

*Sound Transit Fare Compliance  
Community Driven Engagement Plan*

**Updated:** September 16, 2021

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## Executive summary

In 2019, Sound Transit began reviewing its Link light rail and Sounder commuter train fare compliance systems based on community concerns. We evaluated fare compliance policies, procedures, protocols, and we gathered community feedback to identify where improvements should be made.

[Our review found](#) that under existing Sound Transit fare enforcement policy, communities of color – particularly Black transit riders – were disproportionately more likely to be cited, fined or referred to the court system.

Informed by what we heard, the [Sound Transit Board approved](#) a new Fare Engagement Pilot Project to reimagine how the agency handles fare compliance. The Sound Transit Board directed staff to focus further engagement in communities most impacted by fare enforcement, gather input, and come back to the Board with further proposed policy changes in January 2022.

We began implementing this direction by pursuing a series of listening sessions with several community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve Black communities and other communities of color.

Key feedback themes we heard from individual CBOs:

1. **Advance racial equity.** Sound Transit should act as stewards of equitable and inclusive processes in our community engagement strategies.
2. **Build trust within communities.** Building and maintaining authentic relationships with communities of color is necessary to reach intended communities and to successfully meet the goals of this plan.
3. **Meet people where they are.** Minimizing barriers while making participation as easy as possible for intended audiences is critical. It is necessary to tailor a mix of engagement strategies to reach specific groups.
4. **Honor people's time and contributions.** Compensation for participation is crucial to successful and principled engagement both in outreach to CBOs and with the communities they serve.
5. **Follow up, review, and assess.** In order to meet engagement goals, regular assessment of progress is necessary. This should be conducted early and often to provide the opportunity to adjust strategies and techniques.

Feedback from the CBO listening sessions is incorporated in this **Community Driven Engagement Plan**. The Community Driven Engagement Plan is a roadmap informed by CBOs that will guide Sound Transit's effort to collect community feedback about fare compliance policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project.

The next steps of engagement outlined in this Community Drive Engagement Plan include:

- **Summer 2021:**
  - Develop a community survey and notification and informational materials that will aid in collecting feedback from the community about fare compliance policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project.

- Request partnership with CBOs to collect feedback about fare compliance policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project, guided by their expertise and desire to support Sound Transit in next phases of this work.
- **Fall 2021:**
  - Conduct extensive direct in-person and online engagement to collect feedback from community members via posters, flyers and informational booths.
  - Offer and conduct briefings and feedback sessions with schools, community service centers, and other community-based organizations.
- **Winter 2021:**
  - Summarize community feedback to share with CBOs and the Sound Transit Board.
- **Spring 2022 and beyond:**
  - Continue to build and strengthen relationships with CBOs at the conclusion of this effort to support priorities of both Sound Transit and the individual CBOs.

Community feedback about Sound Transit fare compliance policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project will be shared with the Sound Transit board for further consideration in early 2022.

## Project overview and background

In 2019, Sound Transit began reviewing its Link light rail and Sounder commuter train fare compliance systems based on community concerns. We evaluated fare compliance policies, procedures and protocols, and we gathered community feedback to identify where improvements should be made.

[Our review found](#) that under existing Sound Transit fare enforcement policy, communities of color – particularly Black transit riders – were disproportionately more likely to be cited, fined or referred to the court system.

Informed by what we heard, the [Sound Transit Board approved](#) a new Fare Engagement Pilot Project to reimagine how the agency handles fare compliance, with a goal of preventing the inequitable and compounding effects that often result from unpaid fines and contact with the court system. They also paused citations until a new program and policy could be adopted.

The Sound Transit Board directed staff to focus further engagement in communities most impacted by fare enforcement, to gather input, and to come back to them with further proposed policy changes in January 2022.

Sound Transit began implementing this direction by pursuing a series of listening sessions with several community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve Black communities and other communities of color. These listening sessions were focused on the following key elements:

1. Providing background about fare compliance on Sound Transit service
2. Understanding individual CBO mission statements and the communities they serve
3. Understanding existing relationships between CBOs and Sound Transit
4. Asking CBOs for guidance on how Sound Transit could best reach the communities they serve
5. Asking CBOs for any other feedback they have about Sound Transit service or Sound Transit as an agency

A list of the CBOs we coordinated with is included in *Organization outreach*. A summary of feedback from the CBOs is included in *Findings from listening sessions*.

Feedback from the CBO listening sessions is incorporated in this **Community Driven Engagement Plan**. The Community Driven Engagement Plan is a roadmap informed by CBOs that will guide Sound Transit's effort to collect community feedback about fare compliance policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project.

Community feedback about Sound Transit fare compliance policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project will be shared with the Sound Transit board for further consideration in early 2022.

## Organization outreach

Beginning in May 2021, Sound Transit staff reached out to several CBOs that serve Black communities and other communities of color to participate in listening sessions with Sound Transit.

Listening sessions were offered on virtual platforms (Zoom or Teams) to allow CBOs to participate in a way most convenient for them. These sessions were conducted with members of CBOs along with staff from Sound Transit and their consultant team. Sound Transit staff members guided CBO attendees through a series of questions and the answers were recorded by consultant staff.

Email invitations were sent to a total of 44 organizations. The email invitation text provided a background of the project and its goals and offered organizations compensation of \$100 for their participation.

