Department of Transportation Communications
 Matt Hansen, Manager, Customer Communications & Services, Metro
 Mike Harbour, Deputy CEO, Sound Transit
 Laura Hitchcock, Policy Research & Development, Public Health
 Janice Hougen, Housing Planner, Department of Community and Human Services
 Jill Krecklow, Finance Manager, Metro
 Kathleen McMurray, Project Manager, Metro
 Katy Miller, Supportive Housing Manager, Department of Community and Human Services
 Victor Obeso, Manager of Service Development, Metro
 Adrienne Quinn, Director, Department of Community and Human Services
 John Resha, Principal Legislative Analyst, King County Council
 Jim O'Rourke, Operations Manager, Metro
 Priscilla Vargas, Manager, Paratransit/Rideshare Operations, Metro

Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Task Force members

Rob Beem, North Urban Human Service Alliance
 Kathy Brasch, Women's Advisory Board
 Alex Clark, Bellevue Community College
 Alison Eisinger, Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness and Seattle Human Services
 Mahnaz Kourourian Eshetu, Refugee Women's Alliance
 Mike Heinisch, South King Council of Human Services
 Mary Kay Lewis, Veterans Citizen Levy Oversight Board
 Jorge Madrazo, SEAMAR Community Health Centers
 Lynn Moody, Eastside Human Services Forum
 Alex Stoller, King County Transit Advisory Commission
 Katie Wilson, Transit Riders Union
 Dan Wise, Catholic Community Services

Metro Transit project team members

Carol Merrill, Customer Services Supervisor
 Katie Chalmers, Transportation Planner
 Rajan Cheriell, Project/Program Manager
 Sarah Driggs, Writer/Editor, DOT Communications
 Doug Hodson, Finance & Administrative Services Manager
 Tom Friedman, Project/Program Manager
 Fotini Georgiadou, Project/Program Manager
 Kathy Kelly, Business & Finance Officer
 Mark Konecny, Customer Service Coordinator
 Ref Lindmark, Transportation Planner
 Katy Miller, Supportive Housing Manager, Department of Community and Human Services
 Chuck Sawyer, Supervisor, Research

14246

Bob Virkelyst, Supervisor, Marketing

Contents

Why a low-income fare program?	3
Executive summary	6
Background	8
Operations model	15
Implementation plan	17
Verification of eligibility	17
Preparation, registration and distribution of low-income fare ORCA cards	19
Technology to support the program	20
Fees for obtaining, replacing and renewing cards	21
Moving from rollout of the program to ongoing operation	21
Where customers can add value to their low-income ORCA cards	22
Measures to protect program integrity	25
Outreach and marketing	25
Budget	28
Evaluation	30
Key dates and deadlines	32
Conclusion	33
Appendices	34
A. Operations model	37
B. Implementation planning calendar	38
C. Examples of identification requirements	39
D. Verification process	41
E. ORCA add-value locations	42
F. Card replacement process for current business accounts	46
G. Card replacement process for current disassociated or standard cards	47
H. Low-Income Fare Program RFP	48

Why a low-income fare program? Because no one should be left behind

Equity and social justice are cornerstone values for King County. All of the County's programs and services strive to make our community a place where everyone has opportunities to succeed. Public transportation is critical to this effort because it opens many doors—to jobs, education, health care and other services, and to the many activities that make life enjoyable.

Today, there are gaping income inequities in King County that affect residents' access to transportation. Many county residents are prospering; the top 20 percent of households have an average income of \$248,000, with the top 5 percent averaging \$434,000. The average for the lowest 20 percent is starkly lower: \$15,000.

A growing number of people are living in poverty. Out of a population of 2 million, more than 240,000 or 12 percent have incomes below the federal poverty level. Nearly 500,000 residents—a quarter of the county's total population—have incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. These members of our community are the most likely to depend on public transportation and the least able to afford the fares.

As the County's Low-Income Fare Options Advisory Committee wrote in its June 2013 report, "Low-income populations face an array of mobility barriers, which can impede their ability to sustain a job, access critical services, and obtain basic necessities. Many low-income individuals and families rely solely on public transit to move around the region, however, they often face obstacles that make it difficult to achieve their desired mobility."

For many years, the County's public transportation system, Metro Transit, has offered reduced fares for seniors, youth, and people with disabilities. While many people with low incomes benefit from these discounted fares, many others, including working poor individuals and families, don't fall into these fare categories.

The low-income fare adopted by the King County Council in February 2014 will lower the obstacle of cost, expanding opportunities for tens of thousands of people.

With an eligibility threshold of 200 percent of the federal poverty level, the program will serve a broad segment of the county's residents. The program's operations model is designed to make it easy for eligible individuals to qualify for, receive, and use a low-income One Regional Card for All (ORCA) card.

Reflecting the Executive's goal of making King County the nation's best-run government, the program will be a collaborative effort that taps the strengths of County and community agencies. The unique capabilities of Metro Transit, Public Health – Seattle & King County, the Department of Community and Human Services, and an array of community organizations will be combined, making smart use of the public's dollars and serving program participants well.

Who might benefit from the low-income fare?

Imagine Mary, a single mother who works two minimum-wage jobs, one part-time, to support her family of three. Her annual income is about \$32,000, and she rents an apartment for \$1,100 a month.

Mary doesn't own a car, and depends on Metro to get to both jobs and everywhere else she has to go. On a typical weekday, she makes two one-zone trips during peak periods and two trips during off-peak hours, which costs her \$9.50. With the low-income fare, she will save \$3.50 each weekday, at least \$70 per month—a welcome savings for a mom with a tight budget.

Because of staggering inequities in King County, too many people are being left behind. By offering more equitable and affordable access to public transportation, the low-income fare program promises to make a major contribution to King County's effort to create more opportunities for *all* the people we serve.

Executive summary

This plan responds to King County Ordinance 17757, which approved the creation of a low-income transit fare program.

King County Metro Transit is proud that we will become one of the few large transit agencies in the nation to offer a reduced fare for customers who have low incomes.

Being one of the first means we did not have an industry-standard template to design our program. Our project team, with guidance from the Low-Income Fare Steering Committee, did extensive research and consultation with others to develop this implementation plan. The Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Task Force made recommendations that have strengthened this update of our original plan. Still, this is a work in progress. We expect to make modifications as we continue developing the program and as we gain experience operating it.

This plan outlines what we will do to successfully launch the low-income fare on March 1, 2015:

- Contract with partner agencies to conduct outreach to potentially eligible participants and provide income verification and card distribution services.
- Define the details of program operations, including the procedures we will follow to prepare and distribute ORCA cards; how we will work with partner agencies; and measures we will use to protect program integrity.
- Enter into an agreement with Public Health – Seattle & King County to coordinate the network of partner agencies and supplement the services those agencies provide.
- Conduct a vigorous public outreach and marketing program. Key strategies include giving the program a simple, memorable name; collaborating with community agencies; and using a variety of culturally and linguistically appropriate communication tools.
- Modify existing ORCA technology and develop a new low-income fare program database.
- Implement the program in a manner that minimizes ongoing administrative costs, maintains program integrity and otherwise manages potential risks.

Key features of the low-income fare program

- Income eligibility amount is up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level (\$23,340 for a single person in 2014).
- The fare will be available only on an ORCA card.
- The network of partner agencies will make it convenient for people to apply for the low-income fare around King County, at various times of the week and day.
- Applicants for the low-income fare will have a variety of options for documenting their identity and income.

Key features of the low-income fare type

- Fare will be \$1.50, all day, for travel in one or both zones
- Cards will look the same as regular ORCA cards.
- No fee will be charged for a new card or renewal; a \$5 fee will be charged to replace a lost or stolen card.

- The low-income fare product on the ORCA card will expire 24 months after the card issue date; the card can be used as a regular adult fare card after the expiration date.
- Card holders can put E-purse value or passes on the card at ORCA vending machines at Link stations and some transit centers, at 74 retail stores, at the Metro customer service offices in downtown Seattle, online or by phone. Metro's ORCA-To-Go mobile sales vans will be visiting community centers and events.
- Low-income ORCA cards will be registered to the owners, providing balance protection and ease of replacement if cards are lost or stolen.

When the Low-Income Fare Program is up and running, tens of thousands of people who travel in King County will benefit from reduced fares. Metro's customers who are least able to afford fares will have a low-cost way to travel to work, school, services and other destinations. This program will make a major contribution to the County's effort to create a more equitable community where everyone can realize their potential.

Background

King County's adoption of a reduced Metro Transit fare for people with low incomes stems from a fundamental commitment to promoting fairness and opportunity and eliminating inequities. This "fair and just" principle is woven into the King County Strategic Plan and is expected to be incorporated into everything the County does.

Along with this policy basis, actions taken to help make up for a recession-related drop in Metro's operating revenue prompted consideration of a low-income fare. Metro raised fares four times in four consecutive years—2008 through 2011. In September 2012, Metro eliminated the Ride Free Area in downtown Seattle. In October 2012, the County Council adopted Metro's financial plan which assumed that Metro's fares would be increased again in 2015. While these steps were important parts of the strategy to manage Metro's financial situation, their impact on low-income transit customers became a concern.

Metro's adult fares increased by \$1 from 2008 through 2011—an 80 percent increase in the adult base fare. As a result, an adult customer who purchases monthly passes is paying \$432 more per year.

Low-Income Fare Options Advisory Committee

Following the events noted above, on October 8, 2012, the King County Council passed a motion¹ calling for the establishment of an advisory committee to assist in the development of public transportation fare programs for people with low incomes.

The Executive convened the Low-Income Fare Options Advisory Committee in January 2013. The committee met over the next seven months, considering information related to Metro's fare structure, existing discounts, policy objectives and financial situation. In July 2013, the committee submitted a report to the Council recommending that a low-income fare program be created. In September 2013, the Council was briefed by Metro, Executive Office, and committee staff and by members of the advisory committee. The Council accepted a motion concerning the committee's final report and recommendations.

Low-income fare ordinance

In January 2014, the Executive proposed an ordinance to increase all existing Metro fares and add a new low-income fare category effective March 1, 2015. In February, the Council adopted Ordinance 17757 approving fare changes.

The ordinance includes the following directives concerning the low-income fare program:

- The director of transportation may implement and administer a low-income transit fare program using the existing smart card One Regional Card for All, also known as ORCA, system, upon Council acceptance of a low-income fare program implementation plan.
- The eligibility threshold for the low-income fare is set at 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- The low-income fare would be set at \$1.50 starting in 2015. The low-income fare is flat—the same at all times of day and for one- or two-zone travel.
- The low-income fare is available to persons who apply for and are determined to meet the threshold eligibility requirements for the low-income transit fare program authorized by the ordinance and receive a valid low-income transit fare card, which allows the ORCA system to accept a low-income fare.

¹ Motion 13746. On January 22, 2013, the council passed Motion 13806, increasing the advisory committee membership and rescinding Motion 13746.

- The Executive should transmit a low-income fare program implementation plan to the Council by June 1, 2014. The low-income fare program implementation plan transmitted by the executive must reflect participation by the Department of Community and Human Services and Public Health – Seattle & King County and must document this participation.

The Executive transmitted an earlier version of this implementation plan by June 1, 2014 as required. This report was updated to reflect developments since then.

Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Task Force

Ordinance 17757 also created a Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Task Force that was directed to submit a report to the Council and the Executive by August 15, 2014 which reviews the low-income fare program implementation plan submitted by the Executive.

