



***Sound Transit Fare Compliance Project  
PROGRESS REPORT AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
January 2022***





## Background

Informed by what we heard, the [Sound Transit Board approved](#) a new Fare Engagement Pilot Project with a goal of preventing the inequitable effects that often result from unpaid fines and contact with the court system.

The Board adopted Motion M2020-74 that directed staff to seek diverse voices in communities most impacted by fare compliance policies and to do further analysis to recommend an updated Fare Compliance Policy. The Motion called for three deliverables by January 2022.

1. Fare Compliance Progress Report
  - Action Plan progress
  - Fare ambassador program update
  - Cost-benefit analysis
  - Engagement equity analysis report

A note on the language used- since the shift to the new Fare Engagement Pilot Project, Sound Transit moved away from using the term Fare Enforcement, and going forward in this report, you will see it called **Fare Compliance**, in order to better reflect the current pilot and policy considerations.

### Fare compliance Progress Report

#### Action plan update

In March of 2020, Sound Transit reported to the Board an action plan developed by staff to revise ST's approach to fare compliance. The Action Plan was developed to achieve the following:

#### **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.

#### **Objectives**

- Sound financial stewardship, as indicated by high fare payment rates, low evasion and exceeding farebox recovery minimums.



- Equity and fairness to our riders, stakeholders, community members and taxpayers.
- Continuous improvement that is measurable and accountable.
- Uphold Sound Transit’s values of Customer Focus, Integrity, Inclusion and Respect, and Safety.

This action plan committed Sound Transit to begin implementation of thirteen reforms, to continue evaluation of an additional four, and recommended against pursuing an additional three. These reforms had all been policy and program proposals identified through stakeholder feedback, customer surveys, community conversations and review of peer agency practices.

Since then, Sound Transit has begun implementation of all thirteen of the reforms identified for near-term action, as well as two of those from the list for further evaluation, and one from the list of reforms not originally prioritized. An update on these sixteen actions follows.

Action Item	Details	Update
<i>Expand communications and public education to access and use ORCA card</i>	Help riders understand how to obtain and use fare media	<p>The Fare Ambassadors have been a main channel where we have increased this communication.</p> <p>~Ambassadors are thoroughly trained on all types of valid fare media and actively educate our riders.</p> <p>~Ambassadors are trained to ask passengers without proof of payment about why they don’t have proof of payment in order to educate and address the root cause. Through this dialogue, Ambassadors spread applicable information about ORCA, ORCA lift, how to obtain and use fare media, proper tapping, etcetera.</p> <p>Sound Transit has also expanded public education through our community engagement efforts where we discussed the importance of paying fares and how to use ORCA.</p>
<i>Greatly enhance “Fare Paid Zone” signage</i>	Aid riders with the ability to identify when and where to tap on	Fare paid zone signage has been installed at the three Northgate stations with plans to

	and tap off when using the system.	have all stations installed prior to the 2 Line opening.
<i>Income-based fare program for a two-year pilot</i>	Provide access to fare media for those who make less than 80% Federal Poverty Level and participate in certain federal and state programs.	The program started in September 2020. Because of Covid, enrollment in the program was much lower than estimated during initial estimates. As of January 2022, there were 7,300 people enrolled in the program. The program is being evaluated in conjunction with Robin Wood Johnson Foundation and the Lab for Economic Opportunities at Notre Dame. The evaluation will be completed in December 2023. Sound Transit will consider expanding the pilot participation beyond June 2022, in order to complete the evaluation and determine a permanent program going forward.
<i>Expand/extend ORCA Lift incentives</i>	Develop and implement a plan to expand opportunities and locations to access ORCA Lift registrations and card reloading.	<p>Sound Transit launched a multi-channel ad campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~Community-based organization connections</li> <li>~Multi-channel campaign: targeted, multi-language</li> <li>~Expanded reach through partnership with KCM</li> </ul> <p>Supporting enrollment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~In-person engagement: Pop-ups/tabling</li> <li>~Promotion of in-person availability and online options</li> <li>~Social services partnerships + direct financial support</li> </ul> <p>2022 investments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~200 thousand to expand enrollment</li> </ul> <p>Despite these efforts enrollment in the programs has dropped driven by severe drop in ridership, administrative difficulties and staffing shortages.</p>