Of the 44 CBOs invited, we completed listening sessions with 13 total organizations:

Organization	Mission Statement <i>Note: Mission statements compiled from organization websites</i>
<b>Interaction Transition</b>	<i>The mission of Interaction Transition is to benefit community safety by facilitating a successful transition by formerly incarcerated individuals, from life in prison to life in the community. Interaction Transition helps its participants meet certain critical basic needs, such as employment. The program greatly reduces the risk that participants will resume criminal activity, increases safety within the community, and advances successful reintegration with fellow community members.</i>
<b>Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle</b>	<i>The Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (ULMS) empowers African Americans, as well as other diverse underserved communities, to thrive by securing educational and economic opportunities.</i>
<b>ReWA</b>	<i>ReWA is a non-profit, multi-ethnic organization that promotes inclusion, independence, personal leadership, and strong communities by providing refugee and immigrant women and their families with culturally and linguistically appropriate services. ReWA advocates for social justice, public policy changes, and equal access to services while respecting cultural values and the right to self-determination.</i>
<b>The Breakfast Group</b>	<i>The primary focus of The Breakfast Group is to provide support for low-income youth of color in achieving their educational objectives. The emphasis of The Breakfast Group is to work directly with the community's highest risk young men. Furthermore, to assist them in completing their secondary education and access higher education and/or employment after high school as they move forward with determination and integrity toward adulthood.</i>
<b>CHOOSE 180</b>	<i>CHOOSE 180 transforms the lives of youth and young adults by partnering with institutional leaders, connecting them with community, empowering them with choice, and teaching them</i>

	<i>the skills necessary to avoid engagement with the criminal legal system.</i>
<b>Federal Way Black Collective</b>	<i>The Federal Way Black Collective is an organization that is committed to providing voice, building strategy, and driving change in communities of color through policy development and the creation of resources that are equitable and culturally reflective.</i>
<b>Associated Students of the University of Washington</b>	<i>The Associated Students of the University of Washington is the democratic voice of students that engages the campus community through programming, services and advocacy. The ASUW strives to enrich student life and develop future leaders.</i>
<b>Pacific Islander Health Board &amp; Asia Pacific Cultural Center</b>	<i>The Pacific Islander Health board seeks to cultivate resilience within our communities to achieve health equity through culturally safe and community driven solutions, traditions, advocacy, and policies.</i>
<b>Yoga Behind Bars</b>	<i>Advocates for restorative justice solutions, holistic re-entry services, and the removal of other barriers that prevent formerly incarcerated people to rebuild their lives upon release. We work with the WA State corrections leadership to create opportunities within the system, including yoga classes for prison staff and yoga teacher trainings for incarcerated people.</i>
<b>Rainier Scholars</b>	<i>Rainier Scholars cultivates the academic potential and leadership skills of hard-working, underrepresented students of color. By creating access to transformative educational and career opportunities and providing comprehensive support to scholars and families, we increase college graduation rates and empower new generations of leaders.</i>
<b>YouthCare</b>	<i>YouthCare works to end youth homelessness and to ensure that young people are valued for who they are and empowered to achieve their potential.</i>
<b>Peace Community Center</b>	<i>Peace Community Center creates transformational educational experiences for Hilltop youth and families of promise empowering future success in college, career, and community leadership.</i>
<b>Rainier Beach Action Coalition</b>	<i>RBAC, the Rainier Beach Action Coalition, is a grass roots neighborhood development action coalition devoted to implementing neighborhood responsive renewal and development. They focus specifically on the implementation of the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan (1997, 2012). RBAC is one of many neighborhood groups that Rainier Beach residents (youth and adults), community organizations, businesses, agencies and institutions to work together to improve the status of youth and families and to enhance quality of life in the Rainier Beach neighborhood.</i>

## Findings from listening sessions

The below findings capture important key themes we heard during the listening sessions. These themes guided the development of the Community Driven Engagement Plan, its goals, and the engagement tools and tactics to collect feedback on fare compliance policies from the audiences the CBOs serve and other audiences in Sound Transit's service area.

### *Key feedback themes*

#### **Trust building**

- In order to partner with Sound Transit for communication efforts, CBOs need to have trust with Sound Transit. Deep investments are required to truly partner with CBOs, and they need to be more than project-specific and truly focused on long-term relationship building.
- It's important to meet CBOs where they're at on their time in order to help build these relationships.
- CBOs talk to each other. The reputation of Sound Transit in the CBO space is important and goes far.
- CBOs are inundated with requests for their help in a lot of this work. The trends of post-George Floyd and the racial reckoning that came with it have pushed organizations' capacity.
- Many CBOs were very appreciative of Sound Transit's time and investment in this work.

#### **Community presence and follow-through**

- Sound Transit should have an ongoing presence in the communities they are trying to reach. This will help requests for participation and feedback feel more normalized.
- Sound Transit should show how they're investing in communities. This includes hiring within the communities (especially multilingual and people of color) most affected by gentrification and rising costs of living in the region.
- Sound Transit should reach out at a variety of locations, including:
  - Gathering places like schools, businesses, and community centers
  - Facilities that serve historically excluded communities, such as shelters, employers that serve previously incarcerated populations, prisons, and transitional housing
- Follow up after the feedback collection process is vital. CBOs – and their communities – want to know about the decision-making process, and that their voices are actually being heard and won't just go into a report or black hole.

#### **Compensation**

- Compensation and paying people for their time and contributions are important. What can Sound Transit offer to people for participating in outreach? Ideas included ORCA cards, fare tickets, gift cards, cash compensation and food.
- Some organizations would be happy to support Sound Transit with this work – if they're paid for the staff time required to effectively do it.

#### **Community voices**

- Word of mouth is a significant way communication is spread in some historically excluded communities. Working with CBOs is an important way to reach these communities.
- Translated materials aren't always effective on their own to reach people.

### *Representative quotes*

*Can you share data on how the program changes when people work in the communities they serve? That would go a long way in supporting Sound Transit going forward.*

*The younger generation feels like the fare enforcement doesn't seem trusting of the younger generation.*

*Having a bridge to hear from underheard communities is critical, especially since others are heard too much.*

*I think there's a fear of intimidation of using it. Have I exceeded these stops? How far does this go? Etc. To be more equitable, find avenues to support those community members who are non-English speaking that may have fear of "doing things wrong", so to speak. And more clarity around what the roles are—literally everywhere. And how to really access the fares, I think that would be much more encouraging for families to be able to participate.*

*I think being visible would be a nice first step. Getting out into the community. We are representing you. But i think you need to represent yourself. It's about you. We can help you bridge the accessibility and that trust. But ultimately sound transit has to be there to be visible [in the community].*

*I think it's reassuring that you're reaching for input prior to making decisions. I applaud Sound Transit for taking initiative to get voices heard and I'm excited to hear about the results! I'm able to provide guidance in representing the community that I'm a part of and that I'm representing. Again, be really intentional about who it is we are serving. The age, demographics, building trust, those are my main points.*

*I would say hire from the community and where they are. This directly impacts the marginalized communities where they normally would not have access to work in a government position which is something that immigrants and refugees aspire to. Having the ability for these ambassadors to really connect with their home languages – that is amazing. I applaud all of you for even considering that and making that change.*

### *Summarized responses to listening guide questions*

#### **Do you ride Sound Transit trains or buses?**

A majority of those interviewed (10 out of 13 responses) said they ride Sound Transit buses and trains regularly.