The ordinance includes the following directives concerning the task force:

- The report should address the plan's effectiveness in promoting awareness of the low-income fare program to stakeholder communities in King County and the process for establishing eligibility, including a review of potential locations where consumers may seek eligibility to participate in the program.
- The report may also include recommendations on modifications to the plan, developed in consultation with the Executive.
- Each member of the task force shall have substantial experience and expertise relevant to public transportation and its utility for low-income individuals and families and shall have an ability and willingness to attend meetings and participate effectively as a member of the task force. The executive and council shall ensure that diversity of views and experiences are reflected in the appointment of task force members. Diversity of views and experiences shall include, but not be limited to, racial, ethnic, gender identity, geographic and faith diversity.
- The task force shall be composed of one representative from each of the following:
 - A provider of services to immigrant and refugee communities
 - A community organization focusing on transportation issues
 - A member of the Transit Advisory Commission appointed as provided in K.C.C. 2.124.010.3.b
 - A member of the Women's Advisory Board
 - A member of the Low-Income Fare Options Advisory Committee
 - A representative from the Community Health Centers
 - A provider of services to the homeless
 - A representative from the Eastside Human Services Forum
 - A representative from the South King Council on Human Services
 - A representative from the North Urban Human Services Alliance
 - A representative from the Seattle Human Services Coalition
 - A member of the Veterans Citizen Levy Oversight Board
 - A community college student.

The Task Force met five times between June and August. They reviewed the implementation plan and developed a report that expressed support for many aspects of the plan and recommended additional actions. The report is online at www.kingcounty.gov/metro/LowIncomeFare. The table on the following pages summarizes the Task Force's recommendations and how the County is addressing them.

Task Force Recommendation	Plans to Address the Recommendation	What Has Been Done	Page in Plan
Promoting awareness			
Develop a short, memorable and affirming name for the program.	Metro will create a name for the program.	Metro developed a list of potential names that have been reviewed for cultural and linguistic sensitivity. The name is LIFT, recommended because it is short, easy to remember and affirming.	24, 25
Assess likely demand as part of marketing	This was part of the program planning process.	Metro has estimated demand as 45,000 to 100,000	5
Employ ORCA To-Go to provide ORCA card sales, assistance and outreach around King County.	Metro will expand ORCA To-Go and schedule visits to organizations and events around the county.	Metro is in the process of leasing additional vans and acquiring equipment to expand ORCA To-Go. They will be available by November.	21, 25, 34
Spread the word about the program through existing non-profits and others.	This will be part of the marketing program. Contracts with verifying agencies will include responsibility of agencies to help with outreach.	Metro's marketing group has developed a plan for materials and marketing activities.	24
Begin program promotion as early as feasible.	Start broad program promotion in January 2015.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro's marketing program has developed a plan for promotion beginning in January 2015. • Public Health plans to test marketing materials and information handouts and promote the low-income fare in conjunction with Affordable Care Act open enrollment outreach beginning in November 2014. 	25, 34
Income verification			
Begin verification at least by February 2015.	We plan to do this. Some verification may begin in November in conjunction with Public Health's Affordable Care Act open enrollment activities.	This is on schedule. The processes will be tested started in November.	25, 34
Ensure that verifying agencies are spread throughout the county.	Broad geographic coverage is a priority, described in the implementation plan and the RFP for partner agencies.	Agencies around the county were encouraged to submit proposals for offering verification services.	13-14, 43

Task Force Recommendation	Plans to Address the Recommendation	What Has Been Done	Page in Plan
Sign-up should be available on evenings and weekends.	We will ensure evening and weekend availability.	The RFP requested information about office hours for this purpose. As proposals are evaluated, points will be awarded for evening and weekend hours.	46
Consider a co-location model.	The lead partner agency, Public Health, has established more than 50 outreach sites around King County using this model, and the program will utilize these sites.	Memorandum of agreement between Metro and Public Health addresses this.	13
Staff the Metro Sales Offices with a contractor; many people will go there to apply.	This is planned.	Public Health has indicated it can provide this service, and the RFP for partner agencies invited proposals.	13-14, 46
Ensure bias toward enrolling more applicants rather than fewer.	The goal for this program supports this approach: Implement a program to make a reduced transit fare option accessible to all eligible individuals for use in King County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An extensive lists of documents that can be used to verify identity and income. has been developed. • A plan for extensive outreach has been developed. • The program is in the process of developing a network of partner agencies convenient to applicants countywide. 	12, 16
Provide non-traditional ways to verify applicants that aren't in existing databases or enrolled in programs, enabling income to be easily verified.	The County's goal is to reach as many people as possible. The program will develop a list of acceptable verification documents that provides a number of avenues for verifying eligibility.	Completed.	16
Don't place undue burden on agencies to decide gray areas.	Metro and Public Health will work together to create clear procedures, and will serve as resources when agencies have questions.	Policies and procedures to provide clear direction to partner agencies are under development and will be tested November-December.	13
Make the fare available regardless of residence.	Residence in King County will not be a requirement for participation in the program.	Completed	NA
Convene a committee of experienced agency staff to identify workable methods of verification.	Metro will consult with Public Health and other agencies to define workable methods of verification.	Completed	12

Task Force Recommendation	Plans to Address the Recommendation	What Has Been Done	Page in Plan
If an organization offers services based on income, have a simple process to document that they have verified applicant's eligibility within the past 12 months.	The County will confirm with agencies if this timeline is preferred.	Agencies recommended that due to a wide variety of program requirements, previous verification of eligibility be limited to the past 6 months.	NA
Accept ID other than a government-issued photo ID.	Alternatives to government-issued photo ID are on the list of acceptable documents.	Completed	16
King County should have responsibility for the grievance policy.	Metro will be responsible for problems with ORCA cards or revaluing. Public Health will provide this service for income or identification verification. Policies and procedures will be developed.	Single points of contact at each County agency are identified and procedures for agency referrals are under development.	14
Plan modifications			
Any revision to the plan would benefit from more specific budget estimates.	We agree to provide more specific budget information as it becomes available.	Information based on the proposed budget is in this updated plan.	26-27
Create clear rules around use of information and users.	The Low-Income Fare Program will require agencies to keep customer information secure. Applicants will be asked to authorize the use of their personal information for program purposes only. King County will develop clear rules and procedures.	Registry database functional specifications that address data security, and procedures regarding document management reflect best practices of existing/previous benefits programs.	18, 23
Establish an evaluation process	The program will be evaluated after the first year, with regular follow-up reports to the County Council.	Evaluation of customer satisfaction, card usage, and market penetration will be added to ongoing customer surveys. A protocol for evaluating partner agencies will be incorporated into contracts.	28

Outreach to social service agency community

Metro staff met with representatives of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) in February to discuss our goals and how we can work collaboratively with DSHS to achieve them. While not a direct participant, DSHS will continue to receive information about the program and their feedback is important.

Project staff met in February and April with King County Department of Community and Human Services staff members to review the program, discuss options and opportunities to work together, and solicit input on social service agencies to involve in the process.

Metro's project staff members met in March with representatives of Public Health – Seattle & King County to discuss best practices for conducting outreach and distributing information on a large scale to potential eligible populations, based on what Public Health staff learned from their recent initiative to promote enrollment in Affordable Care Act coverage.

Project staff met in April with representatives of social service agencies—Catholic Community Services, Hopelink, Solid Ground, the Coalition to End Homelessness, and Washington State DSHS—to discuss what agencies would need in order to participate as partners with King County in this program by verifying income eligibility and providing ORCA cards to low-income customers.

The low-income fare project manager and team members are continuing to meet with various County agency staff regarding how to best meet the needs of the affected population and work with social service agencies within the county to institute an effective, efficient program.

Metro also assembled a Steering Committee including director-level representatives from both the King County Department of Community and Human Services and Public Health – Seattle & King County. County Council and Executive Office staff members and Sound Transit representatives also participated. The Steering Committee is helping to shape and is reviewing development of the program plan.

Program goal

The first action taken by the Steering Committee was to agree on the following goal to guide development of the Low-Income Fare Program plan:

Implement a program to make a reduced transit fare option accessible to all eligible individuals for use in King County.

Operations model

The Low-Income Fare Program will be operated as partnership of Metro Transit, Public Health – Seattle & King County, and community agencies, each performing the functions they are best able to provide to make the program a success. The primary intent of this model is to make the low-income fare easily available to as many eligible people as possible.

Metro will be responsible for the following functions:

- Procure and prepare low-income ORCA cards and make them available to partner agencies for distribution to eligible clients.
- Produce marketing and outreach materials and conduct broad public information campaigns in conjunction with Public Health – Seattle & King County and partner agencies.
- Define procedures to be followed by participating agencies to ensure program integrity.
- Define procedures to resolve disputes or complaints that may arise when applicants are determined to be ineligible for the low-income fare or have problems with their ORCA cards.
- Manage the process of replacing lost or stolen ORCA cards.
- Provide space in Metro's Customer Service Office in downtown Seattle where a partner agency provides income verification/low-income ORCA card distribution services.
- Develop and manage the program budget.
- Oversee the work of all partner agencies.
- Evaluate the program.

Public Health – Seattle & King County will provide the following functions:

- Provide outreach, income verification and ORCA card distribution services. Tasks include:
 - Verify eligibility and issue ORCA cards to eligible clients in conjunction with Public Health's ongoing services, including the next Affordable Care Act open enrollment (11/15/2014 through 02/15/2015), ongoing Medicaid eligibility determination and enrollment, and other outreach services at the agency's 50+ outreach sites around King County.
 - Provide income verification at ORCA To-Go events.
 - As part of the broad public information campaign, provide information about the low-income fare on Public Health's website.
 - Inform Public Health clients who call the Community Health Access Program referral line about the reduced fare for people with low incomes. Clients in King County call this line for access to health care providers, immunizations, health insurance enrollment and other social service needs and may be eligible for the reduced fare.
- Coordinate the network of community-based nonprofit and government agencies selected by Metro to verify applicants' eligibility and distribute low-income fare cards. Tasks include:
 - Help Metro establish low-income fare eligibility verification and enrollment process guidelines.
 - Coordinate and oversee the outreach, eligibility and enrollment processes with the partner agencies to ensure that they adhere to the County's rules and regulations for the program.
 - Train and provide ongoing technical assistance and consultation to the partner agencies on the income verification process and serve as the responding agency for disputes or complaints when applicants are found to be ineligible for the low-income fare.

King County Metro Transit

- Take referrals from partner agencies for applicants whose identification or income verification does not clearly establish eligibility.
- Work with the partner agencies to determine where they will conduct outreach, identify gap areas, and assign Public Health staff to do outreach in the gap areas.
- Convene bi-monthly meetings with the partner agencies to give them regular updates and promote cross-agency learning.
- Provide monthly reports to Metro that highlight the activities of the network and outline challenges and successes.

In September, Metro issued an RFP to nonprofit and government agencies for income verification, low-income ORCA card distribution and outreach/information services. Metro will enter into contracts with agencies to form a countywide network that enables the low-income fare program to serve diverse populations in the many geographic areas Metro serves.

The RFP gave agencies the options of proposing to verify eligibility and distribute low-income ORCA cards to their existing client base using the income verification methods they currently use, or proposing to verify eligibility and distribute cards to all applicants, including the general public, using a broader list of verification methods.

Metro intends to sign contracts with selected agencies on about Nov. 1 for a January 1, 2015 start.

The RFP process closed on Oct. 7. Ten proposals were received and are currently under review. The majority of proposals offer multiple sites around the county, and those with single sites identify the specific populations they serve. It appears that the program has an adequate number of potential partners to meet the expected needs.

Partner agencies will be responsible for the following functions:

- Inform their clients about the low-income fare program using outreach materials produced by Metro.
- Verify the eligibility of applicants. Depending on the contract type, agencies may choose to serve only their existing clientele or the general public.
- Refer applicants who are determined to be ineligible, or whose eligibility is unclear, to Public Health for resolution.
- Train staff to record customer data and card distribution information in Metro's online customer tracking system.
- Distribute low-income ORCA cards to eligible recipients.
- Inform recipients about how to use the ORCA card and add value to it.
- Keep ORCA cards and customer forms and data secure.
- Adhere to all program guidelines and procedures with the oversight of Public Health and Metro.

