

# KING COUNTY COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Needs, gaps, and emerging trends for transportation-disadvantaged  
populations in King County's mobility system



King County  
**MOBILITY**COALITION

February 2021

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As a product of the King County Mobility Coalition, this Community Transportation Needs Assessment is indebted to the countless members, partners, and stakeholders that make up our collaborative group. Without the input and consistent coordination of our members, we would be unable to gauge our priority populations' needs so thoroughly. The literature review that informed this assessment is founded upon King County's social services sector's vital work to assess and confront vulnerable communities' needs proactively. Furthermore, direct input from our Coalition during multiple meetings and the survey offered crucial insight into this deliverable.



*Attendees sit around a table at a Coalition meeting.*

**Thank you to King County Mobility Coalition members and partners for your investment in improving our mobility network!**

This report was primarily written by Cassidy Giampetro, Program Supervisor for the King County Mobility Coalition. Various Hopelink Mobility Management members contributed to the compilation of resources involved in and editing for this document.

The King County Mobility Coalition thanks its 2020-2021 co-chairs, Alex O'Reilly of the City of Bellevue and Don Okazaki of King County Metro, for guidance throughout the production of this assessment.



*Riders board the Snoqualmie Valley Transportation shuttle, photo courtesy of Snoqualmie Valley Transportation.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The King County Mobility Coalition (KCMC) acts as the coordinated special needs transportation coalition for King County, Washington. The Coalition is made up of a diverse group of stakeholders who convene on mobility and transportation for underserved communities in King County. Bringing together a significant roster of cross-sector partners, the KCMC works to inform transportation services by developing strategies, tools, and projects to improve mobility for people with unique needs. The KCMC's priority populations include any communities with transportation barriers; this often represents people with disabilities, older adults, immigrants, refugees, those with limited-English proficiency, low-income communities, and youth. Through our work in these communities, the KCMC is well-positioned to conduct a thorough assessment of the unmet needs and gaps these populations face.

A robust literature review informed this needs assessment of materials produced after 2014 related to transportation, mobility, and the Coalition's priority populations. The assessment was also guided by a survey shared with the Coalition, through guidance from the Coalition's co-chairs, and a general pulse on needs present throughout the Coalition's organizing and convening.

Through this work, the assessment identified 21 unmet needs in King County's mobility network. Of these 21, five needs were reflected most prominently throughout both the surveying and the literature review. They are:

- ▶ Populations residing in rural and suburban King County need better transportation options to connect to employment and medical centers.
- ▶ Populations residing in rural and suburban King County need better access within their own neighborhoods.
- ▶ Individuals with limited-English proficiency face barriers in utilizing specialized transportation services due to a lack of awareness associated with missing in-language and culturally competent transportation education and outreach.
- ▶ Interested riders are confused or overwhelmed by the process of understanding their mobility options – particularly how specialized transportation providers operate with varying service areas, trip types, and eligibility requirements.
- ▶ Riders accessing employment during traditional off-peak hours (e.g., evenings and weekends) need reliable and quick options.

This assessment also details emerging trends significant for professionals working within the mobility space to consider for short- and long-term planning.

This needs assessment will most notably inform the Puget Sound Regional Council's Coordinated Human Services Plan and the King County Mobility Coalition's strategic planning process in the coming years. In addition, this resource aspires to influence the transportation, human services, healthcare, and social service fields more widely in supporting solutions that will meet needs. Transportation providers, planners, caseworkers, regional planners, city officials, politicians, and advocates can use this assessment to better understand the people they serve.

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## FOREWORD

### THE KING COUNTY MOBILITY COALITION

The King County Mobility Coalition (KCMC) hosts a diverse group of stakeholders to convene on mobility and transportation for underserved communities in King County. The Coalition works to inform transportation services' planning by developing strategies, tools, and projects to improve mobility for people with unique mobility needs. The KCMC acts as the coordinated special needs transportation coalition for King County, Washington, and brings together a roster of over 30 members invested in mobility topics – representing transportation providers, community-based organizations, governments and municipalities, riders, and more.



The KCMC furthers a vision for a coordinated transportation network that allows all people to move freely around King County and the Puget Sound region. It achieves this by:

- ▶ Bringing together individuals and organizations to share information;
- ▶ Assessing the needs of the local community and current transportation network;
- ▶ Providing recommendations to improve the system; and
- ▶ Educating decision-makers, community groups, and the general public.

The KCMC engages in various programming, coordination, and collaboration to accomplish this ever-evolving goal.

## INTRODUCTION

As part of the KCMC's efforts to inform planning and decision-making, the Coalition produces a timely needs assessment to identify the needs, gaps, and emerging trends experienced by the Coalition's priority populations. The Community Transportation Needs Assessment reviews relevant resources to gather information on the state of the transportation system in King County as it relates to people with disabilities, older adults, youth, low-income individuals, those with limited English proficiency, immigrants, refugees, individuals experiencing homelessness, and other marginalized communities.

