

Parking Program Expansion Briefing

Rider Experience and Operations Committee
02/01/2024

Why we are here

- Review existing Board direction to manage parking and policy considerations informing program expansion.
- Provide findings from public engagement.
- Share initial recommendations for an expanded parking program.
- Information only, no action required.

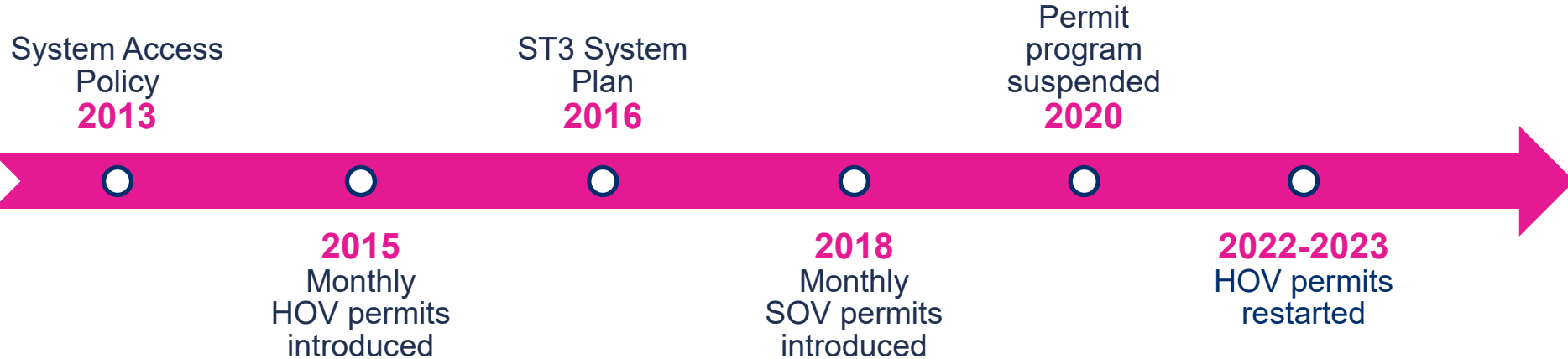
Areas of focus in 2023/2024

Major policy topics

- Fare policy – originally adopted in 2010 with a minor update in 2014 (Resolution No. R2014-27)
 - ✓ Fare structure on Link.
 - ❑ Farebox recovery targets.
- Parking management program – last Board action in 2018 to allow priced monthly parking permits (Resolution No. R2018-27)
 - ❑ Expanded program with daily paid parking.

Moving towards daily paid parking

Following Board direction to better manage agency parking facilities



Permit parking program – authorized by the Board in 2018 (Resolution No. R2018-27)

Goals

1. Maximize ridership.
2. Prioritize parking availability during weekday morning peak period.

Parameters

- **Cost recovery:** Market-rate fees that recover program costs.
- **Performance-based:** Variable pricing that manages demand, with CEO having rate setting authority.
- **Eligibility:**
 - All Link facilities eligible.
 - Sounder/ST Express facilities only when utilization > 90%.
- **Limited reserved parking:** Monthly permits only, and minimum 50% of spaces must remain free, first-come first-served.
- **Discounts:** free HOV permits, deep discounts for reduced fare program participants, and priority given to in-district residents.

Existing conditions and policy considerations

- Some facilities remain very full despite changed travel patterns.
- New Link service will generate higher demand at 7 new and 5 existing facilities.
- Costs to build and operate parking can be offset by user fees, like fares.
- ST3 system and finance plans assume parking revenue from fees.

