

Income-based fares Program update

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Mobility is a human right, leading to thriving communities, sustainable environment, and a vibrant economy

EXISTING PROGRAMS

ORCA LIFT

Human Service Tickets

Regional Reduced Fare Permit

Youth fare

Income based fares

ONGOING EFFORTS

Mobility Framework

METRO CONNECTS

Fare Enforcement Reform

Next Generation ORCA

Studies and pilot projects



We are here

Existing conditions	Stakeholder engagement	Customer engagement	Implementation report	Program launch
January – July 2019			June – Nov 2019	2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with experts and peer agencies Research affordability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit stakeholders Hold four workshops: current barriers, potential solutions, long-term vision, program recommendation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community based organization-led community conversations Customer survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with partners and Councilmembers Write and submit report to Council (target: mid-Dec) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-2020: Phase I Robust program evaluation
Program development				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop program concepts: free and low-cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use feedback to refine options Determine what we need to learn from customers Include recommendation in report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use feedback to refine options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimate ridership impact and cost Determine preferred program option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn and adjust for Phase 2 and Next Generation ORCA

Current reduced fare programs



ORCA LIFT

- Income-based
- 50k enrolled in King Co, 5.3m boardings

- **But**, fare may be too high for some, 42% of eligible pay full adult fare



Human Service Tickets

- Income-based
- 1.8m tickets used
- \$4m value

- **But**, have to get in person, agency demand exceeds supply



RRFP Senior/Disabled

- Age and/or ability-based
- 130k enrolled, 3.3m ORCA system boardings

- **But**, difficult to get, fare may be too high for some



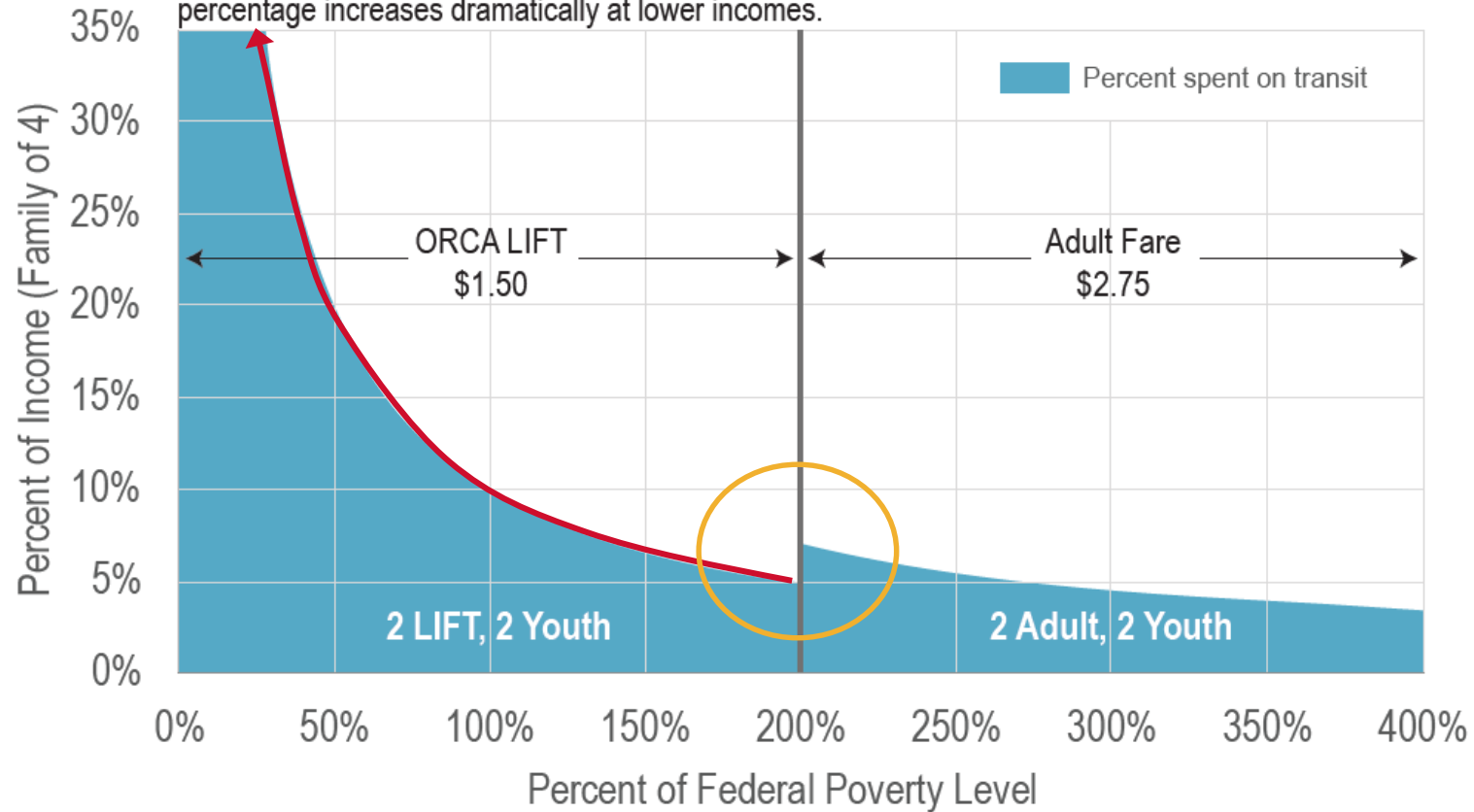
Youth

- Age-based
- 4.7m ORCA system boardings

- **But**, difficult to get, fare may be too high for some

Spending on transit by income

Currently, a family of 4 below 200% FPL would need to spend at least 5% of their income on transit passes. Families below 100% FPL must spend at least 10% of their income on transit passes. This percentage increases dramatically at lower incomes.