<p><i>Develop a youth-focused program</i></p>	<p>Develop a program that includes targeted communications to youth, ensuring that KCSO is not called when fare only issue with youth rider, and ensure FEO training includes specialized training for handling interactions with youth.</p>	<p>Policy and procedure updates:            ~KCSO is no longer called for fare only issues            ~<i>Interacting with Youth</i> SOP rewritten and updated to reflect Strategies for Youth training and best practices</p> <p>Fare Ambassador Training:            ~two-day Strategies for Youth training educated Ambassadors on trauma-informed youth psychology and best practices            ~Current Youth Engagement Specialist is a certified Strategies for Youth trainer</p> <p>Targeted Youth Communications:            ~Fare Ambassadors trained and practiced in youth-specific messaging and strategies            ~Research, discovery, and outreach underway for Passenger Experience youth program</p>
<p><i>Increase warnings in 12 months from 1 to 2</i></p>	<p>In a 12-month period</p>	<p>Motion 2020-74 suspended citations until the Ambassador Pilot ends or a new policy is adopted. Therefore Sound Transit has been giving only warnings, in other words, riders get unlimited warnings at this time. The updates to the Board policy will determine the final number of warnings going forward.</p>
<p><i>Reduce fine from \$124 to \$50</i></p>	<p>Board policy set in RESOLUTION NO. R2009-02 sets the fines at \$124. Sound Transit committed to lowering that amount based on public feedback.</p>	<p>Motion 2020-74 suspended citations until the Ambassador Pilot ends or a new policy is adopted. Therefore, Sound Transit has not been issuing any monetary fines. The updates to the Board policy will determine the final fine policy and amount.</p>
<p><i>Review and enhance fare enforcement officer (FEO) training</i></p>	<p>During the Ambassador Pilot period, this action item applies to the Ambassadors</p>	<p>All Fare Ambassadors completed a three-week training process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-bias/implicit bias</li> <li>• De-escalation</li> <li>• Strategies for Youth</li> <li>• CPR/First Aid</li> <li>• Equity and Inclusion</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health First Aid</li> <li>• Disabilities sensitivity</li> <li>• Agency policies and procedures</li> <li>• Extensive system tour</li> <li>• Supervised practice on the system</li> </ul>
<i>Define parameters to suspend citations and warning during extreme weather</i>	Align ST policies with King County policy	This work will follow adoption of the Board policy.
<i>Resolution pathways through district court</i>	Create an in-house resolution program that includes option to resolve fine by crediting the citation dollar amount to the rider's ORCA card and resolve fine if the rider enrolls in ORCA Lift	This work will be incorporated into the Boards discussion to update the Fare Compliance Policy.
<i>Refine role of FEOs to include customer service and track patterns of FEO deployment and enforcement action</i>	During the Ambassador Pilot period, this action item applies to the Ambassadors	<p>Passenger Service focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~Recruited people with a customer service background</li> <li>~Re-wrote SOPs to reinforce the shift from enforcement/security to compliance/customer service</li> <li>~Ongoing training and practice of these skills</li> <li>~Survey responses indicate we are succeeding. Almost 80% of respondents indicate being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their interactions with Fare Ambassadors</li> </ul> <p>Tracking deployment and enforcement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~All Ambassador schedules (including assigned location) are saved for review</li> <li>~Documented warnings include location and self-reported demographic information for review</li> </ul>

		~Extensive metrics are being tracked and evaluated
<i>Evaluate and clarify process for addressing complaints</i>	Based on public feedback	This work will follow adoption of the Board policy.
<i>Stop the procedure to call King County Sheriff in fare-only interactions</i>	Based on public feedback	This has been stopped and will not be recommended in the final Board Policy.
<i>Change fare enforcement names and uniforms</i>	Based on public feedback	This will be decided at the conclusion of the Ambassador pilot program, based on outcomes of the Pilot.
<i>Make officers ST employees instead of contractors</i>	This gives ST more direct control over training, etc.	This will be decided at the conclusion of the Ambassador pilot program, based on outcomes of the Pilot.