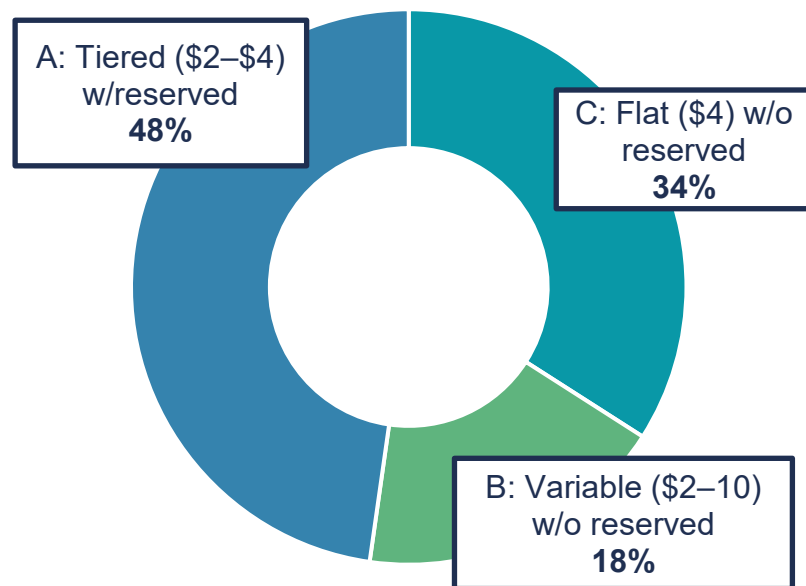


Themes from public engagement

What we heard

- Program goals to increase transit ridership, maintain parking availability, and simplify the passenger experience were most important.
- Preference for a parking program that maintains reserved parking options, with a narrower range of daily fee possibilities.
- Most interest in single-day and monthly permits for solo drivers.
- Open-ended comments reflect general unpopularity of charging parking fees given potential ridership impacts.

Which program option do people prefer?



Parking program update

Key staff recommendations

- **Maintain performance-based program** with administrative implementation (i.e., rate-setting and adjustment).
- **Continue discounts** to low-income passengers and carpoolers.
- **Expand program scope** to allow daily fees and full facility management and require regular reporting to REO Committee on program performance.
- **Introduce a daily fee** that can be charged at Link facilities and facilities with utilization > 70%.
- **Maintain reserved parking** at the busiest facilities (i.e., eligible facilities with utilization > 90%).
- **Start simple**, phase implementation, and add features over time to ensure sustainable program success.

Program implementation: 2024 – 2026

2024

- Initial implementation will focus on Link facilities on the 1 Line with the upcoming extension to Lynnwood City Center Station.
- We plan to test demand for reserved parking at eligible facilities and launch with a daily fee of **\$2/day**.
- We do not expect, as of now, to charge a fee after 2pm or on weekends.



Program implementation: 2024 – 2026

2026

- We expect to be fully implemented at all eligible facilities.

Note: this map is illustrative and based on current trends.

- Prices for daily fees and reserved permits will be adjusted as we respond to program performance and parking demand.



Parking program performance forecast

Transit ridership impacts

- Improved parking availability during peak periods and more open spaces for midday transit trips.
- Some price sensitive passengers will shift to other modes and others will share rides to use free carpool permits, increasing ridership.

Potential annual net revenue of ~\$4M-\$6M by 2026

- Expanded parking management is forecast to generate ~\$6M-7M in permit and daily fee revenue annually by 2026.
- Assumes annual cost of ~\$1.5M-\$2.0M for program administration and enforcement services at up to 20 stations.

Toward a comprehensive fares strategy

Next steps for parking program expansion

February 2024

- Today: Executive and Rider Experience and Operations Committees to share initial parking program expansion recommendations.

March 2024

- 3/7: Executive Committee recommendation on parking program expansion.
- 3/28: Board action on parking program expansion.

Next steps for fare policy update

March 2024

- 3/7: Executive Committee briefing on fare policy update.

April 2024

- 4/4: Executive Committee recommendation on fare policy update.
- 4/25: Board action to update fare policy.

Thank you



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Appendix:
Supplemental slides

Fares guiding framework

We serve passengers with a fare structure that is regionally integrated to encourage transit ridership through equitable and simple pricing, and financial stewardship.

