

Metro Fares Work Program

Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #3

May 18, 2017

Today's Agenda

- Recap work program goals, timeline
- Fare simplification process & options (feedback)
- Increasing affordable access to Metro's system (feedback)
- Next steps

Purpose of 2017-18 Work Program

- Assess ways to improve Metro's fare structure
- Guided by existing policies regarding fares, safety, equity and social justice and farebox recovery targets

Policy Goals that Guide Our Work

Customer Feedback, Strategic Plan, Service Guidelines, Metro Connects, Fund Management Policies, ESJ Plan

- Make fares easier to understand and pay
- Coordinate with regional partners
- Improve safety and reduce disputes
- Speed boarding and save travel time
- Grow ridership and increase affordability
- Meet fare revenue targets

Benefits of Simplification

- Easier to use and understand
- Syncs up with peer transit agencies
- Supports off-board fare payment to speed boarding
- Helps English Language Learners, new and infrequent riders, visitors
- Could increase transit ridership and use
- Reduces complexity, cost of ORCA next generation development

Options Ruled Out

\$2.50 Flat Fare

- Eliminated primarily because of revenue loss

Express/Local Option

- Eliminated for reasons other than revenue loss
- Suburbanization of poverty
- Challenging to define routes as local or express
- Elimination of “local tails” on peak-only express routes would cause problems
- Maintains some complexity

Peak Fare Low (\$2.75)/Off-Peak \$2.50

- Eliminated partly because of revenue loss
- Not as effective as \$3.00 peak in reflecting cost of service, sending price signal

Current Options Under Consideration

(Current structure still an option. No changes for ORCA LIFT, youth, seniors or riders with disabilities)

\$2.75 Flat Fare

- No zone and peak category
- Easy to understand
- Speeds boarding and operations
- Minimizes interactions with operators
- Impacts:
 - Off-Peak: \$0.25 fare increase
 - 1-Zone Peak: no change
 - 2-Zone Peak: \$0.50 fare decrease

\$3.00 Peak/\$2.50 Off-Peak Fare (no zones)

- No zone category
- Metro would be the only ORCA agency with peak pricing
- Reflects cost of service
- Impacts:
 - Off-Peak: No change
 - 1-Zone Peak: \$0.25 fare increase
 - 2-Zone Peak: \$0.25 fare decrease

ESJ Effects of Final Options

Current Fares

- Average adult fare on low-income routes is \$.02 higher than on non-low-income routes
- Average adult fare on minority routes is \$.05 higher than on non-minority routes
- 2-Zone peak routes are more likely to be low-income and minority

Flat Fare Option

- Eliminates these disparities

Peak Fare Option

- Significantly reduces these disparities

2nd Round Survey Initial Results

80% of respondents like a \$2.75 flat fare (somewhat or strongly agree)

- 28% would ride the bus more often
- 97% said it was easy to understand
- 83% agree it will make boarding easier and faster
- 73% believe it is equitable
- 70% believe it is affordable

6,656 responses

28% of respondents like a \$2.50 off-peak/\$3.00 peak fare (somewhat or strongly agree)

- 8% would ride the bus more often
- 56% said it was easy to understand
- 29% agree it will make boarding easier and faster
- 40% believe it is equitable
- 43% believe it is affordable

Reviewing feedback on how to minimize impacts of fare change on those who indicated either option was not affordable for them.

Feedback

- What considerations should we take into account when making a recommendation?
- Any other questions or comments?

Current Programs to Increase Access

- Any fare change will have impacts
- We already have many programs targeted at ESJ populations, but we want to expand them so we better serve our customers
- We want your feedback on what is effective and who we are not reaching

Transit Affordability

ESJ Rider Group	Current Action	Next Steps
Low-income	ORCA LIFT (\$1.50 fare for low-income adults) <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Re-enrollment plan– Eliminated LIFT card fees– Outreach via community-based organizations to understand barriers Human Service Tickets program <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Survey of participating agencies	ORCA LIFT <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Continued re-enrollment outreach– Continued research– More translations of LIFT materials– Reduced Summer Youth Fare ORCA pilot program in summer 2017 – card fee waived Human Service Ticket Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Use survey responses to determine if subsidy is sufficient– Develop an ORCA LIFT human services demonstration project