The purpose of this Needs Assessment is to:

- ▶ Support the vision, purpose, and goals of the King County Mobility Coalition;
- ▶ Guide the King County Mobility Coalition's strategic planning initiatives;
- ▶ Inform the Puget Sound Regional Council's Regional Transportation Plan for the Central Puget Sound region; and
- ▶ Update the 2014 King County Mobility Coalition Needs Assessment.



*A Community Van rider smiles outside of the van. Photo courtesy of Community Van.*

Beyond this, the document itself enhances understanding of mobility services for the Coalition's priority populations. It provides an updated resource for planning and strategy for the Coalition's internal use and external partners. The report does this by compiling data, publications, and relevant literature produced across the county to centralize and summarize various sources of insight without duplicating efforts. Needs and emerging trends are extracted for this Needs Assessment through a literature review and prioritization process.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The remaining section of this report will summarize thorough findings on unmet needs related to specialized transportation in King County.

## METHODOLOGY

The Needs and Emerging Issues and Trends portions of this Needs Assessment were informed by a research and review process that spanned from May 2020 to December 2020. This research was conducted by the Hopelink Mobility Management team and informed by Coalition partners. The Hopelink Mobility team was provided a scope to compile relevant resources for the Needs Assessment that narrowed their search to include the following materials and reports:

- ▶ Published after 2014<sup>1</sup>;
- ▶ Occurred or conducted in King County; and
- ▶ Provided information related to public transit or specialized transportation.

The resources included in these sections range from reports and analyses, surveys, project findings, and event summaries. City-specific reports were included based on how precise or informative their coverage of transportation needs was; for example, using descriptive detail to expand upon transportation needs beyond simply gauging a transportation need. Throughout research and compiling resources, stakeholders were invited to provide feedback and suggest the inclusion of resources through Coalition meetings, announcements, and the King County Mobility Coalition newsletter. To learn more about the methodology for this Needs Assessment, see Appendix B.

## LIMITATIONS

Like any review, our Needs Assessment is limited by inherent biases in analysis and data. Our team has made an intentional effort to uncover resources that will expose needs with demographic and geographic diversity in mind during our full literature review. We have included multiple internal and external opportunities for feedback in the writing of this assessment through KCMC channels. However, notable limitations remain.

One limitation is the absence of in-depth analysis on transportation needs when they emerge. In much of the literature reviewed, transportation gets listed simply as a need without much further expansion into what precisely the need entails. For example, this may look like a report referencing “transportation as a barrier to food access” but not detailing *why* transportation is a barrier to food access. Doing this leaves many variables – like lack of options, unaffordability, inconvenience, or something else – to be



*Riders view a bus route map at a RapidRide bus stop.*

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<sup>1</sup> Immigrant and Refugee Elders Transportation Project Summary Report by the King County Mobility Coalition, July 2011; <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Immigrant%20and%20Refugee%20Elders%20Transportation%20Project.pdf>

the possible root cause for addressing this need. We did not initiate research into these instances for our Needs Assessment by reaching out to the original resource publisher. Instead, we noted the needs as presented within the literature review.

This Needs Assessment is also being published during the COVID-19 pandemic, about one year from the initial impact in King County. While longer-term trends and data are emerging at this point, this Needs Assessment will be published ahead of more thorough, reflective reporting on mobility impacts due to COVID-19 in King County. Therefore, many of the COVID-19 related materials will be either out-of-scope or will not align to be included with the timeline we have to publish our assessment. The KCMC collaborates with the Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET), a regional coalition focused on transportation during adverse weather and emergencies, which will partake in a more focused assessment of COVID-19 needs in the future.

## COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

This section uses various sources of information to evaluate the state of the current transportation system in King County and the barriers to mobility. This section reflects an understanding of the obstacles, gaps in service, and overall needs our priority populations face regarding mobility. To learn more about the methodology for data collection that informed this section, view Appendix B. Additionally, a full list of resources from which insight was pulled for this section is available in Appendix D. These resources include events, surveys, other needs assessments, and community reports.



*Coalition members read and post stickers on posters on the wall displaying transportation gaps as part of a meeting activity.*

This section's needs have been given relevant “tags” related to stakeholders and geography to make it easy for the reader to understand how needs relate to these qualifiers. The tags describe areas and communities that are particularly impacted by the need. Note that this does not mean needs are only relevant to the populations and within the regions elevated through tags; in most cases, these needs are present and appropriate for a greater variety of riders throughout the county. However, labels are used here to provide deeper geographic and demographic insights aligned with the Coalition’s priority populations.

The top five most common needs are listed here. They are presented in order of priority as ranked by our KCMC members and partners in November 2020<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> In November 2020, a short survey was distributed to King County Mobility Coalition members and partners that asked them to rank a pre-determined list of needs and provide insights on needs not yet mentioned. The survey received 22 responses.

**NEED:** Populations residing in rural and suburban King County need better transportation options to connect to employment and medical centers.