#### Ambassador pilot results to date

As of early November 2021, both cohorts of Fare Ambassadors have been hired, trained, and are actively assisting passengers on our system. The team consists of 4 supervisors and 18 ambassadors, all full-time Sound Transit employees. They speak 8 different languages, are more diverse than the communities Sound Transit serves, and are on duty 16 hours a day, 7 days a week.

All Fare Ambassadors and Supervisors completed 3 weeks of intensive training. By combining in-house education with the expertise of a half dozen external partners, Ambassadors trained in topics including anti-bias/implicit bias; de-escalation; Strategies for Youth; CPR and First Aid; Equity and Inclusion; Mental Health First Aid; disabilities sensitivity; agency policies and procedures; an extensive system tour; and supervised practice on the system.

The Fare Ambassador team first worked on the system on September 1, 2021, focusing solely on customer service and passenger education. A few weeks later, they began to check fares and they started documenting warnings on October 11, 2021. Ambassadors ride Link and Sounder, and also spend time each week, called Passenger Focus Time (PFT), assisting passengers near TVMs at select times and locations (for example, at Stadium Station before and after a sporting

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event). During this time, ambassadors answer questions from the public mainly on how to get to where they need to go and also assist with TVM support. We have so far received good feedback from the community with how our ambassadors have been engaging with them out in the system. Our current onboard survey has 84% of passengers rating their interactions with our team either satisfied or very satisfied. Ambassadors work in teams of two or three and roam specific zones consisting of two or three stations for the duration of their shift. Their primary duties include fare checks, passenger education, and customer service. Additionally, our Fare Ambassadors elevate passenger concerns to the proper departments in real time, such as security or facility and maintenance needs.

Throughout the pilot, the Fare Engagement Manager, along with the Fare Ambassador Supervisors, will monitor the success of the program and make improvements wherever possible. A working group including CREI, Legal, Public Safety, and Fare Engagement is rewriting the standard operating procedures for the program. The new procedures consider the focus shift from security and enforcement to compliance and customer service and adhere to best practices learned during the three weeks of training. Because the full program and all staff are in-house, there is an immediate feedback loop where problems can be identified and solutions implemented quickly. This includes daily robust data collection by the Ambassador team.

The Fare Ambassador program has seen several successes so far:

- The new uniform and name change is perceived as less intimidating to survey respondents; 55% described the new appearance as “helpful” or “friendly.”
  - o *“less intimidating [for an unstable passenger] than dealing with an actual armed officer”*
  - o *“The Ambassador boarded the train with two others and loudly and clearly introduced herself by name and why she was there. She gave an explanation of checking fare payment and answering questions about ORCA. She announced that they'd be starting at end of the cars and working their way in. She greeted each person on our end with a very friendly demeanor and answered a couple of ORCA/ticket questions along the way. She then greeted a family with a small child and stroller, giving the kids a couple of cute stickers. It was such a different experience than the previous, cold and authoritative ticket police. I felt very safe, comfortable and like she was there to help instead of confront people”*
- The new customer service and education approach met with positive feedback, both internally and externally. Passenger surveys show a preference for this approach, and our Fare Ambassadors share that this is the most rewarding part of their work.
- While it is difficult to know exact causes, fare compliance rates have increased since fare checking resumed.