***Parking management at
Sound Transit: background***

Permit parking program

Key features

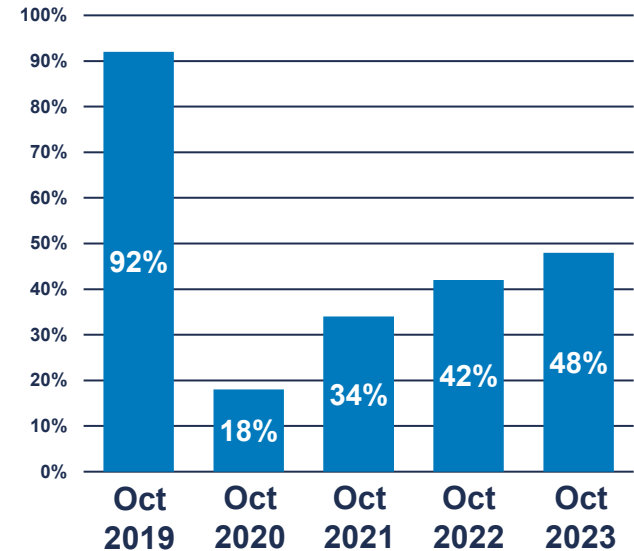
- Monthly permits only:
 - SOV permits at market rates (\$45-\$120/month).
 - HOV permits were free to incentivize more riders per space.
 - Reduced-price SOV permits for ORCA LIFT-qualified passengers.
- 1,200 permits issued at 14 Sound Transit facilities before program suspension in March 2020.



Existing conditions & policy considerations

- Parking demand much lower than 2019 but is growing.
- Unequal demand between facilities.
- Post-pandemic prevalence of remote and hybrid work models may reduce demand for monthly permits.
- Program-wide revenue and cost challenges to overall plan affordability.

***Systemwide parking utilization,
October 2019-October 2023***



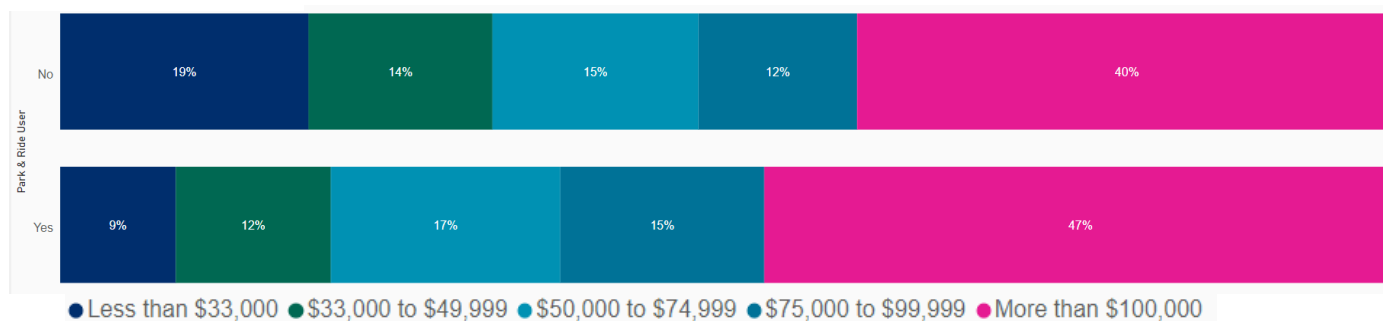
Existing conditions & policy considerations

- There are significant costs to design and deliver parking, and ongoing costs to operate and maintain it.
- Parking fees can offset some costs, comparable to how fares support the cost of transit service.
- Staff analysis estimates a cost of ~\$2/day per space for ongoing O&M and parking program administration (not inclusive of capital costs to deliver parking facilities).