Transit and mobility services have not kept pace with the geographic and demographic shifts occurring in King County. These shifts have brought new people to urban areas, which has displaced vulnerable communities from these centers. Factors like sprawl, rising housing prices, and general population growth are causing higher numbers of people to live in suburban and rural areas, which are historically underserved by transit and transportation services. Many of the same people moving to escape unaffordable housing are still relying on transit to get to work or health centers in areas even further from where they live. Access to healthcare in this context is a huge need, as many of the region's large healthcare centers are in urban areas. A need is growing to equip rural and suburban areas with routine, reliable transportation options that provide them greater connectivity to the larger areas where jobs and healthcare are located.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, BIPOC Communities

**Where:** Snoqualmie Valley, South King County, East King County

**NEED:** Populations residing in rural and suburban King County need better access within their own neighborhoods.

Trends continue to show growth in rural and suburban areas of King County. These areas often have less built-out mobility networks. This means that transportation is minimal or does not run as efficiently or timely enough to be a reliable option outside of owning a car. Without these options and transit investment in these neighborhoods, riders are forced to either buy a vehicle or, if they cannot drive, face isolation – even when it comes to needs as simple as navigating space within their own neighborhoods, like visiting grocery stores, pharmacies, community centers, and other nearby destinations. This need to build out suburban and rural connectivity applies to suburban and rural residents who rely on transportation services to take them to neighboring cities in addition to within their own neighborhoods – since many services act purely to connect riders with large urban areas.

**Who:** Older Adults, Limited-English Proficiency Populations, People with Disabilities, Families, BIPOC Communities

**Where:** All of King County

**NEED:** Individuals with limited-English proficiency face barriers in utilizing specialized transportation services due to a lack of awareness associated with missing in-language and culturally competent transportation education and outreach.

King County is incredibly diverse; adequate education and information sharing must respond to the diversity in communication methods required to reach each community. Many communities are not using specialized transportation services not because they don't need them but because they lack the information and awareness of said services. Data from many Limited-English Proficiency groups in King County show a considerable lack of awareness about the diverse mobility options available to communities. Traditional forms of outreach can be limited in scope. For example, traditional forms are most effective for audiences who speak English and have internet access. However, it has consistently been shown that these levels of communication don't reach many vulnerable communities in King County. There is a need to provide training and information sharing resources that support specialized transportation usage in multiple languages and provide readily available interpretation accompanying in-person or event-based programming.

**Who:** Limited-English Proficiency Populations

**Where:** All of King County

**Opportunity:** There have been recent investments in the peer-to-peer or "Navigator" model to bridge information and awareness gaps between hard-to-reach communities through culturally considerate and representative support. This model has been successful nationally and regionally, including the City of Seattle's Department of Neighborhood's Community Liaisons program and King County Public Health's Promotores work. Alongside more intentional outreach, a Navigator model would improve information dissemination and ensure all communities receive equitable outreach and education.

**NEED:** Interested riders are confused or overwhelmed by the process of understanding their mobility options – particularly how specialized transportation providers operate with varying service areas, trip types, and eligibility requirements.

The process of understanding transportation options is complicated for prospective users. There are many nuances to the diverse variables that can match a rider to their mobility services, such as eligibility, trip type, service area, trip time, mobility need, or mode preference. This information is disparate and often only discoverable to those who are already familiar with these services. There is a need for low barrier ways to perform trip planning and securement for those looking to use services without institutional knowledge of existing options.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, Limited-English Proficiency Populations, Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** All of King County

**Opportunity:** A comprehensive system that centralizes transportation information for riders can effectively address this need. A One-Call One-Click system fulfills this need by compiling the complexity of various transportation options in a region and housing this information in one website, supplemented by a call center, where users can discover services and potentially book rides. Establishing a One-Call One-Click in King County can help riders, caregivers, and assisting staff or agencies get connected to services that appropriately meet needs without the barriers of the existing decentralized network.

**NEED:** Riders accessing employment during traditional off-peak hours (e.g., evenings and weekends) need reliable and quick options.

Riders commuting to work make up a significant population of transit ridership. However, transit services put a large emphasis on serving commuters working traditional 9-to-5 business hours. The thinning of services outside this time frame means transit is not a viable option for a large portion of the workforce who commute during off-peak hours. These workers, often in the service industry (for example, within foodservice, healthcare, domestic care), lack feasible options to consistently get to their workplaces. Both riders who could use transit as an alternative but cannot rely on the system and riders who do not drive themselves require options that adequately address their needs through availability, efficiency, and dependability.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, Youth

**Where:** All of King County



*Riders gather around a bus route display and read from the map.*

There were many other needs identified through the literature review. They are organized below using five key lenses: spatial, temporal, institutional, infrastructure, and awareness. There is no particular order within each section.

## Spatial Needs

Spatial needs are geographic and place-based.

**NEED:** Individuals impacted disproportionately by displacement and isolation need guaranteed access to healthcare.

Individuals with insecure or unsatisfactory transportation options to access healthcare need reliable and affordable options to connect them to healthcare providers regularly. Older adults, people who live in rural areas, people of lower-income, veterans, and more vulnerable communities with specific needs face unique difficulties when looking for transportation to take them to hospitals and other medical destinations. This is especially acute as specialty-healthcare can be further away or not covered by insurance. Many individuals fall between criteria for supportive programs, like those ineligible for Medicaid, and have needs unaddressed by supportive programs in the current system.