Basic operation of the program can be described as a five-step process:

1. Metro will prepare the low-income fare ORCA cards and provide them to the partner agencies.
2. Partner agencies, including Public Health, will verify the eligibility of program applicants.
3. Partner agencies will issue ORCA cards to eligible customers after checking to make sure the customer does not already have a card. Agencies will refer any questions about ineligibility to Public Health.
4. Partner agencies will submit required customer information through the program's online database and maintain verification documents in their files for audit purposes.
5. Metro will register the customer and card in the ORCA system for security purposes, duplication checks and future card replacement.

This process is illustrated in Appendix A.

Implementation plan

This section describes plans for implementing the major components of the low-income fare program:

- Verification of eligibility
- Preparation, registration and distribution of low-income fare ORCA cards
- Technology to support the program
- Fees for obtaining, renewing and replacing cards
- Rollout of the program compared to ongoing operation
- How customers can add value to their low-income ORCA cards
- Measures to protect program integrity
- Outreach and marketing

See Appendix B for an implementation planning calendar for October 2014-May 2015.

Verification of eligibility

King County Ordinance 17757 defines the eligibility threshold for the low-income fare as income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. A major function of the program will be to verify applicants' eligibility.

The number of eligible people who will apply for a low-income fare card is unknown; estimates range from 45,000 to 100,000—a sizeable number in any case. Although Metro offers a number of programs that benefit people with low incomes, none of these programs require verification of income, so Metro has not developed the capacity for verifying eligibility for the low-income fare.

The Low-Income Fare Options Advisory Committee recommended that Metro not create a new entity to determine eligibility, and instead leverage existing eligibility verification systems and explore working with agencies that could provide verification services. Ordinance 17757 noted this recommendation in its statement of facts.

Metro is in the process of contracting with nonprofit and government agencies to verify applicants' income and perform related services. We plan to have agreements with a number of social service agencies in locations throughout King County in the fall of 2014.

RFP proposers will identify locations for serving clients, the cost of services to be reimbursed by Metro, and internal processes for verifying eligibility, recording low-income ORCA cardholder data, and keeping customer information and ORCA cards secure. Metro's agreements with agencies will define staff roles and work processes.

Documentation of identity and eligibility

Metro has consulted with Public Health, Department of Community and Human Services and other human service agencies about the identity and income documentation methods they use and recommend. Based on this consultation, we have compiled initial lists of documentation that agencies may accept as proof of identity and income. As we work with partner agencies and gain experience operating the program, these lists may be modified.

Federal Poverty Guidelines by Household Size

Household Size	100%	200%
1	\$11,670	\$23,340
2	\$15,730	\$31,460
3	\$19,790	\$39,580
4	\$23,850	\$47,700
5	\$27,910	\$55,820
6	\$31,970	\$63,940
7	\$36,030	\$72,060
8	\$40,090	\$80,180

Source: U.S. Health and Human Services Department, 2014

Acceptable documents for establishing identity (initial list)²

The program will offer two options for verifying the identity of anyone who applies for a low-income card. Applicants may either present one document from list 1 **OR** a combination of documents from list 2.

1. Government-issued photo ID
 - Driver's license (any state or country)
 - Photo ID card from any state, province, county or country
 - Armed Services ID with photo
 - ID card from any foreign consulate
 - Passport from any country
 - School photo ID – university, college, high school
 - Tribal ID
 - US certificate of citizenship, naturalization (signature, photo)
 - Any other form of photo ID issued by a government agency of any country

- OR -

2. A combination of two or more documents:
 - a. non-government-issued document with name and a photo of the applicant as an adult, and
 - b. document that indicates the applicant's name and birthdate, such as:
 - Adoption papers
 - Baptismal records
 - Birth certificate
 - Border crossing card
 - Court order
 - DHS "Trusted Traveler" cards (NEXUS, SENTRI, FAST)
 - Driver's instruction permit
 - DSHS identification letter for those in custodianship
 - Employee ID card
 - Immigration ID
 - Marriage license
 - School records / transcript (certified)
 - Social Security card
 - Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)
 - Unemployment card

Acceptable documents for verifying income (initial list)

1. For those in existing database/benefits systems:
 - a. Apple Health/Medicaid recipients: ProviderOne medical services card. Agency can verify client's current eligibility on Washingtonconnect.org
 - b. Washington Basic Food Program recipients: EBT (electronic benefits transfer) Card. Agency can verify client's current eligibility on Washingtonconnect.org
 - c. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients: Agency can verify client's current eligibility on Washingtonconnect.org, or client can provide copy of award letter
2. For those receiving other defined benefits programs:
 - a. Employment Security paystub or letter for applicants receiving unemployment benefits
 - b. Award letters for SSI, Social Security, or Railroad Retirement recipients
 - c. L & I statement for workers' compensation recipients
3. For employed applicants: Paystubs – duration last 30 days

² This list is based on a review of examples of documentation used in other programs. Appendix C lists those examples.

4. For self-employed applicants: Copy of their most recent tax return. Income is based on the modified adjusted gross income on their most recent tax return: Form 1040 line 37; Form 1040 A, line 21; Form 1040 EZ, line 4; **or** completion of the self-employment worksheet
5. For clients paid in cash: Letter from the employer signed and dated with gross income for the client for the last 30 days; **or** a bank statement from the client if they deposit their paycheck in their account.
6. For clients with no income: Employment Security verification form

The intent of the final item, #6, is to provide the broadest possible access to the program, but meet the requirement to have some form of documentation of income. As long as someone has identification, Employment Security can verify that they have received no income and are therefore eligible.

Metro and Public Health are defining referral procedures for agencies to follow when applicants are determined to be not eligible. Public Health will be the responding agency for those referrals.

The verification process is illustrated in Appendix D.

Preparation, registration and distribution of low-income fare ORCA cards

The ORCA system has established processes for activating and managing cards. Metro consulted with several social service agencies to define program procedures that conform with existing ORCA parameters and are workable for partner agencies. The plan to prepare, register and distribute ORCA cards is described below.

Preparation

Metro will order unissued ORCA cards for the low-income fare program and will initialize and issue the cards as "low-income" at the ORCA Mail Center and the Metro pass sales office.

The low-income fare will expire 24 months after the card is issued; the expiration date will be printed on the back of the card. This length of time was chosen to balance the values of customer convenience, program integrity and manageable operations. We will evaluate this time limit during the first two years of operation.

The cards will also have a printed note explaining that it can be used as a standard adult card after the expiration date. This information will be translated into Spanish and additional languages as needed.

Cards that have been initialized, issued and dated will be sent to partner agencies that have ordered them. Card inventory will be managed within the program database.

Registration

Applicants will be asked to authorize the use of their personal information for this purpose. Unless otherwise required by law, the County intends to use customer information solely for purposes of the low-income fare program.

As partner agencies verify that an applicant is eligible for the low-income fare, they will check the program card file to see if the applicant already has a low-income fare card registered, to ensure that program customers have only one active card at a time. If there is no duplication, they will enter client



A Mail Center staff member prepares ORCA cards.

Initialization: Setting a blank smart card in the ORCA system as a "low-income" card type. Once initialized, the card type cannot be changed (though when the low-income fare expires, it turns into a regular adult card). The initialization process can be completed by the ORCA Mail Center in bulk, or in Metro's Customer Assistance Office on an individual basis.

Issuance: Making a card useable on the ORCA system. A card would be issued after it is initialized and before it is sent to a verifying agency.

information into the secure, online, Low-Income Fare Program database.

Metro will register the low-income ORCA cards to the individual owners in the ORCA system. Registration provides balance protection, so if the individual's ORCA card is damaged, lost or stolen, the old card can be "blocked" and any pass or balance of funds in the E-purse can be transferred to a new card.

Distribution

Either the verifying agency or Metro will be able to give a prepared low-income ORCA card to the client immediately after eligibility has been verified. The client may add E-purse value or a pass to the card at any revaluing location and begin using it to pay their fare. (See page 20 and Appendix E for information about revaluing locations.)

Cards may be distributed with or without value. Metro will work separately with agencies that provide transit benefits to clients to help them apply those benefits to a low-income ORCA card.

Technology to support the program

Metro has worked with the ORCA vendor, VIX, to have adjustments made to the ORCA system to enhance Metro's ability to manage registered cards.

Program database

A stand-alone database will enable partner agencies to give Metro the customer data necessary to register customers' cards in the ORCA system, ensure that customers receive only one card, and monitor program performance and inventory.

The low-income fare project team worked with KCIT to define the business needs and functional requirements of the database, which KCIT is currently developing. Database testing will be completed by Dec. 2, 2014 and the database will be ready on Jan. 2, 2015 for the pre-March 1 "soft launch" of the Low-Income Fare Program.

The following are key features of the database:

- Partner agencies will access the database online; KCIT is ensuring that it works with agency system requirements. The database is being designed to handle at least 100 concurrent users.
- Agency staff members will be required to use a username and password in accordance with King County's IT Governance Policies and Standards.
- Verification agency staff will enter the following required customer data, which Metro will transfer to the ORCA card registration database:
 - first and last name
 - address
 - date of birth
 - ORCA card serial number
 - the date and time the ORCA card was given to the customer
 - ORCA card expiration date
 - which agency staff member issued the card.

Customers will be asked to authorize the use of this information for low-income fare program purposes.

This customer information will enable the verification agency and Metro to confirm that the potential recipient has not already received a card. It will enable Metro to register the card to the owner in the ORCA system, so the card owner will have balance protection, can track transactions, and can report a lost, stolen or damaged card and get it replaced. It will also make it possible to remind customers of their pending card expiration if the customer has provided an email or text address for notification.

- The database will record the number of cards issued to an agency as well as the number distributed by the agency to customers, assisting the agency in managing their inventory.
- Metro and partner agency administrators can use the database to produce reports on program activity to support program management and provide audit trails for fraud protection.

Fees for obtaining, replacing and renewing cards

Metro currently charges customers a \$5 fee to obtain a regular adult or youth ORCA card, and \$3 for a new or renewed Regional Reduced Fare Permit card for seniors and people with disabilities. The cost to replace any lost or stolen ORCA card is \$5.

We considered several optional fees for obtaining, renewing and replacing low-income fare cards. We weighed impacts on customers, costs to Metro, the ability of partner agencies to process fees, and potential impacts on other transportation agencies.

The plan is to charge no fee for new or renewed low-income fare cards. This policy has the advantages of removing a fee as a potential barrier and avoiding the need for verifying agencies to handle and account for cash—although waiving a fee does add costs to the program. The no-fee policy is consistent with that of Kitsap Transit, the only other ORCA partner agency that currently offers a low-income fare.

The program will charge a \$5 fee for replacement of lost or stolen cards. This is consistent with regional ORCA replacement fees for youth and adult cards, as well as Kitsap Transit's replacement fee for low-income cards. It will also serve as an incentive for card holders to safeguard their cards. We will use the current ORCA system replacement processes as they have the benefits of automating the process, accepting payment via cash, check or credit card, blocking a missing card, and transferring any balance from the old to the new card. In order to make this process less onerous for cardholders, we will look at whether any current Metro policy authorizing such replacements needs to be changed to facilitate online, phone and mail order options as well.

Moving from rollout of the program to ongoing operation

We want and expect many people to obtain low-income ORCA cards in the months just before and after the reduced fare takes effect. Our strategies for managing this large influx of participants include staffing up the Metro pass sales office in order to handle a significant increase in both in-person visits and the back office procedures necessary to support a heavy workload at partner verifying agencies. To maintain program integrity to the greatest extent possible, we intend to process card orders within five days, and complete card registration and inputs to the ORCA system within 48 hours.

