

Fare Enforcement Program Update

*Sound Transit Board of Directors Meeting
October 22, 2020*



Why we are here

- Review past and current work and next steps for revising Sound Transit's fare enforcement program.
- Update Board on timeline for its development consideration of proposed policy changes.
- No Board actions scheduled for today.

Vision and mission

Vision

A system where everyone taps — where everyone who has fare media can get to where they want to go, and everyone who needs fare media can get access to it.

Mission

To understand the impacts of our current program and develop recommendations that provide an equitable and passenger-focused experience, including safety for all riders and integrity of decision making, while ensuring strong financial stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Community engagement process to date



What we've heard so far

The plans we're reviewing today respond to key themes we heard through public engagement:

- Confusion about fare requirements.
- Discomfort with fare inspections involving FEOs who resemble law enforcement.
- Fares are a hardship for a small but important segment of our riders.
- Riders appreciate security presence.

Where we left off in March

- Overview of Fares Action Plan.
- Motion M2020-22 Authorizing Participation in an Income-Based Pilot Program (approved).
- Resolution R2020-05 Fare Enforcement Policy Update (paused due to COVID-19).

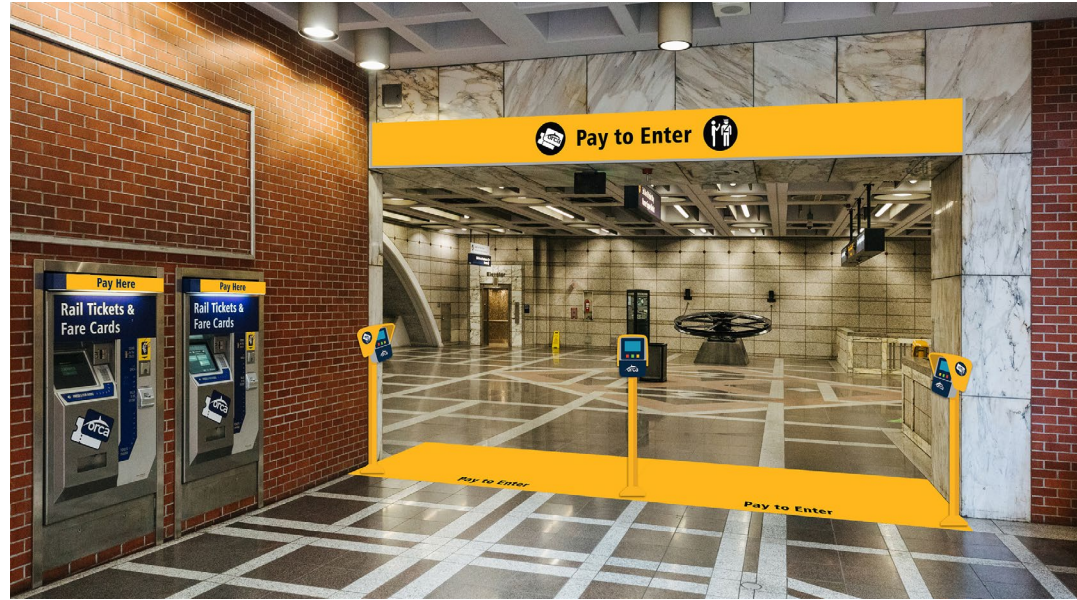
Responses to COVID-19

Emergency risk mitigation

- Reduced service + temporarily suspended fares (March).
- Implemented no-contact inspection when rail fares resumed (June).
- Suspended issuance of infractions.
- Shifted officers' focus to ORCA LIFT promotion.
- Paused some action plan elements as focus shifted to COVID-19.

Recent progress

- Designed new station signage to more clearly mark paid areas (pending).
- Hired new Fare Engagement Program Manager.
- Designing Fare Engagement Ambassador Pilot Program.



Fare Engagement Ambassador Pilot Program

- To begin in 2021.
- Replace fare enforcement officers with ambassadors who will conduct inspections and provide education.
- Fare engagement ambassadors will be ST staff which allows direct control of priorities, training, and management.
- Issue more warnings and fewer infractions.