*Amongst the blue sky and a big mountain, a wheelchair user leaves a Snoqualmie Valley Transportation shuttle. Picture courtesy of Snoqualmie Valley Transportation.*

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, People Experiencing Homelessness

**Where:** Snoqualmie Valley, South King County, East King County

**NEED:** Cross-county riders experience confusing or limited service options.

Riders who travel in or out of King County face challenges to secure a complete trip. Between fare changes, operator changes, and trip planning differences, there is a lot to understand and overcome. On top of this, services they may rely on in one county may stop at county lines or operate differently across county lines, while other services do not. This can make cross-county trips challenging to organize and perform.

**Who:** Cross-County Riders

**Where:** King County and neighboring counties

## Temporal Needs

Temporal needs relate to time and availability.



**NEED:** Riders need a viable transportation option that quickly and efficiently gets them to their destination.

Riders in rural areas, people using transit for work, and people with disabilities all state a provider's ability to be consistently on-time and relatively quick as a significant factor impacting their dependency on a particular transportation program. A large aspect of this is being able to rely on transportation to get them to their destinations promptly, with minimal transfers and time ranges competitive with that of a personal vehicle. Shared ride services or public transit that requires more than one transfer will likely result in lengthier trips. Without this aspect of efficiency, riders are left unsatisfied with the system and cannot consistently rely on it to meet their needs.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** Snoqualmie Valley, South King County, East King County



**NEED:** Potential riders are disincentivized to use specialized transportation options that require advanced booking.

In general, many specialized transportation programs require a rider to "call ahead" and book a ride, sometimes days or a week in advance, which often makes the service helpful for only a limited scope of trips that are pre-planned days or weeks ahead. For riders who experience unexpected changes to their mobility needs or who otherwise struggle to plan for their mobility services, this presents a barrier to their utilization of services. This need for preparation as a barrier also includes a lag time in-between requesting and receiving a ride confirmation. The interim period results in a level of uncertainty for the requester.

**Who:** Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** All of King County

## Institutional Needs

Institutional needs are caused by rules, regulations, or practices administered by the agencies that govern the transportation network.



### **NEED:** Specialized transportation needs more flexibility in trip type.

In much of the feedback provided on transportation, it is noted across communities that potential riders would make more use of specialized transportation services if they were better aligned with the breadth of activities mobility is needed for. Many programs are limited in trip type – meaning they only take riders to a narrow scope of destinations, like medical facilities but not a pharmacy. There is a need for transportation options that are not bound by very specific trip type but instead accommodate flexible destinations to achieve the same goal. Essential trips are not limited just to medical appointments but encompass destinations like childcare, food banks, grocery stores, and community centers – all of which contribute to better health and wellness outcomes for community members.

**Who:** Limited-English Proficiency Populations, Youth, Families, Low-Income Populations

**Where:** All of King County



### **NEED:** Interested riders face barriers in using programs or finding appropriate programs due to cumbersome or restrictive eligibility requirements.

Many alternative transportation programs are limited in who they serve, prompting eligibility requirements. It takes research to understand the nuance of how an individual can qualify for each program. Furthermore, assessing eligibility often requires riders to pull from data sources that may be hard to find or provide personal information that may be uncomfortable sharing. Some enrollment processes require multiple levels of confirmation which results in a delay for a rider to use the service. This contributes to a burdensome experience for the rider.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, People Experiencing Homelessness, Undocumented Individuals

**Where:** All of King County



**NEED:** Riders need temporary support when their usual transportation option is not feasible.

There are multiple scenarios in which riders need quick transportation options during temporary periods – for example, during an interim period of approval for a long-term program or if faced with a temporary injury. Eligibility processes can take significant time to validate; Access can have up to a three-week waiting period before use. This delay between a request to use services and confirmation means riders are left without options during this interim period. For riders who will only rely on transportation programs for a limited duration, the same need exists to be quickly enrolled in a supportive program that can fulfill service gaps.

**Who:** Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** All of King County




**NEED:** King County needs more established coordination among transportation providers and emergency managers to quickly and effectively mobilize during emergency events.

Emergency management reporting in King County has found vulnerabilities in the transportation network's capacity to act quickly during emergency events. Without a strengthened network prepared to respond, individuals are left without options in dire scenarios during and after emergencies. There is a need for more organization and planning to occur before events so that a system is in place for individuals to leverage once emergencies happen.

**Who:** Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** All of King County

**Opportunity:** Using the existing emergency transportation convener, the Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET), there is huge potential to solidify a committed alliance to developing plans, roles, and processes during emergencies. RARET is working to establish a transportation provider network to fulfil this need with involvement and partnership from relevant stakeholders.


 **NEED:** Systemic barriers within the transportation and human services sector prevent clients from receiving holistic care.