We are also developing the program in a way that will shift renewal processes to a rolling calendar, similar to what was done when the Regional Reduced Fare Permit program was converted to the ORCA system. As low-income cards are issued with a defined, 24-month expiration date, batches will be issued over time with later expirations. In other words, the first batches of cards issued in 2015 may expire in February 2017, the next in March 2017, and so on. This will enable us to process renewals of eligible individuals throughout the year, easing the burden on Metro and on any verifying agency acting on our behalf. These renewals will then become part of other renewal processes that we already service. We are also asking the database developers to determine how and if the reverification process can be streamlined within the database.

This approach will also allow Metro to reduce, over time, the staffing needed to manage the very large influx of eligible customers that we expect to see in the first six to 12 months of the program.

Where customers can add value to their low-income ORCA cards

The ORCA card that will be used for the low-income fare program is a “smart card” that can be used to pay fares on seven public transportation agencies in the Puget Sound region. Cardholders can visit any of those agencies' sales offices to load passes or value to their cards. The low-income fare will be valid only on Metro or Kitsap service. Sound Transit is considering adoption of a low-income fare aligned with Metro's fare. Their public process is underway now and will be completed by year end 2014.

Low-income ORCA cardholders will have the same options for loading value as holders of other types of ORCA cards have. The low-income ORCA card can be loaded with:

- A regional pass, like a monthly PugetPass (low-income program participants would pay the reduced fare for Metro service and regular fare for other agencies' services)³.
- E-Purse, which acts like electronic cash on an ORCA card, and provides the rider with a transfer credit from Metro to another ORCA transit agency.
- A combination of pass and E-purse. E-purse value would cover any additional fares beyond what a pass covers.

There are a number of ways cardholders can load value onto their cards:

- Online
- Mail
- Phone: 888-988-6722 / TTY Relay: 711 (add value and get help)
- In person:
 - ORCA customer service
 - Retailer
 - Ticket vending machine

Value added online or by phone takes 24 to 48 hours to process for use. Users activate the value by tapping the card. Once value is added online or by phone, users must tap their card within 60 days at an ORCA reader to make it ready to use.

Users can add value for immediate use at a participating retailer, a ticket vending machine or an ORCA customer service office.

Expansion of the add-value network

Since ORCA was introduced in 2009, Metro and our ORCA partners have expanded the network of retail locations and ticket vending machines where customers may purchase and add value to ORCA cards.

There are now 74 retail locations around King County where it will be possible for Low-Income Fare Program customers to add value to their ORCA cards. The retailers accept cash. See a list of the retailers in Appendix E. Additional outlets are in Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties. The map on page 22 shows all ORCA fare outlets as well as all current Metro routes, Link, and Sounder, and the percentage of residents whose incomes are below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Customers can also add value to their ORCA cards at vending machines in 24 locations in King County. Most of them are accessible 24 hours, 7 days a week. The locations are:

- all Sounder stations (including King Street Station)
- all Link stations (including stations in Rainier Valley and Beacon Hill)
- all Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel stations
- Bellevue, Federal Way, Northgate, Burien, and Eastgate park-and-rides
- Metro's King Street Center pass sales office

³ Sound Transit is considering the creation of a low-income fare to align with Metro's program.

Vending machines are slated to be installed at the Renton, Redmond, and Aurora Village transit centers by year-end 2015.



ORCA card vending machine (TVM)

ORCA vending machines are an option for people who do not have computer access, or whose schedules make a visit to Metro’s customer service offices inconvenient. The machines take cash as well as bank cards, so they are helpful for those who don’t have a bank account. Value added in person at a machine (or at an ORCA retail outlet or Metro customer service office) is usable immediately, unlike value added online, which will be available after 24 to 48 hours. This is important for people whose funds are too limited to store much money on the card.

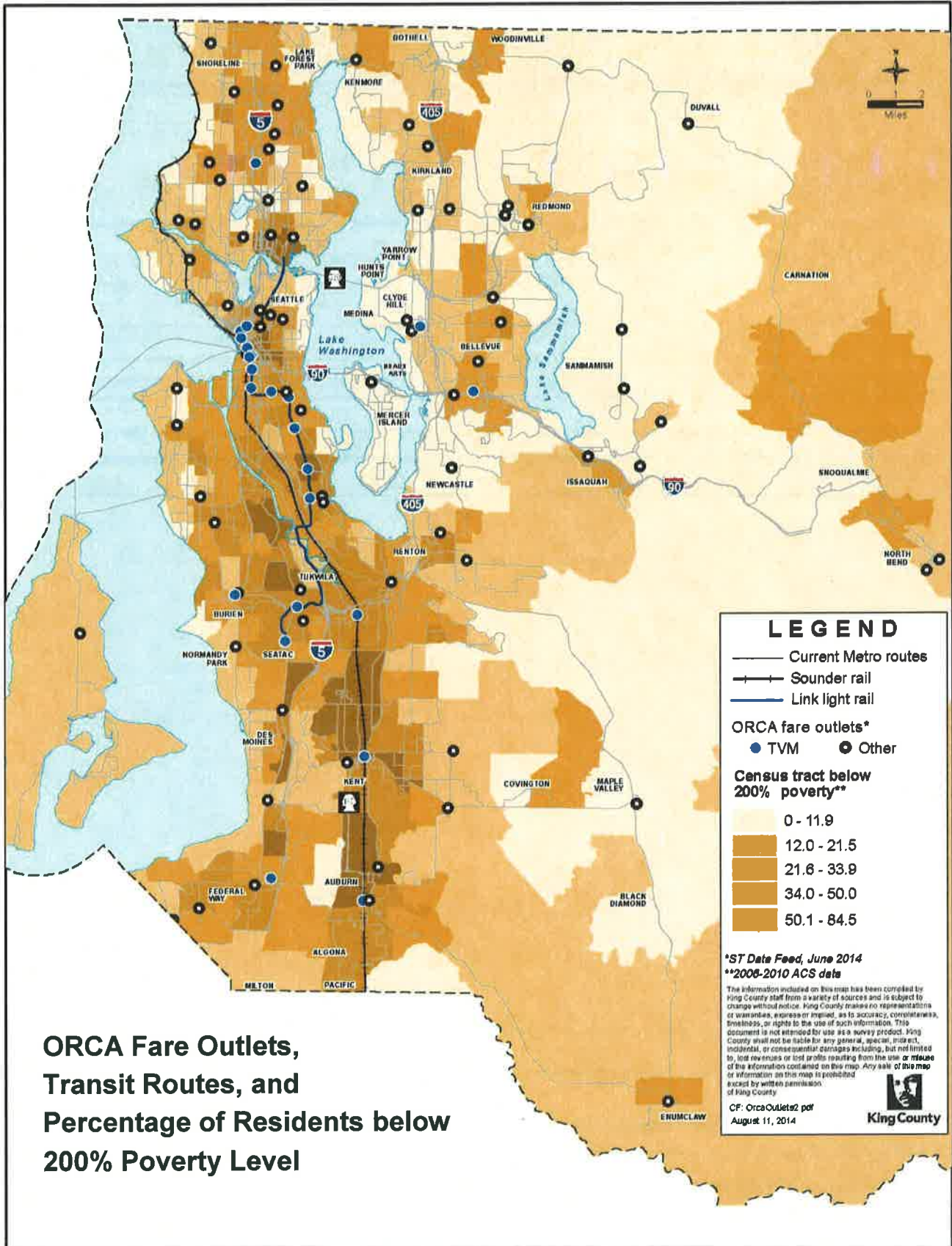
ORCA To-Go

Metro’s ORCA To-Go is a mobile sales van that travels around King County, making stops at senior citizen centers, major events and fairs, and other locations to provide full-service ORCA card sales and assistance. We plan to significantly expand this program to serve low-income fare clients, increasing the number and type of locations visited and using the visits for both distribution and revaluing of all ORCA card types, including low-income fare cards where appropriate. ORCA To-Go staff will also provide information about how ORCA works.

ORCA To-Go will be available in 2015 and 2016 to work with verifying agencies so cards can be issued and value added immediately after verification in locations where that might not otherwise be possible. Public Health will also provide income verification service at ORCA To-Go events so applicants will have one-stop service.



ORCA To-Go van and staff members with portable customer service terminals.



Measures to protect program integrity

The Low-Income Fare Program is developing procedures to ensure that only those determined to be eligible will obtain low-income ORCA cards and that qualified individuals are issued only one card at a time. Our approach will balance the objectives of enabling access for eligible customers, of preventing access or abuse by unqualified individuals, and of establishing procedures that have a reasonable cost that does not exceed the benefits.

The verification process is one safeguard. Verifying agencies will both verify applicants' income eligibility using approved documentation, and check the low-income fare program online database to make sure the applicant does not already have an active low-income ORCA card.

Our agreements with verifying agencies will stipulate that the agencies will follow policies and procedures for managing the low-income ORCA cards, including:

1. Securely storing low-income cards (at a minimum, they must be stored in a locked room and container).
2. Limiting and monitoring access to the low-income cards.
3. Ensuring that only one low-income card is distributed to an individual.
4. Logging and tracking low-income cards.
5. Verifying identity and income.
6. Monitoring the programs or sites that are distributing low-income cards.
7. Promptly reporting to Metro, in writing, if low-income cards are lost or stolen.

Outreach and marketing

A vigorous marketing and outreach program will be critical to achieving the goal of making the reduced fare option accessible to all eligible individuals in King County.

Our goals for marketing/outreach are:

- Low-income customers are aware that this new program exists.
- Metro leverages relationships with community organizations and agencies to help create awareness of this program with their clients.
- Community organizations and agencies are well-informed and prepared to answer questions or assist their clients, and integrate information about the low-income fare program into their service offerings menu, whether or not they are a verifying agency.
- Low-income customers understand the process for qualifying for the low-income fare.
- Low-income customers understand how to use ORCA and the benefits of ORCA.
- Implementation of the program is smooth for customers, partner agencies, and Metro.

We will face a number of challenges as we strive to meet these goals. One is how to reach a target audience that is dispersed throughout the county, ranging from urban neighborhoods with high concentrations of low-income residents to less densely populated rural areas.

There likely will be a sizable market segment of people who are not even aware that they qualify since they may not be participants in any government assistance programs.

Another challenge is how to inform the relatively high proportion of people with low incomes for whom English is not the first language. King County has identified 20 languages that are spoken by substantial numbers of people in our area; many other languages are spoken as well. The use of translated materials, non-print media such as videos, and face-to-face interactions will be incorporated into the outreach and marketing activities described below. Information will be translated into Spanish and into

other languages as needed, following the guidance of the County's Executive Order on Translation and the advice of partner agencies.

An extensive outreach program that Metro conducted in 2012 in southeast Seattle, which has a relatively high number of residents who have low incomes and limited English proficiency, suggests an additional challenge. Many people involved in this outreach were uninformed about where to reload ORCA cards, didn't understand how ORCA works, or were distrustful of the ORCA technology. Since the low-income fare will be offered only via ORCA, it is essential that we overcome barriers to its use.

Collaboration with other entities is a key strategy in all aspects of our marketing and outreach plan. We will strive to engage the broad community of social service agencies and ethnic, community and other organizations; King County departments such as the Department of Community and Human Services and Public Health – Seattle & King County; and the agencies we will partner with to verify eligibility for the program. The Low-Income Fare Implementation Task Force reviewed the first version of this plan and offered valuable guidance that is reflected in this update. We have already consulted with a number of agencies and drawn on our own marketing and community relations experience to develop this marketing and outreach plan, and we will continue this type of collaboration as we develop and carry out the program.