Transit Affordability

Rider Group	Current Action	Next Steps
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Children (0-5) ride free– Youth (6-18) pay \$1.50– Some school districts purchase youth passes for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Reduced Summer Youth Fare ORCA pilot program in summer 2017 – card fee waived– Work with ORCA agencies to eliminate \$5 youth card fee– Coordinate with colleges for ORCA LIFT and ORCA-to-Go outreach– Work with students and colleges to explore college pass options
Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– \$1.00 fare & free transit instruction– Taxi scrip program for seniors with low income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Work to waive \$3 permit fee

Transit Affordability

Rider Group	Current Action	Next Steps
Persons with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- \$1.00 fare, free transit instruction- \$1.75 Access fare- Taxi scrip program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Consider ways to improve Access- Work to waive \$3 permit fee- Web-based reservations and fare payment

Feedback Recap

- We've heard important feedback:
 - Discounted fares are still too high for very low-income riders
 - Consider solutions for low-income riders who don't quite qualify for LIFT
 - Consider solutions for families and college/university students
 - Card fee and minimum load value is a barrier to access
 - Need to increase ORCA LIFT enrollment among qualifying riders
 - Increase places where ORCA cards can be purchased and loaded with value
 - Incentivize payment with ORCA cards
 - Human service ticket program improvements are needed
- We will consider some ideas from this group (e.g. extension of ORCA transfer window) along with customer feedback from both surveys and work with community-based organizations in the context of our key goals

Feedback

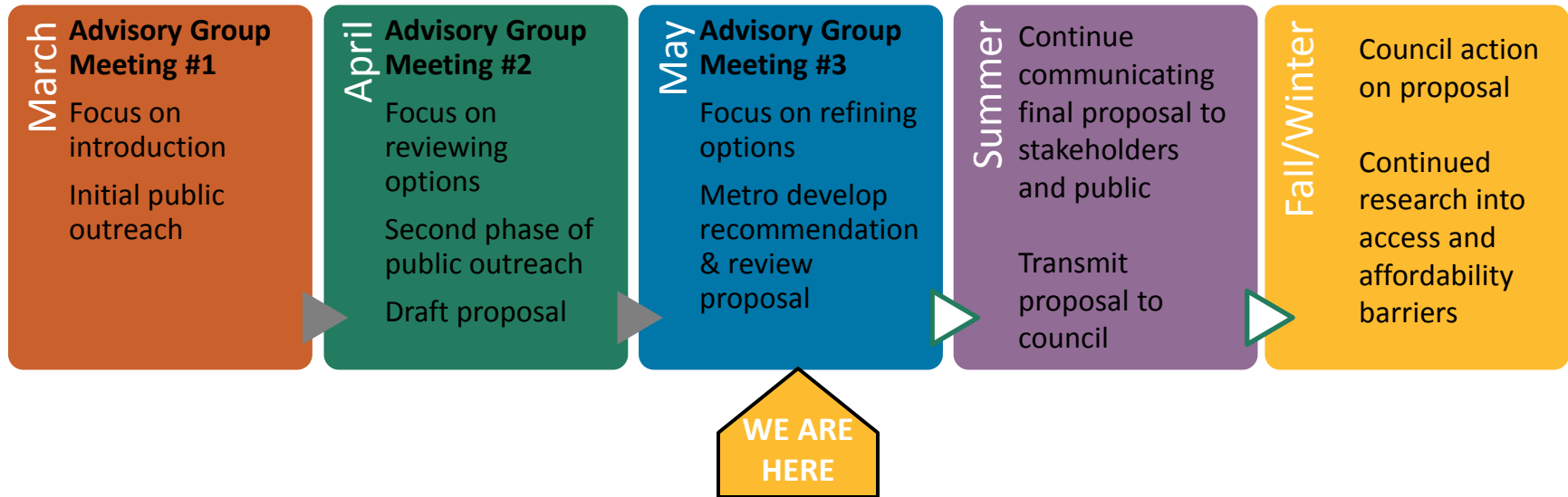
What research should we prioritize:

- What key questions should we ask?
- What components of affordability should we focus on?

2017-18 Schedule

- Short-term – determine final proposal for simplifying fares. Possible recommendation to King County Council in Summer 2017.
- Longer-term – identify and assess additional steps that will continue advancing our goals and help prepare for next generation ORCA.

Public engagement



Contact Us

DeAnna Martin, Community Relations

King County DOT

deanna.martin@kingcounty.gov, 206-477-3835