Due to the complexity of transportation, sectors outside the transportation industry – including social, human, and medical services – are naturally siloed from transportation solutions. The complex nature of transportation makes it difficult to integrate transportation considerations into existing processes that assess need. When an individual’s transportation vulnerability arises in these situations, there is a need to seamlessly offer relevant transportation options and solutions to social, human, and medical service sectors when they need it. This contributes to a more considerable need to better integrate a client’s transportation gaps and subsequent solutions into casework to truly address it as a vulnerability that will impact their utilization of other services.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, BIPOC Communities, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Limited-English Proficiency Populations, People Experiencing Homelessness

**Where:** All of King County

**Opportunity:** Coordinated referral processes would allow providers to address a client’s needs more directly. With growing partnerships like that of the Community Living Connections and Unite Us, there is excellent potential for cross-sector connections to be made.

 **NEED:** Local, regional, and federal funders need to be willing to support the unmet mobility needs of older adults and people with disabilities in urban centers.

In King County, there is an institutional myth that individuals in urban areas have plenty of transit options to cover their needs. As a result, funding to these areas to support specialized transportation is often limited. There needs to be a greater understanding among funders that people, specifically older adults and those with disabilities, still face barriers to getting around in urban areas. Many of these challenges – for example, not being able to ride the bus for health reasons but not qualifying for Access – can be addressed by specialized transportation services if providers and institutional partners are willing to bring these services into urban areas.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** All of King County Urban Areas



**NEED:** Low-income populations need a low-barrier, free option.

Significant outreach with low-income populations have revealed that the most useful programs that reduce transportation barriers for them are low-barrier and straightforward. Importantly, these programs are not just affordable but free. Historically, no-income populations often emphasized a preference for Human Services Bus Tickets because these tickets themselves are free and therefore inherently circumnavigate complexities of fare structures. This feature of bottom-line affordability is critical to building a resource that meets the needs of low-income populations. Since transportation costs represent more significant portions of an individual with a no- or limited-income budget, a free option is best suited to meet needs across the low-income bracket.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, People Experiencing Homelessness

**Where:** All of King County

**Opportunity:** Evaluation of the new Subsidized Annual Pass Program can present valuable information about meeting this need. Particularly, insight can be gained when assessing the process of program entry. Since individuals currently access SAP through enrollment in various state assistance programs, it will be meaningful to understand how this component of eligibility inhibits or adequately meets the needs of low-income populations, especially considering the program's focus on serving no-income people. There is also more opportunity for the literature to expand upon the diversity of its low-income categories. This will help us understand how or if the low-income group's needs differ from that of the no-income group.



**NEED:** Riders with unique social and cultural needs seek a welcoming and inclusive space from their transportation provider.

Beyond translation and in-language outreach, social and cultural conditions exist that relate to potential rider's use of a service. This includes acknowledgments or accommodations to gendered concerns, considerations of schedule or timing concerning cultural practices, and the general facilitation of a welcoming space that does not place an emotional burden on the rider. Many communities with unique needs – like Limited-English Proficiency Populations, people experiencing homelessness, and people with disabilities – discuss stigma they feel or receive when using transit and specialized transportation services related to things like needing to ask for help, not being able to pay, or requesting extra time from drivers to have things explained.

**Who:** Immigrants, Refugees, Limited-English Proficiency Populations, Low-Income Populations, People with Disabilities, BIPOC Communities, People Experiencing Homelessness, Undocumented Individuals

**Where:** All of King County

## Infrastructure Needs

Infrastructure needs relate to the physical or technological conditions necessary for mobility.



**NEED:** Individuals seeking to walk, bike, or roll need a safe and connected active transportation network.

To promote walking, biking, and rolling as viable options for travel, active transportation infrastructure must be accessible, safe, and reliable. Many communities expressed a need for higher walkability or bike-ability in their neighborhoods to leverage walking, biking, or rolling as a mode of transportation. The same improved connectivity would also help people connect to transit without requiring a car to reach access points. People feel unsupported by the design of the pedestrian environment to make full use of this option. Instead, the walking, biking, and rolling environment felt unsafe for many. Between dangerous crosswalks that lack adequate timing and audio cues, deteriorating and unleveled pavements, inaccessible curbs, or complete unavailability of bike lanes or connected sidewalks, there is a lot to improve.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, People with Disabilities, Youth

**Where:** All of King County



**NEED:** Older adults and people with disabilities need improved safety on transit.

In various reports gathering insight from elder communities, safety and comfort are listed as barriers to fixed transit use. Many older adults are worried about falling or otherwise risking their physical safety while using public transportation. They also sought safer and more comfortable bus stops. However, both older adults and people with disabilities also express dissatisfaction with the laborious wait times and dependency on paratransit. Therefore, a need exists to provide more options that are supportive of safety needs without compromising frequency and reliability.

**Who:** Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** All of King County



**NEED:** Riders need more bus shelters and benches to support their use of transit.

In many areas, especially in rural and suburban areas, the absence of bus shelters or benches make using transportation a lot less accessible and plausible. Beyond public transit, some specialized transportation options rely on bus stop markers or place markers to pick-up riders. Without bus shelters or benches, riders may stand for long periods while waiting for their ride, where they may face harsh rain and winter conditions or be made uncomfortable when having to stand.