#### **Feedback about Sound Transit fares:**

- Multiple organizations suggested removing fares from Sound Transit service altogether.
- Multiple organizations talked about challenges obtaining reduced fare transit passes, including making just too much to qualify for ORCA LIFT, not understanding how to apply for ORCA LIFT, or not having the necessary documents to apply for ORCA LIFT.

#### **Experiences with fare enforcement staff:**

- People reported feelings of fear, anxiety, intimidation, and discomfort of fare enforcement officers.
  - Some mentioned fare enforcement staff feels like a police presence.
  - People appreciate the new uniform style and note that it feels more welcoming and inviting.
    - One person suggested adding buttons to uniforms that say, “Ask me” or “How Can I Help You” in different languages.
- When fare enforcement is present, some people reported feeling as if they’d done something wrong or might get in trouble, even if they’ve paid the fare.
- During one listening session, the respondents reported fare enforcement officers made them feel safe.
- People reported observing inconsistent engagement by fare enforcement.
  - Some described witnessing biases toward people of color and youth.
- People reported feeling some confusion (especially non-English speakers) about how to use the system and fare enforcement procedures.
  - Some mentioned inconsistencies with the fare compliance process (which routes or trains get checked, how often do checks occurs, etc.), which add to the confusion.
- People feel it’s important to recruit multilingual fare ambassadors.
- More education (e.g. signage on platforms and inside train) is needed to help community understand who fare ambassadors are and what their role is, the fare compliance process, and what resources or programs are available.
- It feels like fare enforcement has been inconsistent; that fare enforcement officers are located more at some stations than others.
- Consider fare enforcement as a teachable moment – what are ways to understand why a person isn’t able to afford fare, and what are other options to address their fare avoidance?
- How can Sound Transit provide fare options to youth who aren’t currently in school, especially when public transportation is their only option to get around.

#### **Prior experience for engaging with Sound Transit on past projects:**

About half (six out of 13) of those interviewed said they have previously engaged with Sound Transit projects.

#### **Methods to engage with CBOs, the communities they serve, and communities of color on the topic of fare compliance and enforcement:**

- Community centers and community panels or forums were mentioned most as methods to engage with communities, as well as focus groups, virtual and in-person events, one-on-one conversations, and social media.
- One person suggested reaching out to those with previous or multiple citations to understand why they weren't able to pay.
- Partner with CBOs to assist with engagement efforts.
  - Many stated it's critical to pay ambassadors, liaisons, and representatives for their time.
  - CBOs can be trusted conduits to share Sound Transit messages.
- Work with schools to reach youth and college students.
- Work with churches to reach communities of faith.
- Work with community circle keepers and healing spaces to help understand community feelings about historic Sound Transit practices, including fare enforcement and also land acquisition.
- Sponsor and table at various cultural events in the community.

**Ways Sound Transit can work to set up authentic relationships with the community:**

- Connect with CBOs who serve underrepresented populations.
- Work with grassroots organizations and build trust in those relationships.
- Commit to increase personal interactions within different communities. Put a face to the Sound Transit brand.
- Look at the demographics of where work is being done. For example, there was a half-hour trip for kids to get to school within a few blocks due to the construction of bike lanes in a high-traffic area. Most of the people are older residents in the community aren't riding bikes.
- Promote culturally relevant and translated materials.
- Be more visible and getting out into the community, like tabling at different events, high schools and middle schools.
- Consider big events coming like Lunar New Year, International Women's Day, and Legislative Day – these are events that have opportunities where Sound Transit could "sponsor" tickets to transport them to Olympia, or wherever the event takes place.
- There needs to be a face and personal connection to Sound Transit. As one interviewee said, "Sound Transit needs to represent itself. We can help bridge accessibility and trust, but ultimately Sound Transit has to be there."
- Sound Transit should have a presence at job fairs and other job opportunities to share open positions.
- Host events outside of normal working hours, including nights and weekends. These are often better times for people to attend events without compromising during the traditional work day.
- Sound Transit should create panel opportunities for community members to share their lived experience and how that relates to Sound Transit practices.

**Best ways to show appreciation for time and feedback:**

Gift cards, cash, and prepaid ORCA cards were the most popular answers to show appreciation.

Other ideas included:

- Rewards for higher participation through contests

- Hosting appreciation events
- Recognition through Sound Transit's social media platforms
- Food

**CBO involvement after listening sessions:**

Everyone interviewed said they would like to stay informed with updates as the project advances. Some said they were willing to offer additional support if requested. One person mentioned they would like to understand the time commitment before agreeing to engage further.

Seven organizations said they would like to stay involved, four would like to review the plan, and one offered to collaborate.

## Goals and guiding principles

Sound Transit is grateful for the time and intention CBOs provided to help guide the development of this document. Based on feedback, we developed the following goals and guiding principles.

### Goals

Sound Transit seeks to improve its relationships with communities that have been historically most affected by fare enforcement. Improving these relationships requires an acknowledgement of past harm done by the fare enforcement policy, and a recognition of the importance of community feedback and community partnership to identify and strengthen a new fare enforcement policy moving forward.

Recognizing that Sound Transit has work to do to rebuild trust with Black communities and other communities of color, Sound Transit's goals for the Community Driven Engagement Plan include:

1. Increase awareness about objectives for updating Sound Transit's fare compliance policy with communities of color
2. Collect input from and engage with a diverse range of voices and perspectives, with a special focus on communities of color
3. Build presence and trust in new community spaces that allows Sound Transit to identify and deepen existing and build new partnerships with community-based organizations

### Guiding principles

This section describes five themes heard to date that reflect best practices summarized from the listening sessions.

These principles guide the development of the Community Driven Engagement Plan to ensure their consideration in strategies we use throughout the community engagement process.