- Passenger feedback indicates most of our riders are very satisfied after interacting with our Fare Ambassadors, and many passengers note the clear difference and improvement of the new program.
  - o *“It was great to see the Fare Ambassadors in action! Definitely a lot more welcoming. Typically when previous fare enforcement boarded, there was a sense of dread from riders. Thank you all Fare Ambassadors for their work and patience as it is not always easy working with riders.”*
  - o *“The transit ambassador was very informative and helpful”*
  - o *“He assisted my family on our adventure. [The Ambassador] was great at answering the many questions our sons had about trains. We like the program, and look forward to our sons seeing a friendly face on the trains.”*
  - o *“I did not know they were to check my fare. as it turned out, they helped educate me on the fare subject before I boarded the rail + helped me find the Orca reader machine”*

A few difficulties have arisen as well:

- Like many organizations, we were not able to hire as many staff as we had hoped, despite a thorough recruiting process and two cohorts. In the future, we plan to hire on a continual basis and hire for specific shift needs. Additionally, a permanent position will likely appeal to more candidates.
- We are tracking instances where a passenger escalates a conflict and/or Fare Ambassadors feel unsafe doing their job. These happen regularly, though they are a small percentage of total passenger interactions. By tracking these instances, we can adjust our approach; better work with Transit Security and KCSO when needed; and evaluate additional training needs for our Ambassadors.
  - o In November 2021, Fare Ambassadors contacted security due to safety concerns 45 times (1.5 times a day on average) while checking 20,110 passengers.
- The Fare Ambassador team is one of the only teams in Sound Transit with hourly employees and a shift-based schedule. Because of this, we have found various policies and processes that don't work for the Ambassador team. The supervisors and manager partner with HR to seek solutions in these situations.
- Occasionally, the Fare Ambassadors contact passengers who incorrectly believe they have valid fare media (for example, a passenger may think their employee badge is valid fare media). It would be helpful in these situations to publish an exhaustive list of valid fare media.



- We have also heard through comments received from our passenger services center and onboard survey that there are some community members and passengers who do not agree with this approach. Some believe it is too lenient, while others do not support any enforcement.
  - o *“Eliminating the responsibility to pay just passes the burden onto others... that does not seem fair.”*
  - o *“Every single rider who uses the system Must Pay. I’m perfectly ok with reduced fares for seniors, low income folks etc, but the free ride on my back has to end. I don’t care if enforcement personnel look like police— that’s because their job is to “police” the fare payments and all people need to accept that.”*
  - o *“Make public transit free for all.”*
  - o *“I am skeptical that you will do anything besides change the uniform.”*

#### Cost-benefit of fare enforcement

The cost to ST of obtaining Link fare revenue is comprised of two primary elements: fare collection (ORCA, ticket vending machines, mobile ticketing, and administrative expenses), and fare enforcement. For the pre-pandemic base year of 2019, Link fare collection costs were \$3,246,000. In that same year, fare enforcement costs under the Securitas contract was \$1,424,000.

In total, costs of collecting and enforcing fares on Link in 2019 were \$4,670,000, or given 2019 Link ridership of 24,761,684 boardings, roughly \$0.19 per boarding (\$0.13 per boarding for fare collection systems plus \$0.06 per boarding for fare enforcement)<sup>[1]</sup>. As the average fare per boarding for Link in 2019 was \$1.75, the fare revenue per boarding net of fare collection and enforcement costs was \$1.56 per boarding.

Eliminating fares is not feasible, due to the cost of eliminating fares altogether would be, based on 2019 as a base year of analysis, the full \$1.56 of net revenue per boarding (fare revenue less fare collection and enforcement costs). The cost/benefit ratio of full fare collection and enforcement vs. fare elimination is \$0.19: \$1.75, or \$9.21 returned for every dollar spent.