Public engagement

- Four stakeholder workshops
- Six in-depth community conversations
- Public survey





Themes

- Focus resources on those most in need
- Partner with human service agencies
- Regional integration is critical for customer experience
- Price isn't the only concern
- Customer-centric outreach and education is necessary

Program proposal



- Leverage existing LIFT infrastructure
- Fully subsidized Metro services
- On an ORCA LIFT or RRF card
- For customers who earn $\leq 80\%$ federal poverty
- Through state, local, and community programs
- Sound Transit can join now and other transit agencies in Next Generation ORCA
- Launch in mid-2020
- Through six state benefit programs
- Expand in 2021 via a call for partners
- Employ robust evaluation



Next steps

- Submit implementation plan to Council
- Move toward July 2020 implementation
- Make necessary changes to the ORCA system
- Continue to engage with regional transit agencies and County Council
- Procure evaluation consultant, start baseline data collection
- Develop 2021 expansion plan

Questions?

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Reference slides for this proposed program

Poverty in King County

	People ages 6+ in King County	Single adult	Family of 4	
50% FPL	4%, 83k people	\$6,245	\$12,875	
80% FPL	6%, 130k people	\$9,368	\$19,313	This program
100% FPL	9%, 184k people	\$12,490	\$25,750	
30% AMI	14%, 167k people	\$23,250	\$33,200	Subsidized housing
138% FPL	13%, 261k people	\$17,236	\$35,535	Medicaid
200% FPL	20%, 396k people	\$24,980	\$51,500	ORCA LIFT
50% AMI	26%, 210k people	\$38,750	\$55,333	

Key findings: Existing conditions

- The affordability of transit and transportation is a key equity issue.
- The need for affordable transportation is exacerbated by the increasing cost of living in King County
- Mobility for low-income populations depends on the development of high-quality alternatives to driving
- Existing data does not make it clear how important lower fares are for low-income populations as compared with other priorities
- More work is needed to understand and further reduce the barriers of enrolling and using Metro's lowest fares for those who are eligible

Key findings: Peer outreach

- It's important to incorporate discounts into the existing fare structure and to design programs to be easily scalable and expanded.
- It is difficult to compare costs between programs since agencies evaluate costs differently, especially with respect to foregone revenue.
- Many discount programs are supported by cost-sharing with cities, counties, partner organizations, grants, or through dedicated sales tax measures; few are fully funded by the transit agency alone.
- Programs that offer multiple or variable reduced rates based on income are most effective at ensuring program investments are made where the need is greatest.

Reference slides for Mobility Framework

Mobility Framework: Why it is needed

- Responds to King County Council Motion 15253, and significant changes in our region:
 - The rapidly changing transportation landscape, with its wide array of new technologies, innovative services, and mobility providers
 - King County's growing and increasingly diversifying population
 - The persistent inequities that exist by race and place
 - The climate crisis



Mobility Framework: Principles to recommendations

Guiding Principles





Mobility Framework: Guiding principles

- Invest where needs are greatest
- Address the climate crisis and environmental justice
- Innovative equitable and sustainably
- Ensure safety
- Encourage dense, affordable housing in urban areas near transit
- Improve access to mobility
- Provide fast, reliable, integrated mobility services
- Support our workforce
- Align our investments with equity, sustainability, and financial responsibility
- Engage deliberately and transparently



Mobility Framework: Recommendations

- **Thematic area 1: Investments**
 - Provide additional transit service in areas with unmet need
 - Support investments to increase safety
 - Support improvements to increase speed and reliability
- **Thematic area 2: Surrounding land use**
 - Increase dense, mixed use zoning and affordable housing in urban areas near transit; minimize displacement of priority populations
 - Develop station area and right-of-way guidelines that prioritize transit use and access
 - Develop people-friendly street design near transit
 - Meet King County's climate goals: reducing car use, developing green infrastructure, promoting climate justice

Mobility Framework: Recommendations

- **Thematic area 3: Innovation**

- Change Metro's adopted policies to assert the role of innovation, address new mobility services, and support innovative, equitable, sustainable mobility
- Develop new mobility guidelines for how Metro partners with private providers
- Facilitate integrated payment and planning for multimodal trips
- Enhance communications and engagement to raise awareness of mobility innovations
- Convene and support jurisdictions in developing a regional framework for innovative mobility partnerships



Mobility Framework: Recommendations

- **Thematic area 4: Workforce**
 - Strategically partner with the labor community
 - Use future transportation innovations to target new riders as potential employees
 - Use strategic and culturally specific communication methods for community relationships
 - Build infrastructure to provide pathways to mobility-related employment
 - Use strategic workforce planning to meet needs
 - Purposefully foster a sustainable learning culture within Metro
 - Require the centering of equity in all contracts and subcontracts

Mobility Framework: Recommendations

- **Thematic area 5: Engagement**
 - Strengthen communication and marketing efforts
 - Build lasting relationships in communities
 - Use a coordinated cross-departmental approach to engagement
 - Develop an equity-centered engagement framework
 - Develop a community liaison program
 - Identify metrics to measure success and continually improve