#### **1. Advance racial equity**

Act as stewards of equitable and inclusive processes in our community engagement strategies. Aim to elevate the voices of those most impacted by fare enforcement policies and voices belonging to communities of color.

#### **2. Build trust within communities**

Building, maintaining and sustaining authentic relationships with communities of color is necessary to reach the intended communities and goals identified in this plan. Engagement strategies identified in this plan are identified to advance Sound Transit's role as a partner in the community—a partner that values responsiveness, collaboration, transparency, and trust.

#### **3. Meet people where they are**

Minimizing barriers while making participation as easy as possible for intended audiences is critical. CBOs interviewed spoke of *meeting people where they are*. It is necessary to tailor a mix of engagement strategies to reach specific groups. Often, an engagement strategy that works well for one community group may not work for another. For example, some populations don't have reliable access to online tools, so in-person engagement may be more effective.

#### **4. Honor people's time and contributions**

Compensation was consistently highlighted as crucial to successful and principled engagement both in initial engagement with CBOs and with the communities they serve. Equitable public participation acknowledges that compensation for time and contribution is a best practice in the field. Additionally, in today's social climate, mandatory paid compensation is increasingly an expectation for sharing one's skills, talents or lived experience.

#### **5. Follow up, review, and assess**

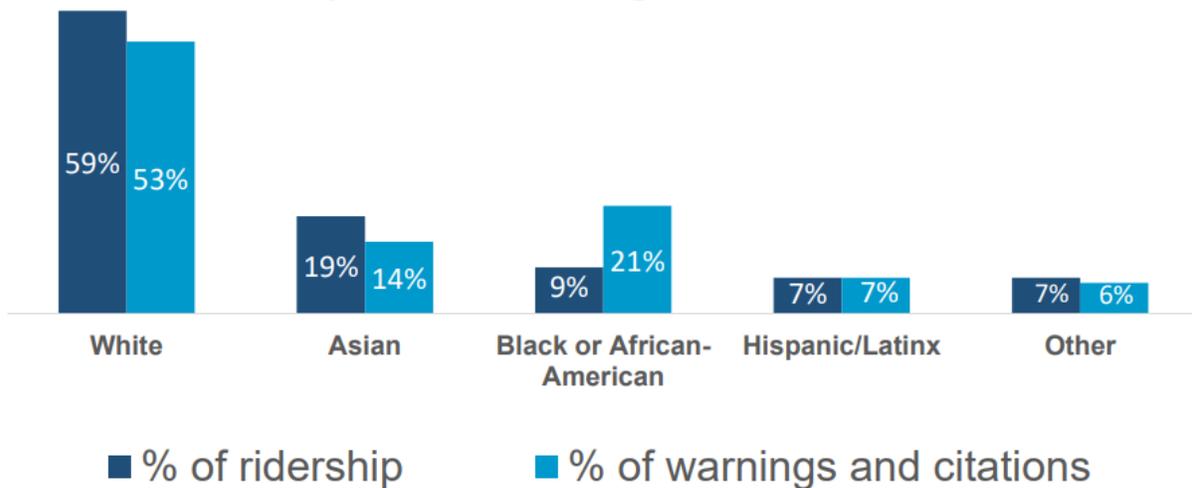
In order to meet engagement goals, regular assessment of progress is necessary. This should be conducted early and often to provide the opportunity to adjust strategies and techniques. An assessment of diversity of voices should be taken to ensure target audiences are reached, which will be measured by conducting a post-survey demographic analysis along with connecting with CBOs to assess the effectiveness of this engagement. Related to this is following through with CBOs and the communities engaged in the process. Being transparent, opening lines of two-way communication, and actively participating with CBOs and the communities we're trying to reach should be top of mind.

## Audiences

In 2019, Sound Transit began reviewing our fare compliance system based on community concerns. We set up an internal interdisciplinary workgroup to evaluate fare compliance policies, procedures, protocols, and gather community feedback to identify where improvements should be made. [Our review found](#) that under existing Sound Transit fare enforcement policy, communities of color – particularly Black transit riders – were disproportionately more likely to be cited and fined. In the past after multiple citations, Sound Transit would refer riders for prosecution for “theft of service.”

## Warning and citation demographics

### 2018-2019 ridership vs 2018 warnings and citations



From our listening sessions with CBOs that serve Black communities and other communities of color, we identified a wide variety of audiences to connect with to solicit opinions and feedback about Sound Transit’s fare enforcement policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project.

Those audiences include:

- Black riders and other riders of color.** Because prior Sound Transit fare enforcement has disproportionately affected these communities, we are seeking feedback from those who fare enforcement has affected most severely and will use that feedback to guide future implementation.
- Students (and other coordination with schools).** The CBOs we spoke with frequently mentioned that schools are a great place to reach our target audience, which would include both current students and their extended families and/or care-giving networks that support them with their education. Coordination with schools will provide opportunities to hear direct feedback from students, as well as provide other opportunities for students to be engaged with Sound Transit.

- **Youth (and coordination with youth-based activities and service centers).** Similar to schools, we heard from CBOs that engaging with youth-focused activity and service centers is another great way to reach youth and their care networks.
- **People experiencing homelessness.** According to the [2019 Seattle/King County Point-In-Time Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness](#), 40 percent of King County’s population identifies as people of color (Black, Hispanic, Latino, American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Island, or multiple races), while 70 percent of King County residents experiencing homelessness are people of color.
- **Immigrant populations.** We heard from CBOs that there are multiple immigrant populations in the greater Seattle area who are not only unfamiliar with Sound Transit fare enforcement, but also how to access the system in general. CBOs recommended targeted engagement to immigrant populations with a heavy emphasis on education about the system in general, and fare enforcement in particular.
- **English-language learning communities.** Similar to immigrant populations, we also heard a need to provide in-language outreach to people who are English-language learners. Some representative limited-English speaking groups include refugee populations, immigrant populations, and other limited-English speaking residents.
- **Parishioners.** CBOs frequently stressed the importance of reaching out to places of worships, particularly churches.
- **Formerly incarcerated individuals.** In our conversations with CBOs, we learned that formerly incarcerated individuals often need additional support and guidance in how to access the transit system. CBOs recommended we conduct engagement in prisons to reach this population prior to their release.
- **Parents, single mothers, guardians and caregivers.** Some CBOs stressed the importance of connecting with individual caregivers of children and/or networks that support those caregivers.