Components of the outreach and marketing program:

- **Information-gathering about best approaches.** We are consulting with people who work with low-income populations to gather their advice about culturally appropriate materials, effective communication channels, how to avoid stigmatizing beneficiaries, etc.
- **Development of information and marketing materials.** Metro will develop basic informative materials such as frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the program and information about how to use ORCA. Materials will be translated into Spanish and into other languages as needed. We will also develop a marketing theme, a visual identity, and marketing materials such as posters, brochures, and bus signs. Following the advice of the Low-Income Fare Implementation Task Force, we are developing a name for the program that will be short, memorable and affirming. Materials will be provided to low-income fare program partner agencies.
- **Outreach to community organizations and agencies that represent or serve people with low incomes.** Outreach will focus on informing them about the program and engaging them in informing their constituents. We plan to meet with key organizations and send informational materials to a broad list of organizations.
- **Marketing/advertising campaign.** The campaign may include:
 - exterior Metro bus advertisements
 - ads in ethnic media including newspapers, cable TV programming, radio and online
 - limited broad awareness campaign announcements in mass market media
 - public service announcements in mass market media
 - videos for YouTube, Metro pass sales offices, etc. that explain the process
 - posters at community organizations, food banks, low-income housing lobbies, adult and child day care centers, and other places
 - leveraging of County resources to provide further information and outreach
 - distribution of low-income fare guidelines, how-to's, FAQs, etc. in Metro literature distribution racks around the county
 - notices to city and community newsletters, blogs, and websites
 - referral and information-sharing via social media
 - inclusion in Metro public and Orca To-Go events
 - inclusion in Metro fare media references (print and online)

We will continue to seek advice and support and opportunities to leverage the work of partner agencies, including Public Health and the King County Department of Community and Human Services, which have

conducted successful campaigns promoting the Affordable Care Act, the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, housing and other services.

- **Media.** We will send news releases to mainstream and ethnic media and blogs leading up to the March 1, 2015 start of the low-income fare.
- **Website.** Metro Online will have a webpage with basic information about the low-income fare program, including translations. The program will also be featured on the Metro Online home page leading up to the launch.
- **ORCA To-Go visits to community sites.** We will build on our experience visiting senior and community centers and large public events to make it convenient for people to get and revalue ORCA cards. Public Health will provide eligibility verification services at events.

Timeline for marketing and outreach

June-July 2014:	Steering Committee and Low-Income Fare Implementation Task Force review and provide advice about our planned approach (completed).
May-September 2014:	Work with other agencies to define roles. Determine how ORCA To-Go will work with the eligibility verification process.
October-December 2014:	Prepare informational and marketing materials; develop program name. Conduct outreach to community organizations. Test materials, agency roles and database during Public Health's fall Affordable Care Act outreach.
January-March 2015:	Conduct soft marketing campaign focused on potential program participants, with goal of verifying their eligibility and getting ORCA cards to them before March 1.
March-ongoing	Continue outreach, ORCA To-Go.

Budget

Assumptions

Metro has continued to work on identifying and estimating the costs associated with implementing a low-income fare program. Some of these costs are related to program startup activity and might be a one-time occurrence while other costs are related to ongoing program administration. Some costs are categorized as capital expenses while others are categorized as operating expenses.

Startup costs include a mix of one-time expenditures for items such as equipment and furniture, database development, ORCA system modifications, and tenant improvements associated with additional work/office space. Most of these startup costs will be incurred in 2014. A summary of the estimated startup expenses—including for additional staff—is outlined below. A supplemental budget was approved by the County Council in July 2014.

Ongoing operating costs include assumptions for additional Metro staff needed to support program eligibility verification and reverification, card registration, coordination with third-party income verification agencies, and issuance of cards to customers. Additional ongoing costs include assumptions associated with supplies, mail and translation services, transaction fees, educational materials, training, ORCA card stock, and payments to third-party income verification agencies. A summary of the estimated first year of operating expenses is below.

Some of the ongoing operating cost estimates are still being fine-tuned and are subject to change depending on a variety of factors such as the number of eligible customers and the subsequent number of boardings and transactions those customers make with their low-income ORCA cards. Furthermore, the cost associated with payments to third-party income verification agencies is still to be determined. More detail around the estimated ongoing costs will be included in the 2015-2016 proposed biennial budget for Metro.

In addition to the ongoing expenses associated with the low-income fare program implementation, Metro is estimating a loss in fare revenue because it is assumed that more adult riders will be riding at a lower rate of fare. Per Metro's fares and elasticity model, the loss in fare revenue in 2015 is estimated to be nearly \$4 million per year. This is expected to increase in 2016 and 2017 to approximately \$4.75 million per year.

Start-up – 2014 estimated expenses

Estimated capital expenses

\$652,000 Modifications of the ORCA database, creation of the stand-alone verification database, equipment to expand ORCA To-Go outreach capability and establishment of a verification office at King Street Center.

Estimated operating expenses

\$126,000 ORCA card stock.

\$119,700 Program materials for education and promotion, support of the Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Task Force, translation services and miscellaneous supplies.

\$50,000 Contracts with Public Health and community agencies for coordination, outreach, eligibility verification, ORCA card distribution, and related services.

\$475,011 Program staffing for card inventory management, ORCA card registration processes, additional sales and outreach activities and technical assistance to community agencies.

Year-one operation – 2015 estimated expenses

Note: Ongoing operating costs for future years are still being developed

Estimated capital expenses

\$0 None anticipated at this time.

Estimated operating expenses

\$164,000	ORCA card stock.
\$174,150	Program materials for education, outreach and promotion, translation services and miscellaneous office supplies. Also includes rent for verification office space at King Street Center and fuel for outreach vans.
\$900,000*	Contracts with Public Health and community agencies for coordination, outreach, eligibility verification, ORCA card distribution, and related services.
\$1,185,492	Program staffing for card inventory management, ORCA card registration processes, additional sales and outreach activities and technical assistance to community agencies.
\$460,080	ORCA transaction fees paid to software vendor for boardings and revalue of ORCA cards (depends on number of active customers).

*This amount is set aside in Metro's proposed 2015 budget for agency contracts. Approximately half (\$460,000) will be paid to Public Health for outside agency training, program audits and fully staffing a verification office at King Street Center, in addition to their outreach, eligibility verification and ORCA card distribution roles. Actual expense will depend on number and scope of contracts.

Estimated lost revenue

(\$3,966,047) Assumes that more customers will be riding at a lower rate of fare.

Year-two operation – 2016 estimated expenses

Ongoing operating costs for future years are still being developed, but it is estimated that 2016 capital and operating expenses and lost revenue will be approximately the same as in year-one (2015) but may have to be adjusted based on volume of participants in the program.

The proposed 2016 budget sets aside \$900,000 for Public Health and agency contracts. Approximately half (\$460,000) will be paid to Public Health for outside agency training, program audits, full staffing of a verification office at King Street Center, as well as outreach, eligibility verification and ORCA card distribution services. Actual expense will depend on number and scope of contracts adjusted for volume of participants.

Evaluation

The Low-Income Fare Program will collect and track data about outreach, enrollment, costs, ridership, and fare revenue to be used in evaluating the program. Evaluations of customer satisfaction and card usage, market penetration, and related topics will also be added to ongoing customer surveys. The program will also establish a protocol for evaluating partner agencies' adherence to contract terms.

The program plans to produce a detailed report for the County Council after the first year of operation, with follow-up reports at 12 and 24 months as the program matures. Those reports will be incorporated into Metro's regular program and fare reviews and budget documentation and support.

The following are specific areas that could be included in reports.

Outreach and marketing

- The methods and strategies we used to provide information about the program
- Procedures established to lower barriers to access, such as providing cards for free
- ORCA To-Go effectiveness

Work with community partners and other King County agencies

- Number and scope of agencies that contracted with Metro to distribute cards
- Number of cards distributed to the agencies and the number of cards they distributed
- Number and location of places where eligible individuals can get low-income ORCA cards
- Number of individuals found to be not eligible for the program
- Effectiveness of training and dispute resolution process

Effectiveness of program

- Number of cards in active service (not blocked)
- Number of boardings by card type
- Survey of agency partners to identify opportunities to streamline the program
- Possible survey of participants to assess program success, areas for improvement, and customer satisfaction
- Analysis of low-income fare card usage by route and area, to inform equity and social justice efforts and transit system planning
- Impact of program rollout on locations where individuals can add value and revalue low-income ORCA cards

Procedures to maintain program integrity

- Effectiveness of procedures to assure that each eligible individual has only one active low-income fare ORCA card
- Number of cards registered and number blocked due to duplication

Effect on other Metro programs and revenue:

- Human Services Ticket Program
- Farebox cash
- Metro revenue
- Metro staffing / costs

Lessons learned

- What worked, what didn't, how the program could / should be changed going forward.

Low-Income Fare Program Key Dates & Deadlines – 2014/2015

Updated September 2014



- ★ **Jan. 14:** Fares ordinance transmitted
- ★ **Feb. 4:** Council BFM Committee considers fare ordinance
- ★ **Feb. 18:** Council approves fare ordinance
- ★ **March:** Social service agency meetings
- ★ **May 14:** ORCA specifications complete
- ★ **June 1:** Implementation plan to Council
- ★ **Aug. 1:** Fares report due to Council
- ★ **Aug. 15:** Task Force review due to Council
- ★ **Sept. 14:** ORCA upgrade complete
- October-March:** Testing, promotion and outreach to customers ★
- Nov. 1:** Agreements with social service agencies in place (effective Jan. 1) ★
- November:** 2015-2016 budget adopted ★
- Dec 2:** Database project complete ★
- February 2015:** Card distribution begins ★
- March 1:** Low-income fare goes live ★

Conclusion

King County is committed to making the Low-Income Fare Program a success, and will continue building on this plan toward that end. The Low-Income Fare Program Implementation Task Force made many recommendations that have made the plan better.

The low-income fare program is groundbreaking and complex; many details must be worked out. Some elements will not be completed until closer to the implementation date. As we begin operation of the program, we will collect data and feedback from partner agencies, evaluate the processes outlined in this plan, and make adjustments as needed.

We want to ensure that the benefits of the reduced fare reach the tens of thousands of low-income transit users who may be eligible. Not only will the Low-Income Fare Program benefit them directly, it also will enhance our entire community. We all gain from creating a place where people can lead better lives and contribute their best. Equitable access to public transportation enables everyone to grow and strengthen our county.