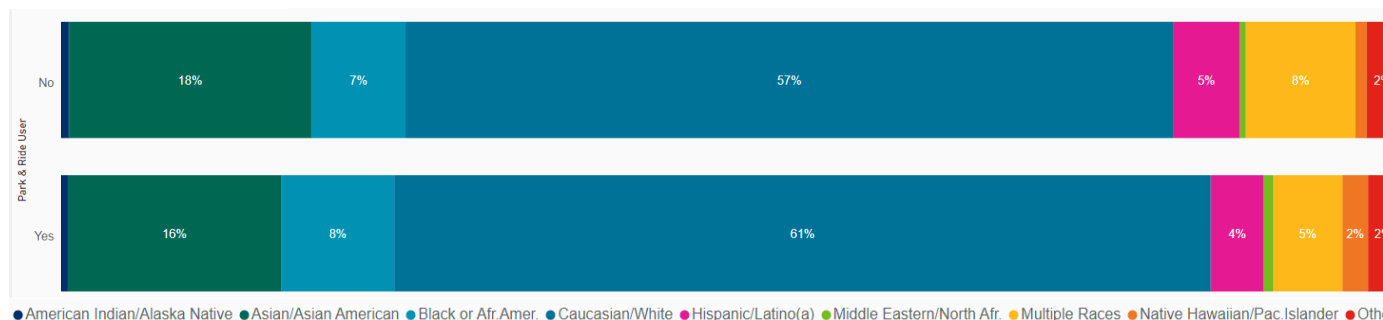


Park & Ride passengers are generally higher-income and less diverse than other passengers

INCOME BY PARK AND RIDE USAGE

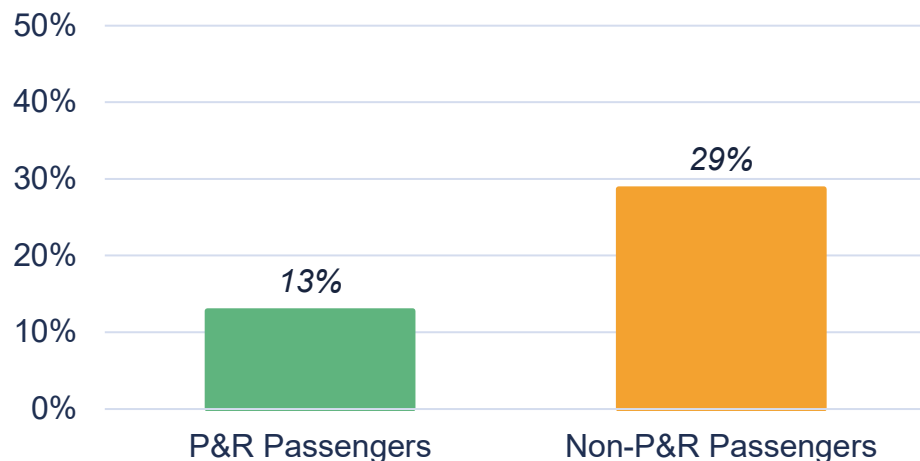


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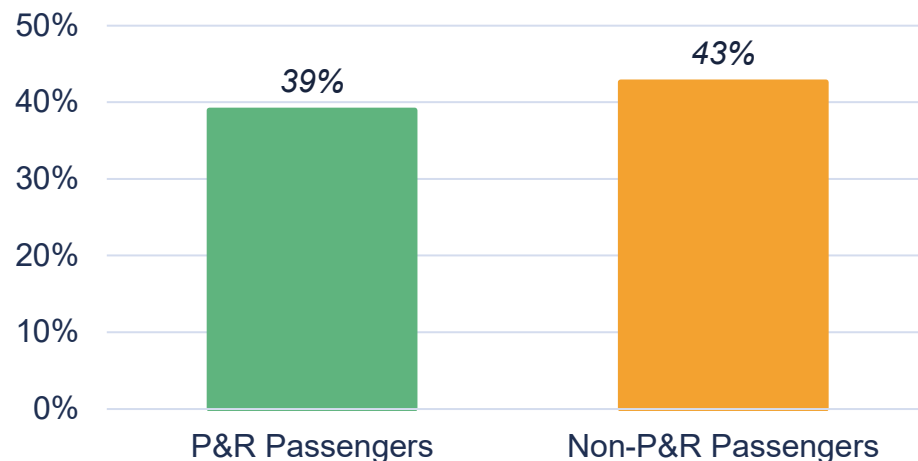