The above list doesn’t represent every potential stakeholder group affected by Sound Transit fare enforcement, but instead is a distillation of audiences directed by the CBOs we conducted listening sessions with. The engagement will also include other audiences, including seniors, people with disabilities, and other historically excluded communities.

**Geographic focus:** Based on direction from CBOs, and in alignment with existing regional demographics, Sound Transit will focus its engagement in South Seattle. South Seattle is home to the greatest percentages of populations of color in the Sound Transit’s service area, and Central Link runs through the Rainier Valley and Chinatown/International District communities in South Seattle.

We will also focus engagement in the South Puget Sound area, particularly as Sound Transit begins discussions around fare compliance on Link light rail in Tacoma.

## Suggested engagement strategies

The feedback we received from the listening sessions provided guidance on several engagement approaches and locations for Sound Transit to conduct engagement in fall 2021 and beyond. Key strategies are highlighted below, including:

- Accessible materials
- Informational briefings and feedback sessions
- Direct in-person engagement
- Virtual engagement
- Long-term relationship development

### *Fall 2021 engagement strategies*

Accessible materials

#### **Promotions and printed materials**

Sound Transit should create promotional materials to spread awareness about the project and include ways to share feedback about the Sound Transit fare compliance policy and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project (on paper and online). Distribution and placement of printed materials should be strategic and target spaces where intended audiences already are.

Project materials to include:

- **Posters** to be placed throughout the geographic focus areas
- **Flyers** to be shared with local businesses, community service providers, CBOs, and other potential engagement partners
- **Notification emails** to be shared with partner organizations
- **Online and printed survey** to collect community feedback
- **Presentation slides** to be used for informational briefings and feedback sessions

There should also be ***translated materials*** available, with special engagement to English-language learning audiences and communities.

CBOs also recommended developing a “how-to” guide in both English and multiple languages for communities who are unfamiliar with the transit system and may not know how to pay for fares or understand options available to them to help with fare assistance.

#### **Sound Transit web platforms**

In addition to printed materials, Sound Transit should use its own web platforms – social media channels, *Platform* blog, and agency website – to provide background information to outline Sound Transit’s project background, objective, timeline, contact information, and link to the survey.

#### **Paid and promoted social media**

We heard from CBOs that social media (including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok etc.) is an effective method to share information, engage in discussions, and post announcements. Social media

also connects diverse groups of people and serves as a powerful networking tool. There is an opportunity for Sound Transit to partner with individual CBOs to leverage their social channels to reach those organizations’ audiences.

Recommended Activities
Request organizational partners to share online survey on their platforms
Engage potential influencers to post survey link to their networks (government or agency partners, businesses, restaurants, sports teams, other influential public figures such as Morgan DeBaun)

**Paid advertising and media**

As community members after the decrease in ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic, CBOs recommended using visual advertisements to promote the project and survey. Paid advertising and media can be posted at transit stations, along the inside of Link light rail, on digital billboards throughout heavily trafficked areas in the city, broadcasted via radio stations, and more.

There is an opportunity for Sound Transit to partner with individual CBOs to pay for advertising in CBO-produced newsletters or other media.

Informational briefings and feedback sessions

**Partner workshops or presentations**

To effectively reach people they serve, CBOs suggested traveling to common community gathering spaces to perform engagement. This entails working closely and/or contracting with schools, local community service centers and nonprofits to schedule workshops and presentations to engage targeted audiences about Sound Transit and to gather feedback for the project.

Recommended Sites or Locations
Shelters, community housing facilities, or engagement centers supporting people experiencing homelessness (Mary’s Place, Gospel Mission, Compass Housing, YouthCare, Roots)
Community centers serving previously incarcerated people (Interaction Transition)
Community centers serving families or low-income people (YMCA, Peace Community Center, Boys and Girls Club)
Other community-based organizations in other service areas (FareStart, Recovery Café, etc.)
Places of worship
Food banks

*See Appendix A for a list of community service providers*

Direct engagement

**Community events**

CBOs suggested targeting engagement to audiences by sponsoring or tabling at community events throughout the Greater Seattle Area, with a special focus on outlined neighborhoods noted in *Geographic focus* under *Audiences* section. Sponsoring and tabling at events also provides Sound Transit

an opportunity to spread awareness about the project, encourage people to get further involved, and build visible presence in the community. Vetting for events should be completed with special focus toward reaching communities of color.

Sound Transit can directly engage with target audiences through a variety of activities:

- Hosting a table with Sound Transit staff who can talk about the project and ask people to complete survey (paper or online)
- Offer Sound Transit swag and giveaways to encourage participation in survey
- Assist with administering surveys on the spot (either by paper or digitally) for food or prizes

**Note:** One CBO mentioned that sponsoring a community event (as opposed to only holding a table or booth) has greater impact since it's also financially supporting the hosting community-based organization or event.

Event Ideas
Pride or LGBTQ+ events (for example, Taking B(l)ack Pride)
CBO-hosted events (Rainer Beach Action Committee's Back to School Bash and Community Healing Space)
Events highlighting culture, social justice or advocacy-related themes: Lunar New Year, International Women's Day, and Legislative Day

### Flyering; hosting booths

Some CBOs pointed out the importance of engaging directly and in-person with intended audiences. Flyering and hosting booths are ways for Sound Transit to share information, collect feedback, and assess public interest regarding the project. During these interactions, engagement staff can field questions about the project, discuss concerns, provide materials, administer surveys, and sign people up for mailing lists to stay updated about the project.

Recommended Flyering Example Locations
Libraries
Employment service centers
Government centers or buildings
Food banks
Community health centers and medical facilities
Transit centers

Recommended Hosted Booth Example Locations
Transit stops and train platforms
Community centers
Community health centers
Grocery stores or convenience stores
Food banks

See Appendix B for a list of potential engagement locations

**Business engagement**

CBOs suggested partnering with local businesses for help with promoting and distributing project materials. They emphasized having some form of incentive to offer the business for their partnership. This creates presence in the community and connection to local business groups who could help amplify efforts to gather feedback from their customers.