#### Community Engagement and Equity Analysis Report

Since identifying the extent of the issue of racial disparities in fare enforcement outcomes, Sound Transit has been very intentional in engaging communities and impacted riders to co-develop program changes and solutions to improve program equity. Through careful research design to better understand and differentiate the experiences of different rider demographics, *Sound Transit Fare Engagement Project*



and to solicit directly from those riders the problem statements and potential solutions, Sound Transit has incorporated a deliberate equity analysis approach to designing program change. As described below, Sound Transit is working with our communities through every step of both the design phase of program development and the implementation and pilot testing phase. More detail on the design phase efforts is provided in the *Community Engagement Report* (February 2020), and on the implementation and pilot phase efforts in the *Community Driven Engagement Plan* (September 2021).

### ***Design Research Phase - Listening sessions (Summer 2019)***

The first non-experimental iteration of the research was to gather qualitative data about the experience of riders of color and/or proximity to poverty with Sound Transit fare payment and enforcement. The goal was to better understand factors which might result in the observed racial disparities in fare enforcement outcomes. The primary means of data collection at this stage was to conduct a series of six focus groups each with 12-15 key informants believed to have valuable feedback about their experiences riding and paying fare as people of color on ST services.

Recruitment of participants was facilitated by community based and social justice advocacy organizations including Tacoma Urban League, Casa Latina, The Station Coffee Shop, and Phinney Ridge Neighborhood Association, who had previously been in contact with ST about racial equity issues. Program administrators at these organizations were asked to contact individuals known to have experience as transit riders of color, some of whose negative experiences were the basis for the organizations' prior contacts with ST. Those individuals would then identify others with similar experience to fill out the focus group sessions (via "snowball" sampling).

The focus groups were described as "listening sessions" for purposes of seeking community input from voices that might not otherwise be well represented in aggregate survey data (and to assess the differences between their feedback and that of the "average" rider), and to ask what fare enforcement program problems and priorities need improvement. The groups were prompted with questions about the ease of navigating the transit and fare payment systems, perceptions of the fare collection program, and requests for suggestions to improve the experience.



This qualitative methodology was chosen because of the complex nature of the factors involved in the research where we hoped that through qualitative inquiry with people directly affected by the policies in question, we might obtain suggestions for programmatic change that would not otherwise occur to us without consultation and co-design with those communities.

These listening sessions resulted in 25 primary areas of concern and improvement opportunities for the fare enforcement program<sup>[3]</sup>.

### ***Design Research Phase - Online survey (Fall 2019)***

The specific suggestions and concepts distilled from the listening session were then captured in questions and responses categories for a subsequent online survey to obtain quantitative data about the broader reception of potential program changes responsive to the listening session feedback. Sound Transit received more than 8,000 completed online surveys. The following feedback for improving fare enforcement was collected from respondents:

Support for program changes (respondents asked to pick top 3):

- Reducing fines from \$124. (82%)
- Increasing the number of warnings. (57%)
- Reduce warning period from 12 to 6 months. (40%)

Statements respondents most frequently agreed with:

- ST should help riders who can't afford to pay. (85%)
- ST should expand fare enforcement program education outreach to hard-to-reach communities. (76%)
- ST should forgive fines if rider enrolls in ORCA LIFT. (72%)

Question: Should Fare Enforcement Officers

- Offer on-the-spot information about reduced fare programs: Yes (75%)
- Wear less intimidating uniforms: Yes (33%)

Majority support suspending fare enforcement for:

- Severe weather. (90%)
- Students on first day of school. (77%)



- During major construction or service disruptions. (67%)
- Individuals experiencing homelessness who need to get out of the cold. (60%)

Majority of riders with or without fare support:

- Forgiving fines after enrolling in ORCA LIFT.
- Forgiving fines if already enrolled in ORCA LIFT.
- Paying fines via community service.
- Crediting fine amount to ORCA cards.

Agreed or strongly agreed on the following: (with POP / w/o POP)

- Many people do not know about payment options, subsidies, benefits or programs.
- Sound Transit should help very low/no income riders afford to pay.
- Sound Transit should expand outreach to hard-to-reach communities.