**Who:** Older Adults, People with Disabilities

**Where:** Snoqualmie Valley, South King County, East King County

## Awareness Needs

Awareness needs are developed from a lack of information or education.



**NEED:** Communities need to be more aware of the true cost of transportation, including their eligibility for low or no-cost options.

This need can be broken down into several levels. To start, a common reason people cite for not using transportation programs or transit is that owning a car is more affordable. However, this analysis does not often originate in objective side-by-side analysis on the compounding costs that private vehicle ownership places on individuals. Similarly, many communities eligible for low or no-cost options are unaware of reduced fare options and their eligibility for them. This emphasizes that a comparison with private vehicle ownership is not always fully informed. The literature review found that understanding the complexity of fare options – between differing programs fares, eligibilities, and standard fare changes related to time of day – is a significant barrier to communicating the value of participation in low or no-cost options to eligible riders.

**Who:** Low-Income Populations, BIPOC Communities, Limited-English Proficiency Populations, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Youth

**Where:** All of King County

## EMERGING ISSUES AND TRENDS

This section details a set of inferences based on new, emerging, or anticipated mobility patterns in our region. These findings can be used as a lens to inform decision-making for the future.

### COVID-19

The impacts of COVID-19 have had significant ramifications in the mobility space in ways that cannot fully be measured at this point. We anticipate several trends to impact the mobility space in both the short-and long-term, listed below in no specific order.

#### Regaining Trust

**In both the short and long term**, agencies will need to communicate their service's safety to build back ridership, both to riders who stopped using transit during the pandemic and future riders with the potential to use transit. They will also need to develop firm policies and standards to carry out safety guidelines.

#### Driver Recruitment

**Short Term:** Paid and volunteer driver programs will face continuing issues related to the driver pool's significant decrease. This problem is emphasized for volunteer-based programs, where volunteers who are at-risk or concerned for their safety are not willing to drive during the pandemic. Similarly, when schools start to host in-person classes again, drivers who filled-in for transportation programs in the absence of working for schools will return and leave a gap to be filled.

**Long Term:** If demand for delivery continues, transportation programs will have to consider how to compete with competition like Amazon with pay and benefits to retain drivers.

#### Funding

**In both the short and long term**, transportation providers will continue to grapple with budget shortfalls brought on by decreased economic activity and ridership. They will need to find ways to continue service and fund PPE or safety adaptations despite these constraints. There is a need for sustainable and flexible funding models that allow transportation providers to continue service with a modified scope during emergencies.

## New Ridership Trends

**In both the short and long term,** with many people working from home, services will need to adjust to serve new needs and ridership trends. The rider base will likely look different from how it did pre-COVID. Budget cuts will also impact services provided and, therefore, what ridership is prioritized.

## Emergency Management

**Long Term:** There is a need for a more substantial emergency transportation network to mobilize in emergencies. This includes clear, coordinated plans to serve special needs communities during events. It also likely includes planning for similar kinds of events that require safety-forward planning, in which similar services may need to be created to address needs.

## Access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

**Short Term:** Agencies and riders need to have access to the necessary PPE for not only their vehicles (plexiglass shields, physical distancing, cleaning supplies, etc.) but also for themselves (face mask, hand sanitizer, etc.). They need to be able to fund this equipment.

**Long Term:** Agencies will need to confront issues of PPE-fatigue. This means people will be feeling less inclined to wear PPE as COVID-19 restrictions continue and as vaccinations become available. Agencies will need to continue enforcing safety guidelines and providing PPE to riders. They will need to be able to fund this investment.

## Communications and Coordination

**Short Term:** With the variety and sometimes quickly-determined changes happening related to transportation – including service changes, safety policies, altered operations, and emerging resources – communication with the public needs to be emphasized to ensure people are receiving accurate information. Communication between transportation providers is essential as well. For example, some providers are willing to transport COVID-19 positive riders but do not know how to safely. Better coordination will allow changes and adjustments to reach broader audiences.

**Long Term:** Communications about the continuing changes of policy, procedures, and operations will need to be distributed widely to ensure that the mobility network continues to serve all. This includes translating service changes and safety policies, performing intentional and long-term outreach, and investing time in marketing and promotion of adjustments so that users of transportation services are well-informed.

## Centering Access and Equity

**Short Term:** When considering operational changes and transportation to and from emergency-related destinations (like COVID testing sites or vaccination centers), the unique needs of people with access and functional needs (AFN) must be intentionally and distinctly incorporated into planning and procedures.

**Long Term:** People with access and functional needs and essential workers must be centered when prioritizing service adjustments. Populations that use transportation programs as lifelines and connectors to access need to have elevated roles during service realignment assessment. Specifically, transportation providers are tasked with preserving geographic equity that does not enhance an urban/rural transportation gap.