Appendices

A. Operations model

B. Implementation planning calendar

C. Examples of identification requirements

D. Verification process

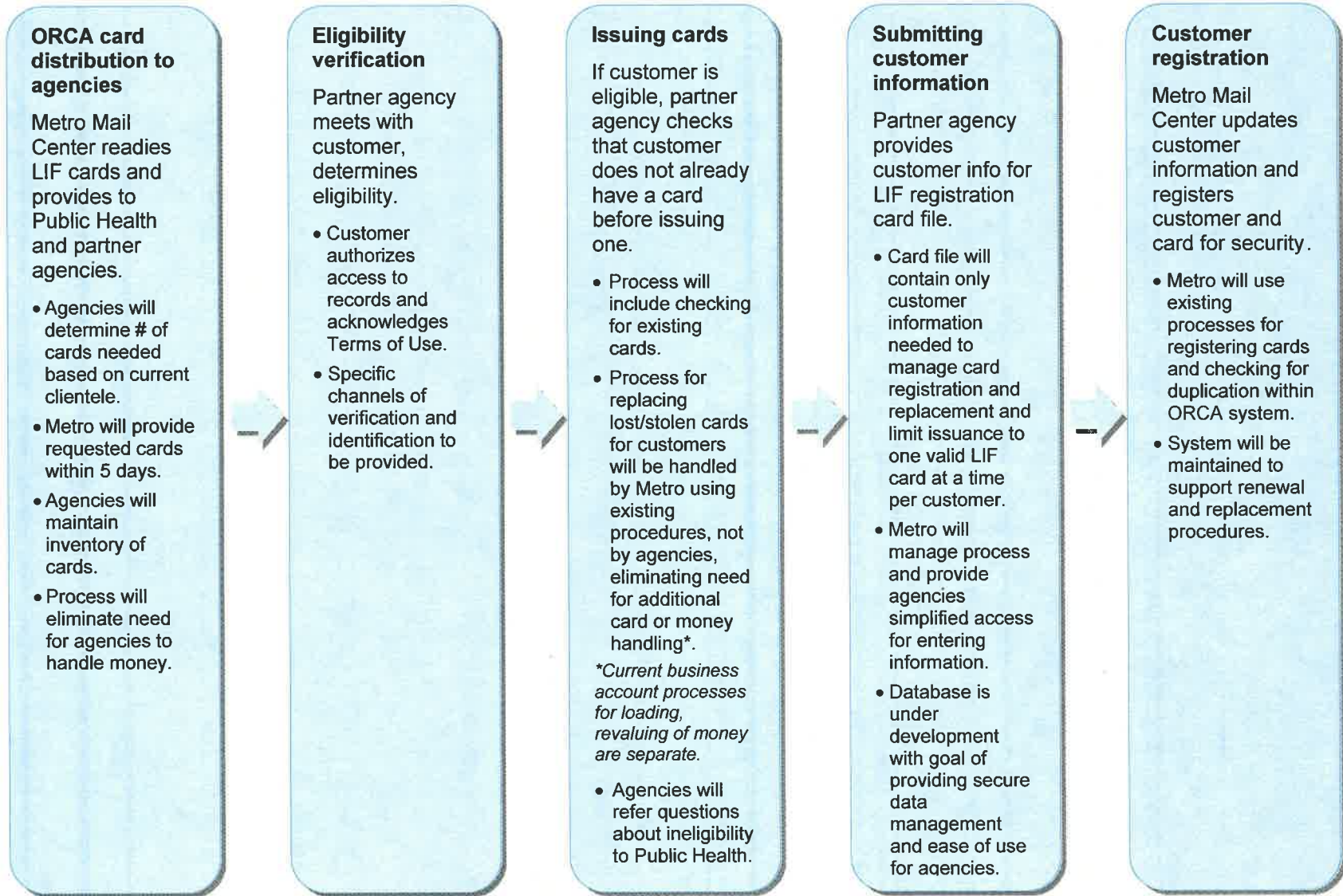
E. ORCA add-value locations

F. Card replacement process for business accounts

G. Card replacement process for current disassociated or standard cards

H. Low-Income Fare Program RFP

A. Operations model



B. Implementation planning calendar

OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
BUILD	BUILD	PILOT	PILOT	IMPLEMENT	IMPLEMENT	IMPLEMENT	IMPLEMENT
MISC: Make KSC space ready for use; hire staff; complete MOU; audit; evaluation schedules	Begin setting up training for agencies, internal staff; DPH test with ACA clients	Train agencies, internal staff; test policies, procedures, documents with ACA clients	Final refinements	All systems go—training complete; policies, procedures, documents final and in use	Full program underway ; audit, retraining processes; data collection for evaluation begins	➤	➤
LIF registry database in development; ORCA adjustments made	Testing	Begin use	Agencies begin registration of clients and general public	Validation checks, corrections; full systems in use; back office functions in place	Registry in full use; ORCA system updates on schedule; clients using cards	➤	➤
Policies, procedures, documents in development	Testing	Ready	In place and in use	In place and in use-revalidate	All systems go	➤	In place and in use-revalidate
RFP processes completed. Agencies selected	Begin contract process with agencies	Contracts with agencies completed. Training begins	Begin agency contracted service and screening of existing clients	Screen existing clients; full scale general public intake added	Full screening, registration underway	➤	Review of agencies processes
Intake, screening, card distribution	Testing	Training	Training	Training	Cards in client hands and in use	➤	➤
ORCA cards ordered		Cards received	Pre-issuance of cards underway	Card distribution begins	Card distribution continues and are in use	➤	➤
ORCA To-Go Equipment ordered	Equipment testing	Schedules proposed	Schedules reviewed, adapted	ORCA To-Go begins expanded services	➤	➤	➤
Outreach and promotion Strategies developed; materials designed	Strategies, materials testing and revision	General info to Public Health clients as part of ACA activities; first broad notices to public	All agency clients; broad and targeted notices to public	Broad general info (press) and targeted (agencies, associations, etc.) available now	➤	➤	Announce program status (# customers, cards), ramp up promotion
Planned events/ activities-soft rollout	News release when budget passed		Possible targeted events at verification sites	General announcements to public and media; events at targeted verification sites	Council districts, community centers?	Continued targeted activities in communities	Schedule off-site verification, distribution at summer events (ORCA To-Go)

C. Examples of identification requirements

A U.S. state driver's license is the most common requirement for access to many programs and benefits, and is generally the highest standard. Other states and the District of Columbia have requirements at least as stringent as the State of Washington.

1. Washington State Department of Licensing

When you apply for a Washington State driver license, instruction permit, or ID card, you must:

- Be a Washington state resident.
- Show proof of identity.
- Provide your Social Security number. If you don't have one, you'll need to show proof of Washington residence.
- Have your photograph taken

Details at www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/idproof.html

- *Stand-alone documents*

Original or certified WA driver license, ID card, instruction permit (photo, DOB, signature)

Out of state driver license, ID card, instruction permit plus SS card

Armed services ID w/ photo

US Passport (signature, photo)

Immigration ID (signature, photo)

US certificate of citizenship, naturalization (signature, photo)

DSHS ID letter for those in custodianship

or

- *Combination of documents*

A-List (photo), e.g., out of state driver license, etc.

B-List (name, date of birth), e.g., divorce decree, Medicare card

2. Washington State Voter Registration

- Provision of personal information – name DOB, address, self-identified qualification, *and*
- WA driver license/ID number or last four SS #
- *Or* Personal declaration statement

3. TSA/Airport Security

one of:

- Valid state issued driver's license
- Driver education card
- Passport
- Social security card
- Birth certificate
- Military id card/military dependent id card
- Divorce papers/certificate of marriage
- Baptismal records
- Court order
- School records/transcript (certified)
- Unemployment card
- Adoption papers
- Concealed weapons permit
- DHS "Trusted Traveler" cards (NEXUS, SENTRI, FAST)
- A Native American tribal photo ID
- Border crossing card
- Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)

- Canadian provincial driver's license or Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) card or A Permanent Resident Card
- Any form of government issued ID

4. Puget Sound Regional Reduced Fare Permit

- Various medically based documents, no photo required

5. Various State Benefit Programs

Benefits programs have a variety of requirements for participation that are not common across programs.

6. Other Low Income Programs

City of Tucson/SunGo, *one of*

- Driver's license
- State ID card
- Passport
- Government-issued ID
- School ID
- Tribal ID

San Francisco Muni Lifeline, *a government issued ID like*

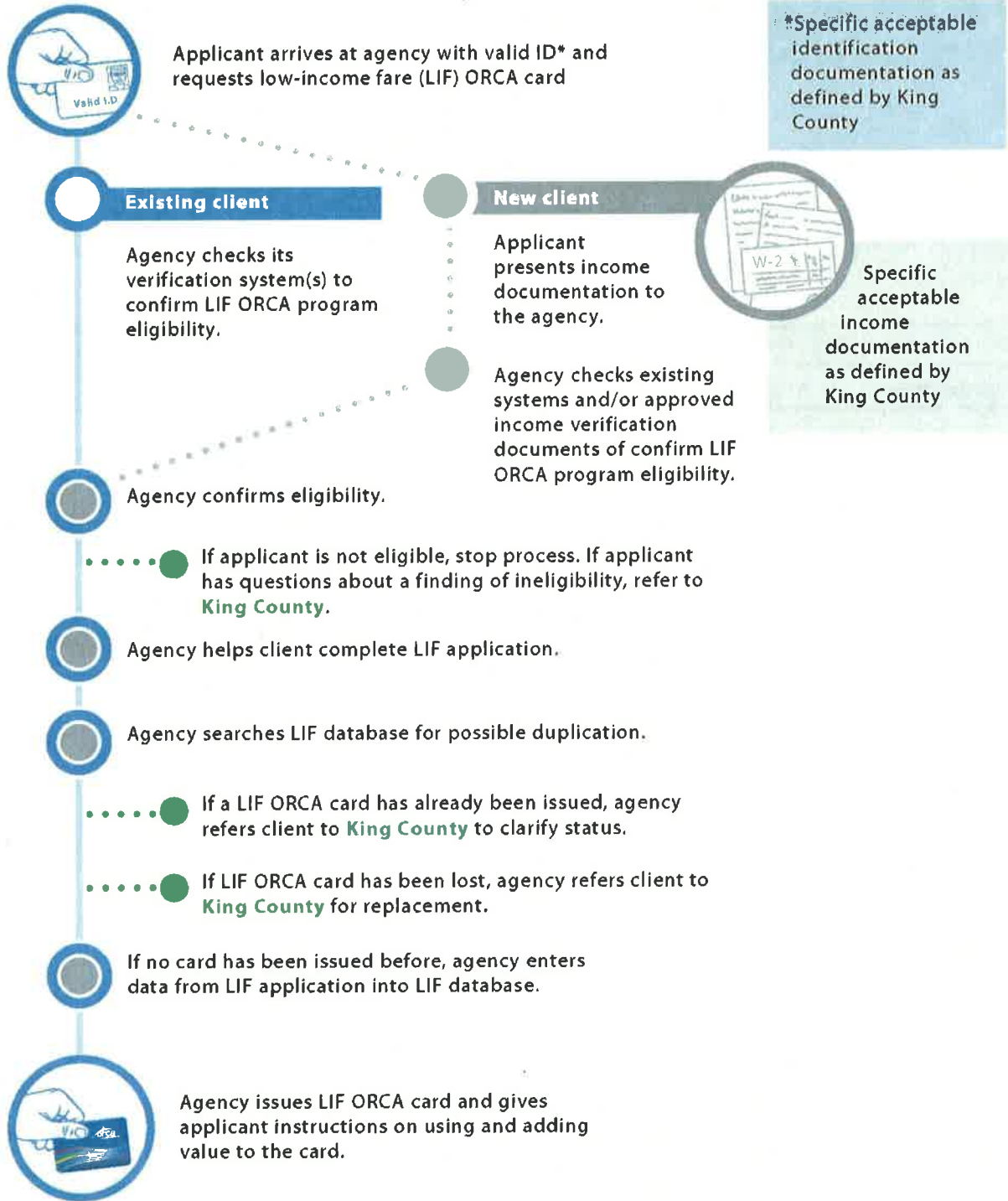
- Driver's License
- SF City ID Card
- Matricula Consular ID Card
- Passport
- US Military ID
- Alien Registration/Permanent Resident Card

Tri-Met Honored Citizen program Seniors 65 and older, Medicare members and people with disabilities. To obtain an Honored Citizen card, complete application and:

- **A certified/licensed health care provider:** Have provider fill out the reverse side of the application form.
- **The Social Security Administration:** Obtain a Benefit Information Report or Benefit Verification Letter from Social Security Administration office dated within the last three months, and include it with completed application form.
- **A certified agency:** Certified agencies include the Senior and Disabled Services Division, Commission for the Blind, Vocational Rehabilitation Division, a mental health agency, or The Arc of Multnomah or Washington County. The application form requires a verification stamp from the agency, so please contact agency representative for assistance.
- **The US Department of Veterans Affairs:** Obtain a Certification Letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs dated within the last three months verifying a disability, and include it with completed application form.
- **Other transit agency:** Include the name, city and state of the transit agency on application form.

D. Verification process

LOW INCOME FARE ORCA CARD



E. ORCA add-value locations

Retail outlets and customer service centers

Retail

People may add value to their low-income ORCA cards at the following retail locations in King County. Cash is accepted, along with other options that vary by retailer.