Fare Engagement Ambassador Pilot Program

- Continue to explore options for reduced fines.
- Suspend escalation to law enforcement for fare issues alone. Escalation would require other aggravating factors.
- Engage community further on key elements of pilot program and policy.

Community engagement next steps

- Expand and continue engagement with people of color, Black-led organizations and others community groups.
- Solicit community input to help shape and evaluate the pilot program and guide implementation.

Staff next steps

- Hire and train ambassadors to replace FEOs.
- New uniforms and training, including enhanced training for anti-bias and de-escalation.
- Define parameters for times to allow free or reduced fares during severe weather.
- Return current FEOs to security duties.
- Staff will continue moratorium on infractions until a later date when ridership recovers.

Board policy—pending decisions

Resolution R2020-05 Fare Enforcement Policy Update

- Reduction of monetary fine from \$124.
- Adds reference to Stride bus rapid transit.
- Revises the suspension section allowing for updated procedures for suspension.
- Confirms changes to infraction process.

What we've heard and how we're responding

Confusion about fare requirements.

- Responses: shift to ambassadors with education focus, increase access to fare media, add new signage marking paid areas, Next Gen ORCA expands payment options.

Some riders uncomfortable with FEOs resembling law enforcement.

- Responses: shift to ambassadors, new uniforms, shift to emphasis on customer service and fare compliance.

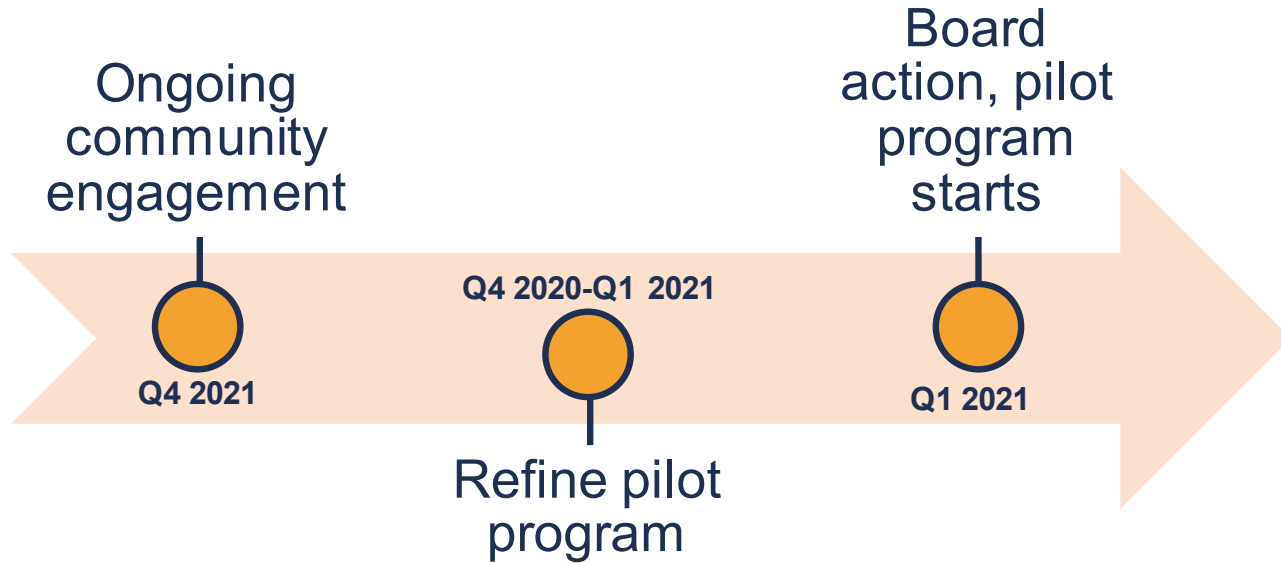
Some riders don't have money for fares.

- Responses: Aggressive ORCALIFT promotion, participation in subsidized annual pass.

Support for security presence.

- Return FEOs to security duties, decouple security from fare engagement.

Path forward



Thank you.



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