Park & Ride passengers are generally higher-income and less diverse than other passengers

% Low-Income



% POC



Parking program expansion

Existing authority

Program goals	Permit types	Eligible facilities	Program scope
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase ridership• Ensure parking availability• Recover program costs	Monthly permits only	Link facilities and facilities with utilization above 90%	Can only manage up to 50% of stalls at eligible facilities

Rationale for an expanded parking program now

- This is the third and final expansion of program scope per original Board intent from program initiation in 2015.
- Enables full program implementation as the Link system expands in the coming years with 12 additional parking facilities serving light rail.

Engagement findings

Engagement activities & schedule

Timing & tactics

- Engagement period began on September 25 and ran through October 22.
- Key tactics included an online open house, a passenger survey, engagement with community-based organizations, targeted focus groups, and street teams to drive survey participation.
- Engagement efforts targeted areas and populations likely to be most impacted by a Link fare change, parking program expansion, or both.

Parking program expansion

Focus of engagement

- What goals and program features should an expanded parking program emphasize?
- Sought input related to simplicity, affordability, and impact on someone's use of Sound Transit's transit parking facilities based on different program alternatives.
- The purpose of these program design alternatives was to illustrate the trade-offs inherent in developing an expanded program.

Parking program update

Probable staff recommendations in advance of engagement

Current program elements to continue	Parking management tools to authorize	What we sought Board and public input on
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operate a performance-based parking program with established targets.• Retain CEO authority to set rates.• Retain discounts for reduced fare program users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand eligibility criteria for managing parking at facilities.• Authorize daily and multi-day fees and/or permits.• Decide whether to offer monthly and/or reserved permits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether to change program goals and priorities.• If, where, and when to offer reserved parking, and permit types to offer.• Potential program design alternatives.

Program design alternatives

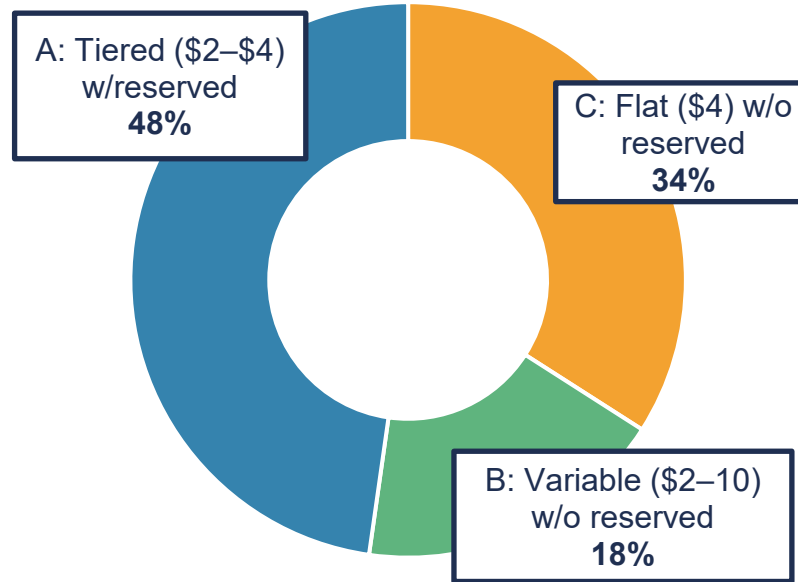
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Reserved parking	Yes	No	No
Fee types	Monthly + daily	Daily	Daily
Pricing	Variable	Variable	Flat rate
Where fees apply	Select stations	Select stations	All stations

Common features of all alternatives

- Performance-based.
- Ability to manage 100% of eligible facilities.
- Discounted pricing for certain passengers (e.g., low-income, HOV).
- Start simple and adjust as needed.