Auburn

Safeway: 101 Auburn Way S, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Bellevue

QFC: 1510 145th Pl SE, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 7 pm (temporarily out of service)

QFC: 3550 128th Ave SE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

QFC: 10116 NE 8th St, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 7 pm

QFC: 15600 NE 8th St Bldg K, Mon-Sun: 7:30 am to 8 pm

Safeway: 300 Bellevue Way NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Burien

Safeway: 138 SW 148th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Des Moines

Safeway: 21401 Pacific Hwy S, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 27035 Pacific Hwy S, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Duvall

Safeway: 14020 Main St NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Enumclaw

QFC: 1009 Monroe Street, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 7 pm

Federal Way

Safeway: 2109 SW 336th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 8 pm

Safeway: 1207 S 320th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Issaquah

QFC: 1540 Gilman Blvd, Mon-Sun: 7 am to 11 pm

QFC: 2902 228th Ave SE, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 7 pm

QFC: 4570 Klahanie Dr SE, Mon-Sun: 7 am to 7 pm

Safeway: 1451 Highland Dr NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Kenmore

Safeway: 6850 NE Bothell Way, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Kent

QFC: 13304 SE 240th, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 210 Washington Ave S, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 13101 SE Kent-Kangley Rd, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Kirkland

QFC: 211 Park Place Center, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

QFC: 11224 NE 124th St, Mon-Sun: 8 am to 8 pm

Safeway: 10020 NE 137th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 12519 NE 85th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Maple Valley Rd

Safeway: 26916 Maple Valley Rd, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Mercer Island

QFC: 7823 SE 28th St, Mon-Sun: 7:30 am to 7 pm

Newcastle

Safeway: 6911 Coal Creek Parkway, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Normandy Park

QFC: 17847 1st Ave S, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

North Bend

QFC: 460 East North Bend Way, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 460 SW Mount Si Blvd, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Redmond

QFC: 8867 161st Ave NE, Redmond, Mon-Sun: 7 am to 9 pm

QFC: 15800 Redmond Way NE, Redmond, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 7 pm

Safeway: 15000 NE 24th St, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 17246 Redmond Way NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Renton

QFC: 4800 NE 4th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 7 pm

Saar's MarketPlace: 3208 NE Sunset Blvd, Mon-Sat: 9 am to 7 pm.

Safeway: 200 South 3rd St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 8 pm

Sammamish

Safeway: 630 228th Ave NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

SeaTac

Safeway: 4011 S 164th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Seattle

Bartell Drugs: 1404 3rd Ave, Mon-Fri: 8 am to 9 pm; Sat: 8 am to 8 pm; Sun: 9 am to 7 pm

QFC: 417 Broadway Ave E, Mon-Sun: 8:45 am to 9 pm

QFC: 500 Mercer St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 7 pm

QFC: 1401 Broadway Ave, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

QFC: 1531 NE 145th St, Mon-Sun: 24 hours

QFC: 1600 W Dravus Street Mon-Sun: 24 hours

QFC: 1801 N 45th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 7 pm

QFC: 2500 SW Barton St, Mon-Sun: 11 am to 7 pm

QFC: 2707 Rainier Ave S, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 6 pm

QFC: 2746 NE 45th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 8 pm

QFC: 4550 42nd Ave SW, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 7 pm

QFC: 5700 24th Ave NW Suite 100, Mon-Sun: 11 am to 8 pm

QFC: 8400 35th Ave NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 7 pm

QFC: 9999 Holman Rd NW, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 8 pm

QFC: 11100 Roosevelt Way NE, Mon-Sun: 9am to 8pm

Saar's MarketPlace: 9000 Rainier Ave S, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 7 pm.

Safeway: 1410 E John St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 1423 NW Market St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 2201 E Madison St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 2622 California Ave SW, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 3820 Rainier Ave S, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 4732 Brooklyn Ave NE, Mon-Sun: 11 am to 8 pm

Safeway: 4754 42nd Ave SW, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 7300 Roosevelt Way NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 8704 Greenwood Ave, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 9262 Rainier Ave S, Mon-Sun: 9:30 am to 8 pm

Safeway: 12318 15th Ave NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Shoreline

QFC: 600 NW Richmond Beach Rd, Mon-Sun: 11 am to 7 pm

Safeway: 15332 Aurora Ave N, Mon-Sun: 10 am to 9 pm

Safeway: 17202 15th Ave NE, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Tukwila

Saar's Super Saver Foods: 3725 S 144th St, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 10 pm

Vashon Island

Vashon Thriftway: 9740 SW Bank Road, Mon-Sun: 8 am to 9 pm.

White Center

Saar's Super Saver Foods: 10616 16th Ave SW, Mon-Sun 9 am to 7 pm.

Woodinville

Safeway: 19150 NE Woodinville Duval Rd, Mon-Sun: 9 am to 9 pm

Customer service centers

Pierce Transit

Bus Shop Tacoma Dome Station

Westlake Station (west end on the Mezzanine near Macy's)

ORCA Regional Call Center

888-988-6722 TTY Relay: 711

Non English: 800-823-9230

Community Transit

Lynnwood Transit Center
Community Transit RideStore
20110 46th Avenue W, Lynnwood

Everett Transit

Everett Station
ET Customer Service Center
3201 Smith Avenue

Kitsap Transit

Bremerton Customer Service Office
10 Washington Avenue, Bremerton

King County Metro Transit

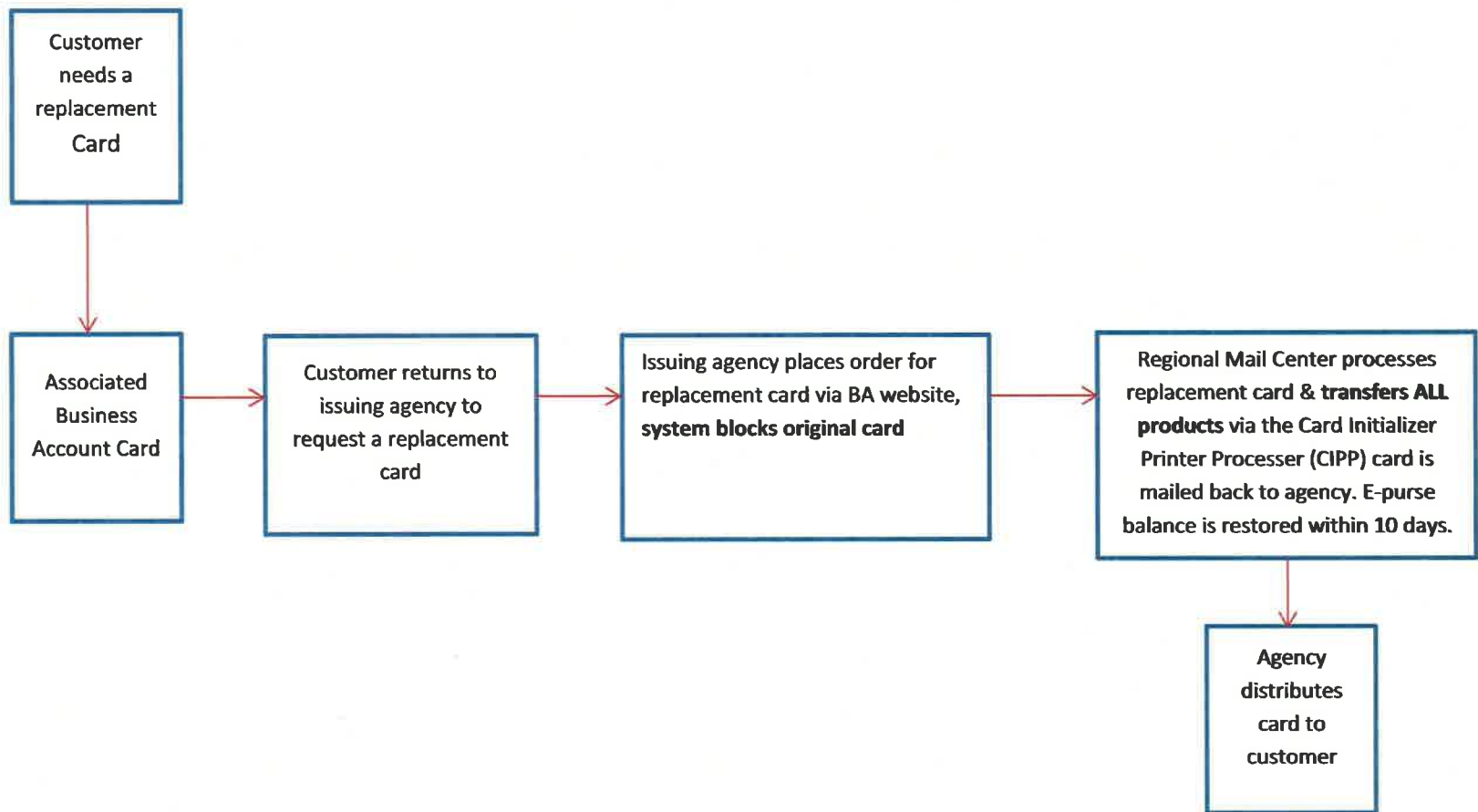
King Street Center
201 S. Jackson St., Seattle

Westlake Customer Stop

Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel

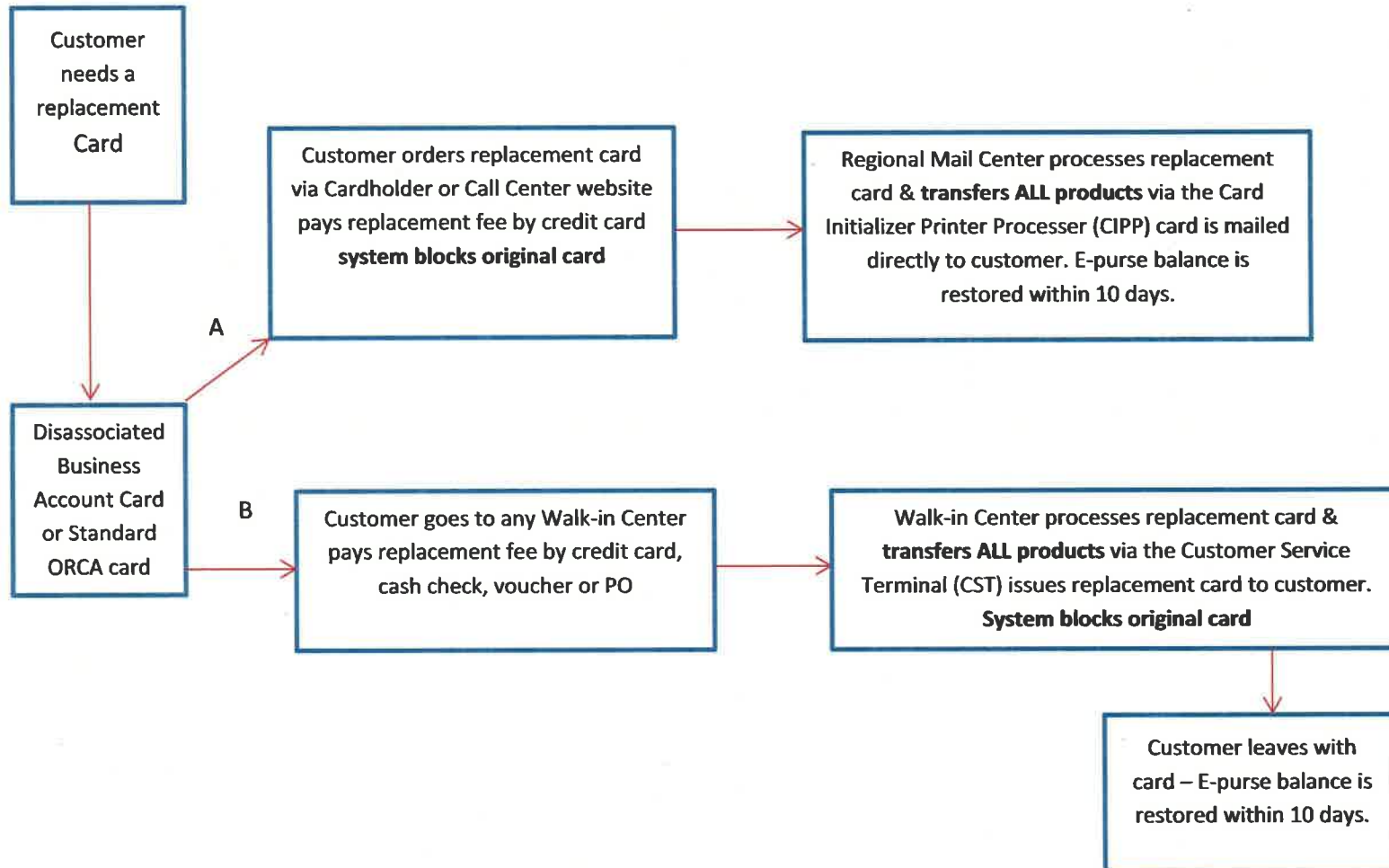
F. Card replacement process for current business accounts

If a card on a Business Account is lost, stolen, damaged or defective, it can be replaced and all products moved to an empty card. The replacement cost would be the current fee for an ORCA card. This process will be modified to allow the cardholder to contact Metro directly for replacement.