Recommended Activities
Coordinating paper surveys with service-oriented businesses (hair and nail salons, barbershops) so customers can fill out while they are waiting for services
Posting print materials on business bulletin board or asking them to leave out printed materials in community spaces to share (coffee shops, grocery stores, restaurants)
Resource-sharing and distributing printed materials to local libraries, government centers or buildings, places of worship

Virtual engagement

With the COVID-19 pandemic still impacting the possibility of in-person events, events held virtually remain an effective tool to reach certain audiences. For some audiences, virtual engagement and events are more accessible.

Sound Transit should consider planning a virtual information and public feedback session to share more background information about the project and provide opportunities for input.

Dates and times for a virtual session(s) could be included on project information materials.

Recommended Activities
Sound Transit-hosted virtual community event
Virtual town hall or workshops with partner organizations

Alignment of engagement activities with audiences

Engagement activities	Communities								
	Black riders and other riders of color	Students	Youth	People experiencing homelessness	Immigrant populations	English-language learning communities	Parishioners	Formerly incarcerated individuals	Parents, single mothers, guardians, caregivers
Promotions and printed materials	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Translated promotions and printed materials	■	■		■	●	●	■	■	■
Sound Transit web platforms									
Paid and promoted social media		●							
Partner workshops or presentations	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Community events	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Flyering; hosting booths	●	●							
Business engagement	●				●	●			
Virtual engagement	●	●							
<b>Key</b>				■			●		
				Low priority			High priority		

*Long-term relationship development*

**Organizational Partnership**

Engaging with community partners, or CBOs, helps Sound Transit connect and authentically engage with communities of color. Engagement strategies will strengthen relationships and build trust over the long-term with CBOs and the communities they serve. Collaboration with CBOs helps us tap into their unique expertise to reach communities they serve and brings cultural humility to the Sound Transit name.

Sound Transit currently engages with different communities in various ways. An analysis of community partnerships is recommended to understand the current landscape of Sound Transit partnerships. This understanding will help us uncover existing partnerships that may need attention, identify new strategic partnerships and bring consistency to Sound Transit’s approach to organizational partnerships and relations.

Partnering with CBOs

Sound Transit reached out to several CBOs during initial listening sessions in spring and summer 2021. This initial engagement can help us kickstart efforts to gather feedback from various communities. Many CBOs who were engaged in listening sessions said they would be willing to further collaborate with Sound Transit on coordination, distribution, and collection of feedback with the communities they serve.

To support collecting feedback about fare enforcement policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project, Sound Transit should reach out to individual CBOs, and depending on individual interest and capacity, be guided by their individual expertise. CBOs already have established trust with their communities and often serve as a reliable source of information for those communities. They can offer unique insights into how to reach their communities and help Sound Transit be culturally aware in their engagement with these communities. Many CBOs shared gratitude that they were asked to participate in this project but stressed that follow-through and honoring of their time and contributions is an important aspect to building trust.

In requests to CBOs for further participation, Sound Transit should demonstrate their willingness and appreciation to partner with CBOs and be guided by how they feel their organization could best support the feedback effort. That may range from sharing notification materials with their lists to developing an intensive engagement program; each partnership may look very different.

Sample Partnership Options for CBO Engagement
Send an email to promote the survey
Post the survey on CBO social media channel(s)
Administer survey directly to communities CBOs serve
Host an informational meeting with prompt to take survey
Other CBO-developed and -led engagement ideas or programs with co-developed compensation

Beyond partnership focused on fare enforcement, there remains opportunity to continue building on these CBO and Sound Transit relationships. This should include efforts to help CBO partners stay engaged through the project, regular and consistent communications to build the partnership, constant resource-sharing, and opportunities to collaborate on future projects.

### Partnering with schools

Sound Transit heard from CBOs and college students that there is a need to deepen partnerships with local educational institutions to better engage with students – particularly high school and college students. Further, many students rely solely on public transportation to get to school and/or work and could benefit from more awareness about program offerings and services. Sound Transit should work to set up partnerships with schools (administration, advisors, student government groups and clubs) to engage students on opportunities to share feedback and get involved.

Recommended Activities
Share materials with school administration, advisors, student government groups, and/or clubs
Hold presentations (virtual and in-person) at school orientations, job fairs, or other school events
Partner with colleges to develop stipends, paid internships, school credit, temporary positions, or apprenticeships to assist with engagement strategies to help students gain work experience
Partner with high schools to develop youth programs to assist with engagement strategies that help youth gain professional experience

### Partnering with community health centers and service agencies

CBOs shared with Sound Transit the connection between access to transportation and personal health. Through partnering with local community health centers, public health centers, and medical facilities, Sound Transit can help bridge this gap by sharing resources and engaging community members about program offerings and services.

#### *Incentives and compensation*

CBOs stressed the importance of compensation as critical to successful and principled engagement, both with individual CBOs and with the communities they serve. Equitable public participation acknowledges that compensation for time and contribution is a best practice in the field. Additionally, in today’s social climate, mandatory paid compensation is increasingly an expectation for sharing one’s skills, talents or lived experience.

#### **Compensation for CBOs**

In initial coordination with CBOs for their participation, Sound Transit should ask for and be prepared to support a compensation plan that’s unique and beneficial for each organization. This may include:

- Direct cash payment
- Grants for services
- Direct staff payment
- Donations of transit passes
- Other ideas that may be generated by CBOs

#### **Compensation for participants**

As guided by CBOs, at individual service provider informational briefings and feedback sessions, Sound Transit may offer transit passes, food or paid meals, prepaid gift cards or other meaningful compensation as directed by individual organizations.



For participants who complete a survey online or in-person, Sound Transit may offer a contest or raffle for participation, ORCA credit, or transit passes. Sound Transit may also partner with individual businesses to provide participation coupons or discounts.

## Implementation and next steps

Sound Transit committed to sharing community feedback about fare enforcement policies with the Sound Transit Board in January 2022.

To meet this goal, Sound Transit will begin a vigorous coordination and engagement effort through the end of 2021 and early 2022. This engagement effort seeks to meet the goals of this Community Driven Engagement Plan while also working to solicit and summarize substantial feedback to share with the Sound Transit Board in January 2022.