Parking program preferences

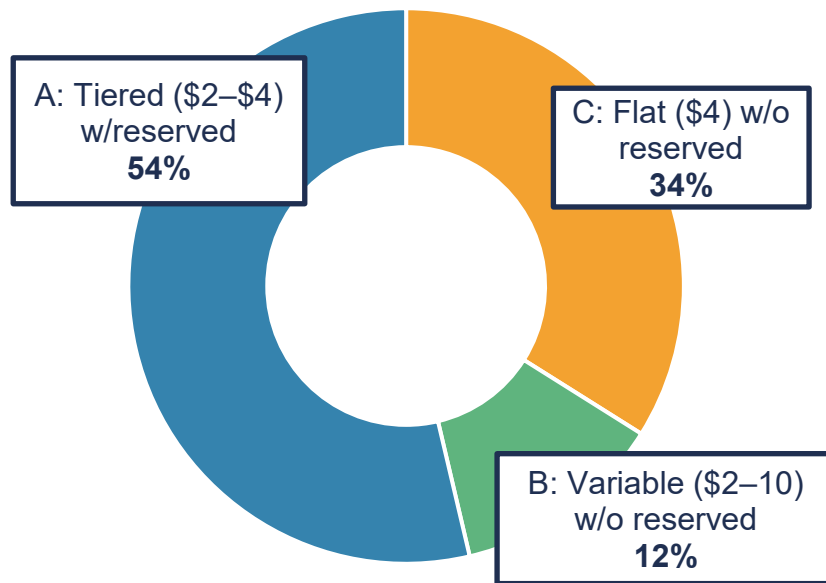
Which option do passengers and the public prefer?



Overall breakdown | 2,352 respondents

Parking program preferences

Which option do passengers and the public prefer?