G. Card replacement process for current disassociated or standard cards

If a card on a Business Account which has been disassociated or a standard card is lost, stolen, damaged or defective, it can be replaced and all products moved to an empty card. The replacement cost would be the current fee for an ORCA card. This process will be modified to include low-income card replacements.



H. Low-Income Fare Program RFP

Note: The appendices referenced in the RFP are not included here because they duplicate information already in this implementation plan.

Request for Proposals (RFP) Scope of Services for Income Verification and ORCA Card Distribution for King County's Low-Income Fare Program

This request for proposals is to solicit responses from 501c(3) agencies and government organizations that are interested in participating in King County's Low-Income Fare Program. Participation in the program includes: verifying income eligibility, distributing ORCA cards to program-eligible customers, and providing information to customers on behalf of King County.

Background

In February 2014, the King County Council passed an ordinance establishing a reduced transit fare for low-income customers who travel on King County Metro. The low-income fare is to take effect March 1, 2015.

King County plans to operate the Low-Income Fare Program in partnership with 501 c(3) agencies and government entities that have expertise in serving people eligible for the new reduced fare. It is also the policy of King County that the reach of the Low-Income Fare Program extend to diverse populations in all areas of the county. King County would like to contract with partner agencies to create a broad network of sites where low-income individuals can easily access information, services, and receive a card.

King County will be responsible for coordinating and monitoring the overall Low-Income Fare Program, producing outreach and information materials, providing low-income ORCA cards to partner agencies for distribution to qualified low-income customers, and providing training and support to partner agencies. King County will also be responsible for resolving issues concerning eligibility and card problems.

Contracted partner agencies will be responsible for distributing outreach and information materials, verifying the income of program applicants and distributing the low-income ORCA cards to eligible individuals. There are also required reporting and data management tasks associated with the Low-Income Fare Program that include using King County's database to report and manage data for registration of cards in the ORCA card system, maintaining records and providing management reports to King County, and making records available for audit purposes at the request of the County. Partner agencies will also provide customers with information about how to use the low-income fare ORCA cards. Contracted partner agencies will not be responsible for resolving disputes arising from a finding that an applicant is not eligible for the low-income fare; agencies will refer disputes to King County following a defined process.

The customer information element of this program is particularly important to King County, as potential customers need to be provided information on the program, including the benefits of the low-income ORCA card and how to use it. Working with partner agencies, King County will develop, coordinate, and implement an outreach and marketing program operated throughout the county to prepare agencies to help their current clients or other applicants receive transportation benefits for which they may be eligible.

This RFP seeks proposals from agency partners that can perform this work as part of a network of agencies providing broad coverage throughout King County. The Low-Income Fare Program is not intended to replace King County Metro's current ORCA business account agreements with agencies that provide transit benefits to clients. We encourage agencies that have ORCA business account agreements to consider partnering with King County to make the low-income fare available to their existing clients as well as to members of the general public beyond their current client base.

King County will work with partner agencies to test the Low-Income Fare Program procedures and to establish equitable, consistent and efficient processes enabling enrollment of as many eligible applicants as possible. King County intends that agencies will start verifying eligibility and distributing low-income

ORCA cards to individuals before the March 1, 2015 start date to help manage the large number of applicants expected as the program is launched. King County estimates that there could be between 45,000 and 100,000 individuals who would want to take advantage of Metro's low-income fare.

The following are details about King County's Low-Income Fare Program:

- The low-income fare will be a flat fare of \$1.50 per ride on Metro Transit with no zone or peak surcharges.
- Adults at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level will be eligible for the low-income fare.
- The low-income fare will be available only by using a low-income ORCA card with either a monthly pass or money loaded on the card by means of an electronic purse (E-purse).
- Low-income ORCA cards will be valid for two years.
- Low-income ORCA cards will be provided to eligible customers at no cost. Customers will be charged a \$5.00 fee to replace cards that are lost, stolen or damaged. Replacing lost, stolen or damaged cards will be managed by King County, not by partner agencies.
- Low-income ORCA cards will be registered in the ORCA card system to the cardholder. This is to aid in replacement of lost, stolen or damaged cards, allow the passes or E-purse balances on those cards to be transferred to new cards, and ensure that each eligible individual has only one card.
- King County will provide partner agencies with a clear description of processes and protocols for partner agencies and for customers.

A county map showing the percentage of residents below the 200 percent of poverty level by census tract, overlaid with transit routes and existing physical locations where people can add value to ORCA cards, can be found in Appendix A.

Partnership Options and Qualifications

An agency may propose to partner with King County pursuant to one of the two options described below. However, please note that given King County's limited implementation budget and the short time frame for program implementation, King County will weight Option 1 proposals more highly in making contract awards.

Option 1 – An agency may propose to issue low-income ORCA cards to all applicants, including individuals who are not part of their client base. An agency proposing to partner pursuant to this option must be able to use all of the income verification data sources identified by King County and shown in Appendix B to this RFP. Agencies proposing to partner with King County pursuant to this option are also encouraged to include as a separate element of their proposal, the staffing of a Low-Income Fare Program office at Metro's King Street Center, to verify applicants' income and issue low-income cards at this location as they would at their existing agency location(s).

Option 2 – An agency may propose to issue low-income ORCA cards only to its existing client base, using the income verification methods that the agency currently uses for this client base.

Tasks

An agency proposing to partner with King County pursuant to option 1 or 2 must demonstrate in its written response materials the ability to successfully complete the following six tasks:

1. Verify identification and income eligibility for applicants using the County-provided list of acceptable documents and data sources. A list of acceptable data sources and documents is attached as Appendix B to this RFP.

2. Receive, securely store and account for low-income ORCA cards provided by King County using documented and clear management processes for accounting for the cards and identifying which staff have authorized access to the cards. King County will provide contract agencies access to an online database that has an ongoing inventory of cards issued to agencies. The database will generate reports that contract agencies can use to manage, and King County can use to monitor, card inventory and distribution.
3. Enter customer data into King County's secure, online Low-Income Fare Program database. The database will enable agency administrators to track and report customer data and monitor workload. King County will provide partner agency staff with secure access to the database and training prior to the low-income fare start date. King County will provide database technical support, and staff available by phone, to help with customer issues on an ongoing basis. Appendix C provides additional information on the database business and technical specifications.
4. Provide information and materials to customers about how to use ORCA and where and how to add value to cards. Contract agencies will be asked to help King County identify additional ways to communicate such information to their clients beyond the overall outreach plan.
5. Establish procedures for storing and retrieving authorization forms signed by customers allowing the agency to access client data from benefits databases or other information sources, and acknowledging that the customer understands and agrees to the terms of use for the low-income ORCA card. King County will provide an electronic authorization form that can be printed and used for this purpose. Partner agencies will be expected to provide a copy of these forms to customers who request them.
6. Abide by the rules of the Low-Income Fare Program regarding eligibility requirements, acceptable verification sources, database entry and reporting, and security of customer data and ORCA cards.

To enable King County to evaluate your agency's capabilities, please provide the following information:

- a. For each site where your agency proposes to provide Low-Income Fare Program services in partnership with King County, please provide the physical address, a brief description of the programs your agency currently administers there, the estimated number of clients your agency serves who might be eligible for the low-income fare at that location, and the hours and days Low-Income Fare Program services would be provided.
- b. Describe how your agency verifies income eligibility of clients for current programs, including the data sources used.
- c. Describe how your agency will ensure the security of the low-income ORCA cards as well as physical and digital client information. Describe how your agency currently protects client information and data.
- d. Describe the processes and procedures your agency would use for storing and retrieving the electronic and/or physical customer authorization forms provided by the County and completed by individuals.
- e. Describe your agency's experience and ability to manage customer information in an online electronic database.
- f. Identify how your agency would provide income verification for low-income customers who are not currently clients of your agency if you are proposing to serve all applicants, and how you

would enter customer data into the Metro database and distribute ORCA cards and ORCA information materials to customers. Note that King County's Low-Income Fare Program outreach will include developing and providing agencies with information about how to use and reload ORCA cards.

- g. If your agency has only one site and serves a specific population with unique needs rather than the general public, please provide additional detail about the population your agency serves, the unique challenges of serving them, your agency's ability and experience serving them and the number of clients your agency serves.
- h. Describe your agency's experience serving populations with limited English proficiency and current practices.

Cost Proposal

Based on the funding available, King County anticipates funding multiple partner agencies through this RFP. Agencies should develop cost proposals based on performing tasks 1 through 6 described above.

1. Agencies proposing to partner with King County pursuant to Option 1 should describe the services your agency would provide for \$50,000 per year and/or for \$100,000 per year. Agencies may also choose to propose services you would provide for a different annual amount. Services are to include training, reviewing and verifying eligibility, entering card data into a database, and distributing cards and materials. Proposals should include the number and location of agency offices and the number of staff hours and the office hours for service that would be provided at each location for each of these annual amounts.
2. Agencies proposing to partner with King County pursuant to Option 1 are encouraged to also submit a cost proposal to operate and staff an office to conduct income verification/ORCA card issuance at Metro's King Street Center, which is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm on non-holiday weekdays.
3. Agencies proposing to partner with King County pursuant to Option 2 (existing client base) should structure their cost proposal as a cost per card issued. That cost should cover reviewing and verifying eligibility, entering card data into a database, and distributing cards and materials.

Proposal Evaluation

To make the most of Metro's limited budget for operating this program, King County seeks to provide a broad network of locations that is both convenient to low-income customers and results in cost efficiency by reaching large numbers of customers. King County will therefore give priority consideration to Option 1 proposals. Should budget permit, King County will look to Option 2 proposals to fill in gaps in geographic coverage, provide additional capacity in areas of high demand, and target populations with unique needs.

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- Demonstrated ability to successfully provide the capabilities listed above (a through h) (25 points)
- The extent to which an agency's locations provide broad coverage in low-income areas that have transit service and are located throughout the county (25 points)
- Office hours available – office hours during the evenings and on weekends will receive extra points (15 points)
- Extent to which populations with unique needs are served (15 points)
- Cost proposals will receive up to 20 points.
 - Option 1 proposals will be evaluated based on number of staff hours and office hours provided
 - Option 2 proposals will be evaluated based on the proposed cost per card issued.

Term of Contract

The contract period is January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015, with the potential for up to two one-year extensions. The decision to extend a contract for one or more additional years will be based in part on partner performance including: the number of customers verified and given low-income ORCA cards, the number of cards issued at agency locations and unique customer needs. Available program funding will also be a consideration. The database to be used in this program will help track and report these data.

Timeline	
Pre-proposal conference	September 23, 2014
Proposals due	October 2, 2014
Notification of agencies selected	October 17, 2014
Contracts signed	October 31, 2014
Contract period begins	January 1, 2015