Efforts called out in the below tables will require additional coordination among Sound Transit staff, agency partners, and community-based organizations. Each effort will require its own implementation and staffing plan.

### *Summer 2021 coordination and planning needs:*

- Commit to ongoing CBO coordination and follow-up
- Commit to compensation capacity
- Review and confirm list of informational briefing opportunities
- Review and confirm list of in-person engagement opportunities
- Review and confirm goals of virtual engagement and select date for public meeting

### *Roles and responsibilities*

Organization	Key responsibilities
Sound Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own relationships with individual CBOs moving forward</li> <li>• Select engagement strategies to collect feedback on Fare compliance policy</li> <li>• Publish website and social media content</li> <li>• Confirm compensation capacity for individual partnerships and community engagement</li> <li>• Present findings to Sound Transit Board</li> </ul>
Sound Transit engagement support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop notification and informational materials</li> <li>• Audit and research community events and ongoing engagement opportunities</li> <li>• Support implementation of individual engagement strategies</li> <li>• Collect and summarize community feedback</li> <li>• Coordinate on social media content development</li> <li>• Coordinate virtual engagement</li> </ul>
Community based organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with Sound Transit per individual organization interest and capacity</li> </ul>

*Fare policy engagement schedule*

	<b>August – September 2021</b>	<b>October 2021</b>	<b>November 2021</b>
<b>CBO coordination</b>	<p>Share draft Community Driven Engagement plan for review and comment</p> <p>Connect with CBOs about partnership ideas</p> <p>Begin implementation</p>	Continue ongoing implementation and coordination	Continue ongoing implementation and coordination
<b>Material development</b>	<p>Draft display and notification materials for survey engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters</li> <li>• Flyers</li> <li>• Notification emails</li> <li>• Online survey</li> <li>• Paper survey</li> </ul> <p>Coordinate material translations</p>	As-needed material updates	<p>As-needed material updates</p> <p>Begin summarizing community feedback</p>
<b>Informational briefings and feedback sessions</b>	<p>Confirm list of organizations for informational briefing and feedback session requests</p> <p>Begin to conduct informational briefings at organization request</p>	Continue informational briefings and feedback sessions	Continue informational briefings and feedback sessions
<b>Direct engagement</b>	<p>Confirm list of flyering, postering and booth locations</p> <p>Review potential community event options</p>	Continue flyering, postering and booth staffing efforts	Continue flyering, postering and booth staffing efforts
<b>Virtual engagement</b>	<p>Select date for virtual town hall to be included in posters and flyers</p> <p>Coordinate notifications for virtual town hall with CBOs and other project partners</p>	Conduct virtual town hall	Summarize virtual town hall

*Assessment and ongoing coordination timeline*

	<b>November 2021</b>	<b>December 2021</b>	<b>January 2022</b>	<b>Spring 2022 and beyond</b>
<b>CBO coordination</b>	Continue ongoing coordination with CBOs	Share initial findings from community feedback	Share presentation developed for Sound Transit Board	Continue ongoing coordination with CBOs
<b>Material development</b>	Begin summarizing community feedback	Develop community feedback summary  Develop Sound Transit Board presentation	Share presentation with Sound Transit Board	Provide as-needed informational materials for CBOs and other community engagement efforts

## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Community service providers*

#### **Schools**

- Franklin High School
- Glover Cleveland STEM High School
- Rainier Beach High School
- South Lake High School
- Foster High School
- Raisbeck Aviation High School
- Renton High School
- South Seattle College
- Renton Technical College

#### **Community Centers**

- Tukwila Community Center
- Rainier Beach Community Club
- Rainier Community Center
- Van Asselt Community Center
- Jefferson Community Center
- Mt. Baker Community Club
- Ukrainian Community Center
- SeaTac Community Center
- Filipino Community Center

#### **Business Associations**

- Beacon Business Alliance
- Mt. Baker Hub Alliance
- MLK Business Association
- Rainier ABC
- Rainier Beach Merchants Association
- Urban Impact
- Church Council of Greater Seattle
- East African Community Services
- Ethiopian Community in Seattle
- Columbia City Business Association

#### **Places of worship**

- Greater Gospel Temple Church (Skyway)
- Rainier Beach Presbyterian Church (Rainier Beach)
- Seattle Christian Center (Rainier Beach)

- Medhane-Alem Evangelical Church (Rainier Beach)
- Rainier Beach United Methodist Church (Rainier Beach)
- Emerald City Bible Fellowship (Rainier Valley)
- Beacon United Methodist Church (Beacon Hill)
- Rainier Valley Church (Rainier Valley)
- Iglesia ni Cristo - Locale of Seattle (Rainier Valley)
- Cao Dai temple of Seattle (Rainier Valley)
- Rainier Avenue Church (Rainier Valley)
- New Light Christian Church (Rainier Valley)
- Beacon Hill Church of the Nazarene (Beacon Hill)
- Columbia City Church of Hope (Columbia City)
- Mt. Moriah Seattle Church (Columbia City)
- This is Holy Ground: Community Church (Columbia City)
- Mt. Baker Park Presbyterian Church (Mt. Baker)
- Christ the Son of God Church (Beacon Hill)

#### **Community health centers**

- Neighborcare Health at Rainier Beach (Rainier Beach)
- Urban Impact Community Health Center (Rainier Beach)
- Holly Park Medical and Dental Clinic (Beacon Hill)
- International Community Health Service (Beacon Hill)
- Therapeutic Health Services – Rainier Branch (Rainier Valley)
- Public Health at Columbia City (Columbia City)
- Neighborcare Health at Columbia City (Columbia City)
- Full Life Care (Rainier Valley)
- VA Puget Sound Health Care System (Beacon Hill)

#### **Child care services**

- Rainier Vista Boys & Girls Club (Rainier Vista)
- Hooyo Bibi Family Child Care (Renton)
- Rainier Beach Family Childcare (Rainier Beach)
- Tiny Tots Development Center (Rainier Beach)
- Asha's Family Child Care (South Beacon Hill)
- Jannah Child Care (Beacon Hill)
- Seed of Life – Early Learning Center (Columbia City)
- Panda Chinese Family Daycare (Columbia City)
- We are the World Daycare (Columbia City)
- Los Ninos Family Daycare (Rainier Valley)

