

KCMC: Access to work and school subcommittee

MEETING NOTES

September 13th, 2016

1:00-2:30 PM

Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 4070

Participants: Jacqueline Mann (PSESD), Ray Krueger (Hopelink), Ben Johnson (Seattle Goodwill), Katie Wilson (Transit Riders Union), Julie Burrell (King County Metro), Lisa Pan (DSHS/BFET), Staci Haber (KCMC), Anat Caspi (Taskar Center), Eleen Trang (SDOT).

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting began at 1:00 PM. Introductions were given by each member of the subcommittee.

Announcements:

- Ben Johnson from Seattle Goodwill announced that classes start the 2nd week of October at Seattle Goodwill. They have about 9,700 students enrolled each year and transportation continues to be a huge barrier.
- Walktober starts October 1st and continues throughout the month. FeetFirst is sponsoring the event and you can sign up to be a part of the event or to find a walk in your area at feetfirst.org.
- International walk to school day is October 5th, 2016. Your school can sign up through fireupyourfeet.org for a chance to win \$500.
- You can now ride the Redmond LOOP. Schedule, times, and fares on the city of Redmond website. The LOOP shows up on the Metro trip planner as an option, but not on Google maps.
- 2017 renewal of the Veterans and Human Services Levy. Community conversations around the county on what should be prioritized. Flyer is attached with dates.
- King County Metro is planning a 2nd round of surveys and outreach around late night bus service. Paper surveys (in English and Spanish) will be available sometime in October. Lauren will send out more information when known. Lisa mentioned that the printed survey should be available in more languages. Julie stated that there is the Metro phone number a person can call to get translations. There was discussion regarding how the subcommittee can assist in outreach for the survey as well as translation for the top five languages in King County. There was a suggestion involving cultural competency for all involved.
- Anat Caspi, Taskar Center, University of Washington, Commitment to Complete Streets for All Initiative—recognition and award from the White House. Open Sidewalks—mapping provides information for other cities and app developers. Released back to school newsletter.
- Julie, King County Metro—in the past, Youth ORCA cards had been given to students that live beyond 2 miles from their school. Rainier Beach High School campaigned to give Youth ORCA cards to students that lived within the 2 mile radius. The initiative is targeted to low income students. Eligibility requirements are same as ORCA LIFT—students can self-certify income. The application form for students is online. King County Metro attended orientation to sign up eligible students.

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- Julie also mentioned other alternative service programs around the county. In Kenmore and Kirkland, employers are subsidizing vanpool costs. There are also many alternative service programs beginning to take shape in Maple Valley and Black Diamond. Look on King County Metro website for more information.

TRANSIT RIDERS UNION

Katie Wilson, general secretary of the Transit Riders Union (TRU), provided a background on the formation of TRU and updates on their fall campaigns. TRU has been around for almost 5 years. The group was formed when Metro first considered deep service cuts. TRU's goal is to have affordable and accessible transit service for everyone.

One big issue they have identified is the lack of late night bus service. The light rail doesn't run for 5 hours during the night/early morning hours. Sound Transit's reason for the break is for needed track and car maintenance. TRU has suggested that a bus could possibly run the same route as the light rail during those 5 hours—mimicking the route and providing access to transit for late night workers. TRU has worked with the labor unions on identifying the need for more reliable and safe public transportation in the overnight hours. Katie provided the latest TRU newsletter to members—highlighting workers' stories about their challenges in waiting for the bus at night.

Another issue TRU has tackled and continues to work on is access to public transit for low to no-income individuals. TRU helped to establish the ORCA LIFT program and worked with Rainier Beach students to campaign for Youth ORCA cards for all students that qualify—not just those past the 2 mile boundary.

TRU is currently focusing on improving the Human Services Reduced Fare Bus Ticket Program. Currently, human service organizations can buy King County Metro bus tickets at a reduced rate for their clients. However, agencies are often not able to afford and/or purchase enough tickets to get them through the year. TRU succeeded in campaigning to raise the cap on the number of tickets available.

Now they are working to reduce the percentage human service agencies have to pay for these tickets. Currently they pay 20% face value of a bus ticket. TRU will meet with King County this fall to ask to lower the cost to providers. Katie also stated that as of June 2016, there is a combination ticket available to providers at the same cost as the regular bus ticket. This combination ticket has an all day light rail pass coupled with 2 bus tickets. This combo ticket helps alleviate the challenge many paper ticket transit riders face when trying to transfer to the light rail.

Katie identified that ORCA LIFT is a great program, but still out of reach for many individuals. TRU is advocating for a very low income transit pass for those who are experiencing extreme

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poverty. TRU is looking at other municipalities to see what could work in Seattle. Calgary adopted a sliding scale transit pass.

Julie suggested that TRU contact ORCA and consult with them during their planning phases for ORCA 2.0. Ben mentioned that Goodwill hands out double tickets to their students to assist them in accessing their classes and services. Katie stated that TRU is looking at expanding the Youth ORCA program to other populations such as people with disabilities and seniors living on a fixed income.

Katie encouraged members to visit the TRU website--<http://transitriders.org/>. Subcommittee members can contact her at Katie@transitriders.org.

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH? OUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY:

Lauren asked the question regarding what would the subcommittee like to accomplish? What do we feel is our role in the community?

It was voiced that we want to be a presence in the community and a resource for service updates and initiatives. There was also interest in exploring alternatives services and getting the word out about these services.

Lisa stated that she would like to learn more about the different resources and programs that are available. What funding is available for transportation? What options are available to her clients and where is the information? Simply put, the information is not getting out to the service providers.

There was interest about pairing with work readiness programs and connecting low income individuals with transportation to jobs and opportunities. What is the best way to connect employment training centers with transportation information?

Discussion about the difference of information disseminated to front line staff/direct service versus internal staff. What does this look like? Many people thought it would be a good idea to educate ourselves first. We will then be able to give accurate information to staff and co-workers. A monthly "E-blast" was an idea to get information out to subcommittee members. The E-blast would be easy to read and full of any new information/events that involved transportation.

There was continued discussion in reaching out to contacts/ organizations/ people in the community and educating them on transportation resources. Lauren mentioned the webinar herself and a coworker were creating for the King County Library System staff on transportation resources. Suggestions of who to reach out to include community colleges, large employers, the airport, those with unconventional schedules, and companies that abide by the commute trip reduction (CTR) requirements.

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ACTION PLAN FOR NEXT MEETING:

- Identify hosts for future meetings—possible “field trips” to other member’s sites to learn about their programs and transportation needs and challenges.
 - Create an “E-blast” for subcommittee members to access transportation information.
 - Next meeting will focus on fleshing out the “Identify the gaps” activity and prioritizing projects.
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ACCESS TO WORK AND SCHOOL SUBCOMMITTEE CONTACT

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