

## Sound Transit Citizen Oversight Panel Virtual Meeting Summary

**June 16, 2021**

**COP Members Present:** Scott Lampe, James Peyton, Helen Powell, Larry Sauvé, Joe Scorcio, Paul Thompson

**COP Members Absent:** Fred Auch, Brett Johnson

**Others Present:** Kathy Albert, Katie Flores, Adam Montee

### **Tacoma Link Fares**

- Chad Davis, Deputy Director of Fares

Chad Davis discussed the history of free fares on Tacoma Link, which have been in place since service opened on the line in 2003. Since 2014, Downtown Tacoma Partnership has compensated Sound Transit for the fare-free service. In 2016, the Board directed staff to propose new Tacoma Link fares to the Board prior to the opening of Hilltop expansion service. The Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension is scheduled to open in May 2022, with the addition of 2.4 miles and six new stations in the Stadium District and Hilltop neighborhood. As a result, the Agency is seeking comment on two fare options via an online survey available through July 25, 2021. A fare proposal is expected to be developed in the fall of 2021, and a Board decision made in November 2021. The adopted fares will go into effect when the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension opens.

Each of the proposed options include a \$1.50 ORCA LIFT fare for low-income adults. Option 1 is similar to Pierce Transit's fares, and proposes a \$2.00 adult fare, and a \$1.00 youth, senior, and disabled fare. Option 2 is similar to Sound Transit's lowest Link light rail fares, and proposes a \$2.25 adult fare, a \$1.50 youth fare, and a \$1.00 senior and disabled fare. Farebox recovery ranges from 10 – 11 percent; revenue projections range from \$1.7 - \$1.9 million annually. The estimated cost of fare collection is \$400 - \$500 million annually.

### **Rider Experience and Operations Metrics Dashboard**

- Russ Arnold – Chief Customer Experience and Innovation Officer
- Rajan Cheriell – Director of Essential Data and Analytics
- Emily Nutsch – Operations Performance Manager

Staff gave an update on the development of the Sound Transit rider experience vision, which states: “We will deliver a transit experience that is dependable, safe, clean and available with informed riders; while striving to create an experience that is simple, seamless and intuitive for our riders.” Dependable service gives passengers an expectation of consistency and reduces their sense of uncertainty. Safe service gives passengers confidence in the operational condition of the fleet, as well as an experience free from discrimination, harassment, or the threat of violence. Available service allows passengers access to their preferred Sound Transit mode, including reasonable assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Clean service pertains to vehicles and facilities that are in good working order and free of excessive trash, graffiti, or vandalism. Informed riders should expect rapid notification of service disruptions, awareness of upcoming changes to service, and easy access to relevant schedules and information.

Staff members are working to make the ridership data the Agency collects more transparent and useful through the development of an online operations metrics dashboard that is being rolled out by category as each metric is developed. Productivity will be included in the dashboard eventually, as will other metrics.

<https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/system-performance-tracker>

## **Discussion**

Tacoma Link Fares – Payment of fares on Tacoma Link will be a big change for the City of Tacoma. The costs of fare enforcement, including security, are significant, but there are also costs associated with addressing petty crime that can occur more frequently in fare free ride zones.

Rider Experience and Operations Metrics Dashboard – COP members noted the work involved in putting detailed ridership information online. Using the information to inform the ridership experience will be a key outcome.

Chair Scott Lampe noted the recently released cost estimating reports prepared by Triunity, which identified a lack of coordination internally, as well as higher contingencies in the ST3 plan than those in ST2. The findings will be relevant to the Board’s ongoing realignment work.

Chair Lampe also noted and read the Board’s response to the COP’s 2020 Year-End Report.

The summary of the June 2, 2021, virtual COP meeting was approved.

## **Member Reports**

None

## **2021 Focus Areas**

- Adequacy and appropriateness of station access, including use of emerging technologies
- Monitoring and review of social equity, racial equity, fare enforcement, and inclusion policies
- Uses of peer comparison data
- Asset management plan progress
- Reliability and availability of federal, state, local, and third party funding sources
- Customer experience focused metrics across the RTA region and transit agencies within it
- Covid-19, contingency planning, and disaster preparedness
- Program realignment, interagency cooperation and interoperability
- Coordination with local jurisdictions to mitigate impacts of unauthorized parking around stations

## **Outstanding Questions**

None

**Next Virtual Meeting:** Wednesday, July 7, 8:30 – 11:00 AM