#### **Libraries**

- Skyway Library
- Rainier Beach Branch – The Seattle Public Library
- New Holly Branch – The Seattle Public Library
- Columbia Branch – The Seattle Public Library

- Beacon Hill Branch – The Seattle Public Library

**Employment service centers**

- Pride Staff (Tukwila)
- WorkSource Tukwila (Tukwila)
- ManPower (Southcenter)
- Adecco Staffing (Tukwila)
- Opti Staffing Group (Tukwila)
- Refugee Foundation Services Center (Rainier Valley)
- Asian Counseling and Referral Service (Columbia City)
- WorkSource Rainier (Mt. Baker)
- HireQuest Direct of Seattle (Beacon Hill)

**Food banks**

- Tukwila Pantry – Emergency Food Bank
- The Salvation Army Renton Rotary
- The Little Free Pantries (Beacon Ave)
- The Little Free Pantries (10615 60th Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Food Distribution Center – International Drop-In Center Meal Program (Beacon Hill)
- Food Distribution Center – Union Gospel Mission Seattle (Rainier Valley)
- Food Distribution Center – DESC Rainier House (Rainier Valley)
- Rainier Valley Food Bank (Rainier Vista)

## *Appendix B: Potential engagement locations*

### **Grocery Stores**

- Walmart (743 Rainier Ave S, Renton)
- Safeway (200 S 3rd St, Renton)
- Safeway (9262 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Safeway (3900 S Othello St, Seattle, WA)
- Safeway (3820 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Fred Meyer (365 Renton Center Way SW, Renton, WA)
- Maleda Grocery & Deli (3810 S Edmunds St. Seattle, WA)
- Seattle Super Market (4801 Beacon Ave S, Seattle WA)
- Shiil Grocery & Halal Meat (4505 Martin Luther King Jr Way S, Seattle WA)
- Amin International Grocery (7128 Martin Luther King Jr Way S #105, Seattle, WA)

### **Restaurants**

- Taco Street (7136 Martin Luther King Jr Way S #102, Seattle WA)
- That Brown Girl Cooks (2822 Martin Luther King Jr Way S, Seattle WA)
- Blue Nile Ethiopian (7821 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Milk Drunk (2805 Beacon Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- King Philly Cheesesteaks (7820 Rainier Ave S Unit A, Seattle WA)
- Beacon BBQ (4886 Beacon Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Horn of Africa Restaurant (9050 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Ezell's (4436 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Ezell's (64 Rainier Ave S, Renton, WA)
- Catfish Corner (11805 Renton Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- The Flour Box (5520 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Taco City Taqueria (5212 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Amy's Merkato (5710 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- The Comfort Zone (5016 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Island Soul (4869 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- Emerald City Fish & Chips (3756 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA)
- The Original Philly's (3019 MLK Jr Way S, Seattle, WA)

### **Link Light Rail Stations**

- SeaTac Station
- Rainier Beach
- Othello Station
- Columbia City
- Mt. Baker
- Beacon Hill

### **Bus Stop Stations**

- Strander Blvd & 61 Pl S (Southcenter)
- Baker Blvd & Andover Park W (Southcenter)
- Southcenter Blvd & 65th Ave S (Southcenter)
- Southcenter Blvd & 62nd Ave S (Southcenter)
- Southcenter Blvd & 53rd Ave S (Southcenter)
- Macadam Rd S & S 150th St (Tukwila)
- Macadam Rd S & 152nd St (Tukwila)
- Macadam Rd S & Southcenter Blvd (Tukwila)
- Interurban Ave S & Fort Dent Way (Tukwila)
- Interurban Ave S & S 147th St (Tukwila)
- SW Sunset Blvd & Stevens Ave SW (Renton)
- SW Sunset Blvd & Oakesdale Ave SW (Renton)
- Martin L King Jr Way S & S 129th St (Skyway)
- Renton Ave S & S 128th St (Renton)
- Renton Ave S & S 130th St (Renton)
- Taylor Ave NW & NW 2nd St (Renton)
- Renton Ave S & 76th Ave S (Renton)
- S 124th St & 67th Ave S (Skyway)
- Renton Ave S & 126th St (Skyway)
- Renton Ave S & 74th Ave S (Skyway)
- S Avon St & 59th Ave S (Skyway)
- 74th Ave S & S 116th St (Skyway)
- Renton Ave S & S Hazel St (Rainier View)
- 59th Ave S & S 118th St (Rainier View)
- S Leo St & 53rd Ave S (Rainier View)
- Renton Ave S & S Prentice St (Rainier Beach)
- 62nd Ave S & S Cooper St (Rainier Beach)
- Renton Ave S & S Norfolk St (Rainier Beach)
- 51st Ave S & S Bond St (Rainier Beach)
- 51st Ave S & S Fletcher St (Rainier Beach)
- S Henderson St & Rainier Ave S (Rainier Beach)
- Beacon Ave S & S Cloverdale St (Beacon Hill)
- Beacon Ave S & S Thistle St (Beacon Hill)
- Rainier Ave S & S Rose St (Rainier Beach)
- Martin L King Jr Way S & S Orcas St (Rainier Valley)
- Rainier Ave S & S Alaska St (Columbia City)
- Rainier Ave S & S Walden St (Mt. Baker)
- Martin L King Jr Way S & S Bayview St (Mt. Baker)

#### **Banks**

- Verity Credit Union (1660 S Columbian Way, Bldg 35)
- Le Goi-Tien Le (6951 Martin Luther King Jr Way S, Seattle, WA)
- Rainier Valley Community Development Fund (6951 MLK Jr Way S #225, Seattle, WA)

- Dahabshiiil Dahabshil Seattle Branch (7126 MLK Jr Way S #103, Seattle, WA)

**Check cashing/payday lending locations**

- E-Z Check Cash (SeaTac)
- Moneytree (Renton)

**Post offices**

- USPS (Skyway)
- USPS (Renton)
- USPS (Beacon Hill)
- USPS (Columbia City)
- Columbia City Parcel & Post