



Legislation Text

File #: 2023-0367, **Version:** 1

Clerk 10/11/2023

AN ORDINANCE relating to public transportation, extending the one-dollar rate for low-income fare on buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles, and streetcars from twelve months to twenty-four months; amending Ordinance 19532, Section 3, and establishing an expiration date.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. K.C.C 4A. 700.010 provides fares for regularly scheduled county public transportation service on buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles, including fares for adults, children, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities and low-income riders.
2. Metro transit department's ("Metro") fund management policies for the public transportation fund, as adopted by Ordinance 18321, provide that Metro will recover at least twenty-five percent and will maintain a target of recovering thirty percent of passenger related operating costs from farebox revenues for bus service.
3. The King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation, 2021-2031, as adopted by Ordinance 19367, includes a strategy to "Align fares with other service providers, meet revenue targets, and advance equity through Metro's income-based approach to fares."
4. The King County council has worked with the King County executive and Metro to implement a number of programs to advance an income-based approach to fares and ensure that public transit is affordable and accessible to people in need.
5. The current low-income fare of \$1.00 for buses, trolleys, transit vans, dial-a-ride vehicles and

streetcars, was adopted on a pilot basis by Ordinance 19532. This pilot fare took effect on January 1, 2023, and expires on January 1, 2024. The low-income fare is available to persons who apply for and are determined to meet the eligibility threshold of two hundred percent of the federal poverty level.

6. Sound Transit implemented a permanent \$1.00 low-income fare on March 1, 2023, following their six-month pilot that began September 1, 2022. More than half of riders enrolled in ORCA LIFT who begin a trip on Sound Transit transfer to Metro services, highlighting the importance of fare alignment for the two agencies. That is particularly important for ORCA LIFT enrollees, who are among the region's most-vulnerable riders.

7. Metro is engaged in a department-wide process to make fares more affordable and accessible to riders. Community engagement is planned for 2024 and will help inform evaluation of the \$1.00 low-income fare pilot.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Ordinance 19532, Section 3, is hereby amended to read as follows:

Ordinance 19532, Section 1 (~~(of this ordinance)~~), expires January 1, (~~(2024)~~) 2025.