### ***Design Research Phase - On-board survey (Fall 2019)***

The second quantitative research effort was to conduct a survey of riders without proof of payment during their trips onboard the train. The population to be sampled was the 2.4% of 180,000 riders per month, who rode without having first paid fare (based on historic fare evasion statistics). Of this population of 4,300, we needed to obtain a sample of about 350 completed survey returns to achieve 95% confidence of a 5% margin of error for inferences made about riders without proof of payment. Simultaneously for comparison we also sampled from the population of the remaining 97.6% of riders who did have valid proof of payment, which would require about 380 completed survey returns to achieve the same statistical validity for that population.

Survey research teams were assigned to fare enforcement officer teams who were in turn assigned to inspect fares of all passengers aboard randomly selected train cars. However, when encountering a rider without proof of payment, instead of writing a warning or citation the officer would introduce the rider to a surveyor who would administer the optional survey (subjects were not coerced to complete the survey though issuance of warnings or citations if they refused). Once the survey was completed, the surveyor would conduct the survey with the next passenger who did have proof of payment as identified by the fare enforcement officers to gather data on the comparison group.



The survey was conducted on computer tablets handed to the respondent with instructions from the surveyor, who was available to assist as needed in reading and interpreting questions. The survey automatically skipped questions not relevant to the respondent based on answers to prior questions. The survey instrument contained 32 questions, and since we wanted to know what factors (including race) correlated with non-payment of fare, we used three questions related to the dependent variable on payment/non-payment of fare: “Why didn’t you have proof of payment for this trip?”, “Do you usually pay your fare?”, and “How many times in the last 12 months has Fare Enforcement found you riding without fare payment?”.

Sound Transit received 1,100 completed onboard surveys in total and achieved a statistically significant sample for the findings. Three key findings emerged:

- A higher percentage of respondents without proof of payment were African American/Black, Hispanic/Latinx, low income or with disability than were riders with proof of payment.
- Household income is the primary demographic characteristic that differentiates those surveyed who were able to provide proof of payment and those unable to do so. Furthermore, results showed that the breakpoint is a household income above or below \$50,000.
- Top reasons for not showing proof of payment were “I forgot to tap,” “my ORCA card didn’t work,” “I thought my transfer was valid” and “I couldn’t find where to tap.”

Based on the findings of the design phase research and engagement efforts (listening sessions, online survey and onboard survey), Sound Transit developed the *Fare Enforcement Action Plan* list of program changes to be further developed and tested in the implementation and pilot phase. Community engagement and ongoing, deliberate equity analysis is also central to this phase.

### ***2021 Engagement Phase - Listening sessions (Spring 2021)-FULL RESULTS IN ATTACHMENT A***

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 CBOs. Regionally, those included ten organizations that serve King County (Interaction Transition, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle, Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA), The Breakfast Group, CHOOSE 180, Federal Way Black Collective, UW Student Government, Yoga Behind Bars, Rainier Scholars, YouthCare, and Rainier Beach Action Coalition), and four organizations that serve Pierce County (The Breakfast Group, Pacific Islander Health Board, Asia Pacific Cultural Center, and Peace Community Center).

***Below is a summary of outreach activities outlined in the CDEP:***

- **Summer 2021:**
  - Helped to develop a community survey and notification and informational materials that to aid in collecting feedback from the community about fare compliance policies and the Fare Engagement Pilot Project.
  - Requested 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:**
  - Conducted direct in-person and online engagement to promote the survey and collect feedback from community members via door-to-door outreach, posters, virtual townhalls, a tabling event, social media, and CBO-hosted listening sessions.
- **Winter 2021:**
  - Summarized community feedback to share with CBOs and the Sound Transit Board.
  - Held debrief sessions with CBO partners to gather feedback on their experiences.

This outreach summary outlines the notification and community involvement strategies used during fall and winter 2021.



## **GOALS OF ENGAGEMENT**

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

- Increase awareness about objectives for updating Sound Transit's fare compliance policy with communities of color.
- Collect input via the community survey from and engage with a diverse range of voices and perspectives, with a special focus on communities of color.
- 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 (CBOs).