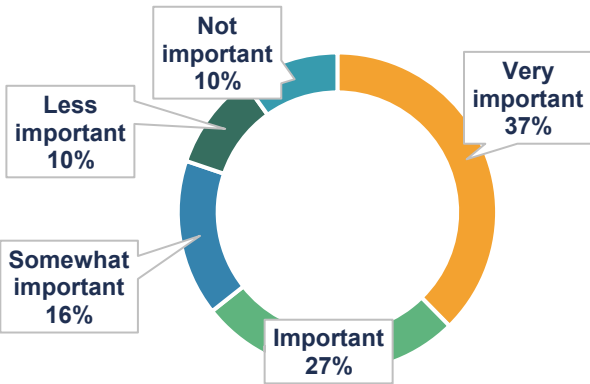


People who park 1 day per week or more | 952 respondents

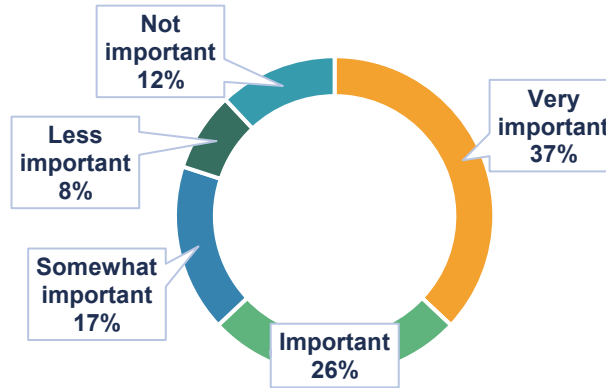
Parking program preferences

Please rank the following objectives in order of importance

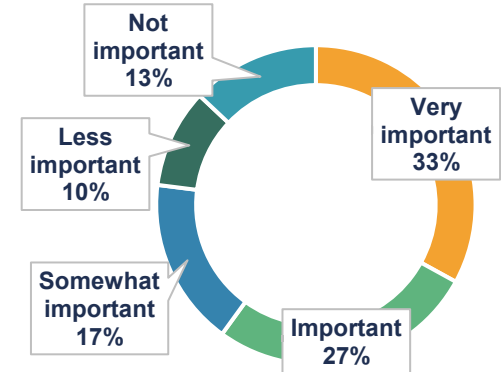
Increase transit ridership



Always keep some parking spaces available



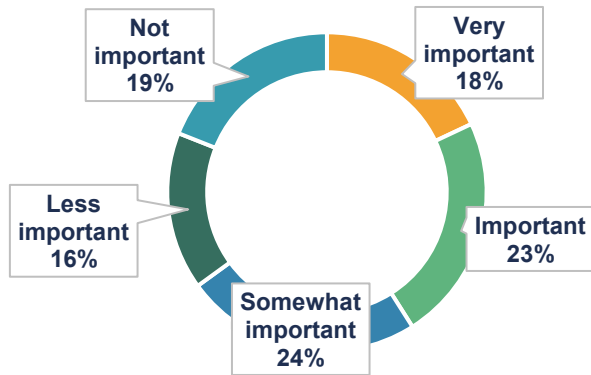
Simple passenger experience



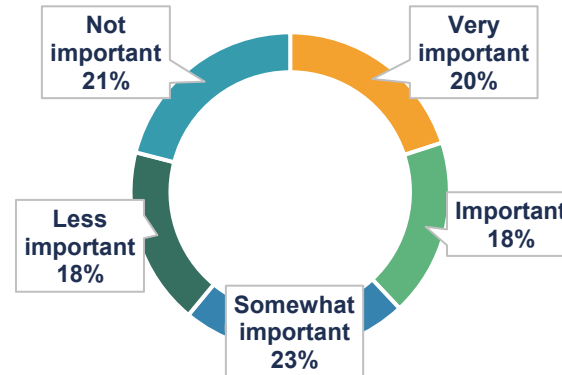
Parking program preferences

Please rank the following objectives in order of importance

Recover costs to provide parking



Generate revenue from parking facilities



Parking program preferences

Which type of permit and fee options would be of most interest?

- Single day general fee was the most popular option.
- Free general carpool parking was the second most popular.

Which type of reserved permit options would be of most interest?

- Monthly solo driver permit was the most popular option.
- Single day solo driver permit was the second most popular.
- Carpool permit options were less popular.

Parking program engagement themes

Board engagement themes from August 2023

- Supportive of maintaining a performance-based program with administrative rate-setting and adjustment.
- Supportive of variable pricing given different conditions and contexts at parking facilities in the Sound Transit district.
- Prioritize parking availability and transit ridership goals above revenue generation, but supportive of recovering costs.
- Equity is a key concern as is simplicity for passengers (over and above simplicity for program administration).

Initial staff recommendations & analysis

Parking program update

1. Program goals & key features

- Maintain key program goals: 1) ridership, 2) availability, 3) cost recovery.
- Add emphasis of a simple and easy passenger experience.
- Maintain a performance-based program with rate setting delegated to CEO and periodic adjustments to ensure achievement of program goals.
- Continue offering discounts to low-income passengers, carpool parkers, and other reduced fare categories.

Parking program update

2. Expand the scope of the program

- Authorize management at up to 100% of stalls at eligible facilities.
- Authorize daily fees and permit options beyond monthly.
- Require regular reporting to the REO on program performance.

Parking program update

3. Charge a daily user fee for parking

- **Eligibility threshold:** All Link stations and parking at other stations with utilization above 70%.
- Set initial daily fee at the cost recovery rate of \$2 at all eligible facilities.
- Adjust daily fee rates periodically to ensure parking availability, especially at facilities with higher utilization.

Parking program update

4. Maintain reserved parking at the busiest facilities

- **Eligibility threshold:** All eligible facilities with utilization above 90%.
- Allow reserved parking at up to 25% of stalls at eligible facilities.
- Offer reserved parking options at a higher price than the daily fee with both monthly and single-day reserved permits.
- Use local market conditions to set reserved parking rates.
- Adjust reserved fee rates periodically to ensure parking availability, especially at facilities with higher utilization.

Parking program update

5. Other key program features

- We will launch a simple program to start and add options and features over time.
- We are likely to initiate program expansion on a phased sequence at eligible facilities.
- We do not expect to charge a fee after 2pm, on Fridays and weekends, or for special events at program launch.
- We do not plan to restrict access to program features or charge higher fees for out-of-district residents.