## **CDEP GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

CBO feedback from the CDEP was critical in guiding our outreach efforts to collect community feedback. To demonstrate these efforts, we've mapped those principles to outreach outcomes below.

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

To promote and gather feedback for the survey, we reached out to CBOs that serve Black communities, other communities of color, refugee and immigrant populations, people experiencing homelessness, and formerly incarcerated individuals. We focused door-to-door outreach in South Seattle, a demographic area serving communities of color.

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

We followed recommendations provided by CBOs during the summer 2021 listening phase. We performed outreach to CBOs to promote the survey and offered an opportunity to partner further in distribution of the survey.

We created a CBO partnership program with two CBOs: Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle and the University of Washington.

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

We broadened our tools to collect feedback by offering briefings, meetings, and materials to CBOs and social service organizations. We tailored our efforts to offer real-time and ongoing support at all times in the process.

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





We offered compensation to CBOs for the listening sessions at \$100 per session. For the partnership program, we strived to tailor the fee structure in accordance to organization preferences, including payment amount and logistics. The partnership programs were developed together with the CBOs and were driven by the CBOs' time, capacity, and needs.

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

Throughout the process, we reviewed and adjusted our outreach strategies. For example, we reached out to the South Seattle Emerald and purchased advertising through their website to focus our reach on communities of color in the South Seattle area. We also promoted with King County Councilmember Girmay Zahilay, who serves the Rainier Valley and surrounding areas.

### ***Implementation of the Community Driven Engagement Plan - Community engagement and survey (Fall/Winter 2021)- FULL RESULTS IN ATTACHMENT A***

In fall 2021, Sound Transit sent out invitations to the 13 organizations who participated in listening sessions earlier in the summer to ask for their support to help push out the community survey. All 13 organizations had expressed interest to stay engaged in the project and survey promotions.

Two organizations, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (ULMS) and Associated Students at University of Washington (ASUW) responded to our outreach with interest to move forward with a CBO partnership program to support collecting feedback and survey responses.

### ***SUMMARY OF PARTICIPATION: BY THE NUMBERS***

- ***13 CBOs participated in listening sessions***
- ***Began CBO partnership agreements with 2 CBOs***
- ***Approximately 7 people attended four virtual townhalls***
- ***309 online community surveys completed***
- ***Approximately 35 people attended in-person events***
- ***2 people participated in CBO-hosted listening sessions***



### ***Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle***

The team met with Maya Manus, Community Engagement Coordinator at ULMS, to begin drafting an outline of the CBO partnership program, or an outline of engagement, on October 10, 2022.

From that meeting, ULMS submitted a proposal that was accepted by the team. The agreement listed sample outreach activities that ULMS could support, a budget that included gift card incentives (\$4,000) to be paid for by Sound Transit, and a total budget of \$6,722 (including staff time).

#### ***Outreach activities included:***

- Survey promotions, including three social media posts on the ULMS Facebook and Instagram social media account
- Flyers
- Website promotion on the ULMS website
- Listening sessions hosted by ULMS staff

**The ULMS-hosted listening sessions** were intended to build awareness about the project and facilitate discussion with people ULMS serves in an engaging way. Sound Transit staff were not present at the request of ULMS staff so that honest reflections could be shared. We provided ongoing support throughout the process, including creating and printing flyers and social media graphics.

### ***ULMS Listening Sessions – A summary of what we heard***

- *Fare should be free for riders under 18.*
- *Minimize youth interaction with fare enforcement as it can be harmful.*
- *No monetary fines for those who have no paid fare. Efforts should be made to decriminalize poverty.*
- *Provide assistance to sign up for ORCA Lift at time of non-payment.*
- *Those who participated in listening sessions reported limited or positive interactions with fare enforcement.*

***“If someone could not afford fare, it is unrealistic to think they would be able to pay the ticket.”***

#### ***Associated Students of University of Washington***

The team met with Michael Saunders, Director of Partnerships at ASUW, to begin drafting an outline of the CBO partnership program, or an outline of engagement, on September 30, 2022.

Initiated from the meeting, ASUW submitted a proposal that was accepted by the team. The agreement listed sample outreach activities that ASUW could support, a budget that included incentives and room rental cost for an event in a total budget of \$2,000. Michael requested this budget be paid through a Husky Fund donation through the school. We provided ongoing support throughout the process, including creating and printing flyers and providing logistical and onsite support for the townhall event.

#### ***Outreach activities included:***

- Survey promotions, including a shared story from a student group affiliate on Instagram
- Flyers posted at University of Washington
- Promotions through other student clubs
- Town hall/tabling event



The town hall tabling event held on November 11 was attended by approximately 35 students. Promotions to attend the event were primarily pushed out by ASUW. Pizza and beverages were provided for the event. A virtual townhall was shown on the projector screen by Sound Transit presenters Carrie and Sandee. Ryan Young from the Sound Transit Fare Engagement Team was available during the event for questions and discussion beyond the presentation.

### ***ASUW Townhall Event – A summary of what we heard***

- *Increase ORCA Lift program awareness*
- *Process of checking fare seems inconsistent*
- *Paying ticket fare can be confusing*
- *Suggestions for higher visibility of signage*

***“If Sound Transit could prepay an ORCA card once for people who can’t pay fare, it could help them into the habit of paying, and then they could start loading funds themselves.”***



## **2021 Online Survey**

The online survey was open from October 18 through November 29. Nine hundred and fifty individuals visited the online survey link; 309 individuals completed the survey.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

### **Fare Payment**

Almost half of respondents (49%) disagree that everyone riding on Sound Transit should pay a fare. More than half (54%) said they disagree that paying fare is a hardship for them; however, almost two-thirds of respondents (64%) of respondents agreed that paying fare is a hardship for people who are close to them. Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents agree it is easy to pay their fare, and most respondents agree that they would pay their fare if they knew no one would check their fare (71%).

Overall, the most commonly mentioned alternative to ways to make it *easier to pay fare* on Sound Transit are:

- Reduced or subsidized fares for riders with low to no income (58%).
- No additional fare after reaching a certain number of rides paid for with an ORCA account in a calendar month (51%).
- Mobile payment options (42%).

### **Managing Fare Violations**

Overall, respondents feel there should be an average of 6.7 warnings prior to further action being taken. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents state there should be no fine given for those who continually fail to show proof or fare payment. Among those who feel a fine is warranted, the average fine amount is \$47. The most mentioned alternative to paying a fine is “*Sign up for reduced fare program if eligible instead of paying fine*” (63%). Only eight percent (8%) of respondents state there should be no alternatives to a fine.

### **Youth Fare Policy**

Regarding youth riders (age 6-18), the most popular warning/fine policy is “*All warnings and education, no monetary fine*” (64%). Another ~20% of respondents supported no fare for youth, meaning ~85% of respondents supported a more lenient youth policy

### **Fare Ambassador**



Survey respondents were told that Fare Enforcement Officers have been renamed to Fare Ambassadors and were asked what comes to mind upon hearing the new name. The most commonly selected thoughts regarding Fare Ambassadors are:

- They are Sound Transit staff who will check my fare (42%).
- They are Sound Transit staff who can answer questions about paying fares (39%).
- Only 4% of respondents state they are not sure what comes to mind upon hearing the new name.

Survey respondents were also shown pictures of the new Fare Ambassador uniform and asked who they would describe that person as appearing. Most respondents described the uniforms as appearing Intimidating (33%) or Helpful (29%). One-third of respondents (33%) believe the uniforms look intimidating, and nineteen percent (19%) believe the uniforms make Fare Ambassadors look strict.

### ***Recommendations and Implementation***

The recommendations and implementation plan will be submitted in a separate document. Those materials will include recommendations for implementation of the fare compliance policy and reduced fare programs.