*A volunteer helps cart boxes of food into a Community Van vehicle as part of their effort to deliver food during COVID-19. Photo courtesy of Community Van.*

In no particular order, other trends expected to shape mobility in King County in the coming years include:

- ▶ **Racial and social justice are being re-centered in transportation conversations and decision-making.**

Events in 2020 have inspired a reckoning across industries, including transportation and mobility, to reevaluate how our planning, structures, and services perpetuate inequity. This comes across levels for the transportation sector: from diversity and representation within agency teams to outreach methods to land-use planning, service adjustments and priorities, and fare enforcement. Those within the transportation profession have many levels to mainstream racial and social justice lenses. The transportation sector is tasked with continuing to make racial and social justice a consistent priority in all efforts to serve the community.

- ▶ **Private on-demand transportation companies continue to modify user expectations for ideal transportation services.**

Transportation network companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft have altered rider expectations. Since these app-based services are on-demand and mostly available at all hours, riders are increasingly expecting this kind of flexibility from other transportation programs. As the popularity of TNCs grows, users' standards will further shift to find advanced booking, strict service areas, and limited operation hours less desirable.

- ▶ **There is a significant opportunity to integrate transportation considerations into centralized information and referral systems, such as Community Living Connections and Unite Us.**

Human and social service sectors are investing in new platforms and processes to optimize their referral and information sharing coordination. While fully integrating these platforms with the transportation system may be difficult, there is a great opportunity to include transportation considerations in these shared standards and referral loops to better integrate mobility factors into a client's care. This would reduce silos between services.

- ▶ **With the current funding structure of mass transportation in our region, there is potential to be highly impacted by political issues.**

In King County, our largest transportation agencies are reliant on sales tax for revenue. In 2020, we witnessed how the significant reduction of income derived in sales tax has impacted our transit system in the short and long term. Also in 2020, we saw other political efforts to limit funding – for example, the repealed Initiative 976 and decisions made at the federal level towards Seattle by the US Department of Justice. Political issues need to be considered related to the short and long-term resiliency of transportation projects tied to funding structures.

- ▶ **Mobility-as-a-service is a model that is increasingly gaining traction in approaches to mobility.**

There is a strong potential that technology improvements geared towards accessibility and user-design can make the region's transportation network more inclusive. Mobility-as-a-service (MaaS) centers user-friendliness in the development of resources. Technology improvements

can bridge awareness gaps about various services across King County – like a One-Call One-Click system that centralizes transportation information as an easy, low-barrier access point.

- ▶ **Transportation providers are making large investments to transition away from fossil fuels by switching to electric, hybrid, or more-environmentally friendly fleets.**

Vehicles and transportation are well-known to be one of the largest contributors to climate change. Public transportation agencies across the country are tasking themselves with mitigating these impacts by transitioning to electric or hybrid fleets. Such a move requires planning and hefty capital investment, especially for smaller, ADA-accessible electric vehicles. As specialized transportation providers consider this valuable transition, more conversations around support for smaller agencies to take on these expensive costs should occur.

- ▶ **Riders are increasingly relying on apps and integrated trip planning for information and discovery.**

With growing advancements in GTFS-Flex, apps like One Bus Away, Transit, and Google Maps are becoming larger central points of transportation information for riders. This means that transportation programs, like specialized transportation providers, that are not integrated into GTFS-Flex or with apps fail to be considered options by people using these apps as one-stop-shops.

## STAYING INVOLVED

If you would like to stay involved in the discussion of mobility needs and solutions for underserved communities, there are multiple ways to engage. Mobility Coalitions around King County invite cross-sector stakeholders to collaborate, coordinate, and advocate for an improved mobility network.



*Coalition members listen to a presentation during a meeting.*

The [King County Mobility Coalition](#), the producer of this report, offers a low-barrier platform for diverse partners to convene on mobility topics. Visit [KCMobility.org](#) to learn more about the KCMC as well as subregional mobility coalitions. Our subregional mobility coalitions provide similar spaces to discuss mobility equity but within more intentional geographic areas of King County. Hopelink's Mobility Management team supports the following subregional mobility coalitions:

- ▶ [Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative](#)
- ▶ [North King County Mobility Coalition](#)
- ▶ [Snoqualmie Valley Transportation Coalition](#)
- ▶ [South King County Mobility Coalition](#)

Hopelink Mobility Management also supports the multi-county [Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation](#) (RARET), focused on the intersection of emergency management, access and functional needs, and transportation.

In neighboring counties, stakeholders can get involved with the [Snohomish County Transportation Coalition](#) (SNOTRAC) or the [Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition](#) (PCCTC) – which parallel the King County Mobility Coalition for their host counties.

Other venues to get involved with mobility conversations include:

- ▶ [Age-Friendly Seattle and King County Coalition](#)
- ▶ [City of Seattle Transit Advisory Board](#)
- ▶ [King County Metro Advisory Groups](#) (including the Access Paratransit Advisory Committee and the Transit Advisory Commission)
- ▶ [Puget Sound Regional Council's Special Needs Transportation Committee](#)
- ▶ [Sound Transit Panels and Committees](#) (including the Citizens Accessibility Advisory Committee)

If you need specific help or want to learn more about mobility in our region, contact [mobility@hopelink.org](mailto:mobility@hopelink.org) to be fielded to the right person.

## APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

King County is the most populous county in Washington and the 13<sup>th</sup> most populous county in the United States. This county covers 2,132 square miles and encompasses diverse landscapes. King County is located on indigenous people's land, namely the Coastal Salish tribes of the Duwamish, Muckleshoot, Sammamish, and Snoqualmie nations, among others. Over 2 million people reside in King County's 39 cities, a mix of urban and rural populations.

Understanding King County's demographic profile, growth trends, and population data offer important insight in analyzing mobility needs. Trends in demographics and growth tell us what services are demanded of King County's transit system and how King County can react to needs to provide improved services.

Growth trends in King County have been notable and unique. Between 2010 and 2019, the County gained nearly 300,000 new residents. Between 2010 and 2017, 77 percent of King County's population growth has been residents who identify as black, indigenous, or people of color. During the same period, 40 percent of population growth has been among foreign-born immigrants, and at least seven percent of this new growth are residents with limited-English proficiency. The population of older adults (aged 65+) is projected to grow by 38 percent between 2020 and 2030, while the rest of the population is only projected to grow by 11 percent during the same period.

Beyond growth trends, the percent of limited-English speakers as a share of King County's total population has remained at a constant 11 percent from 2009 to 2017. English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Somali, Hindi, Tagalog, Korean, and Russian are all languages that over 1% of King County's population speaks. Nearly a quarter of King County's population was born outside of the U.S., and almost 10 percent of King County's population self-identify as having a disability, with older residents being much more likely to report having a disability than younger residents.

While growth has occurred all around, nearly half of the County's population growth has been in higher-density urban and neighborhood centers in Seattle and downtown Bellevue. These changes contribute to the displacement of vulnerable communities currently or historically living in urban centers. Data that went into King County Metro's Mobility Framework found that changing land-use patterns mean that people are traveling further for work, simultaneously while moving further to access more affordable housing, in a concept known as the suburbanization of poverty. The growth in less-dense areas and displacement due to rising housing costs also means more people living in places often underserved by transit, like South King County.

King County is a region full of intersectional identities, notable growth trends, and diverse mobility needs. The unique growth patterns that King County has and continues to undergo add a layer of complexity to planning for unmet needs. Understanding the county's demographic and underlying economic and geographic makeup can provide a more holistic and adapted response to emerging trends and gaps.

## APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY FOR LITERATURE REVIEW

### KCMC 2020 NEEDS ASSESSMENT: LITERATURE REVIEW SCOPE

The King County Mobility Coalition 2020 Community Transportation Needs Assessment compiled data, publications, and relevant literature related to the state of the special needs transportation system in King County. It is not a review of available transportation services; instead, it is a collection of insights, opportunities, and feedback received to speak to the experiences of those using services. It assembles all timely and relevant work to inform on **emerging trends** and **reoccurring needs**. The finalized assessment offers a resource to consume the most up-to-date and comprehensive findings related to King County's special needs transportation. Appendix C serves to collect critical materials necessary to understand the emerging trends and needs and gaps results.

Materials included for the Needs Assessment:

- ▶ Have been published later than 2015;
  - Unless it is a specifically impactful document that is still referenced, and the latest version is before 2014;
- ▶ Will have occurred, been conducted, or focused in King County;
- ▶ Provided information or resources related to public transit or specialized transportation.

Material types included:

- ▶ Times or events that gained significant feedback from relevant parties
  - For example, large meetings, forums, or listening sessions
- ▶ Resource guides that collect relevant information
- ▶ Community assessments
- ▶ Needs assessments/gaps analyses
- ▶ Project reports
- ▶ Surveys

Literature compiled provided context or gave feedback on the state of special needs transportation in King County since 2015. **The goal was to use this literature review to identify needs, gaps, and emerging trends.** Therefore, the literature included in the Needs Assessment should speak directly to this larger achievement. Hopelink Mobility staff used their judgment as the experts on this topic to elevate resources that are key to telling a story about transportation in their area.

“Special needs” populations are broadly those who experience limited transportation options due to age, income, ability, language, or other factors. This can include priority populations of older adults, people with disabilities, those with lower English-proficiency, immigrants, refugees, youth, caregivers, and people with lower-incomes.

## APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY AND TERMS

**Access and Functional Needs:** This term describes individuals who require unique support to make use of services. This includes needs related to physical, developmental, or intellectual conditions as well as other limiting factors like language, age, and income.

**Active Transportation:** Active transportation describes ways of getting around without relying on a vehicle – like walking, rolling, biking, scooter-ing, and running.

**Displacement:** This term refers to instances where a household is forced or pressured to move from their home against their wishes. The three types of displacement are physical, economic, and cultural. Displacement can result in households relocating to more affordable communities further away from employment centers and the urban core.

**Information and referral systems:** Information and referral systems are programs that provide solutions for user-cases by either offering information or connecting users to resources or other services that can more appropriately help them.

**Fixed-Route or Fixed-Transit:** This refers to services with set schedules and routes where the stops never change.

**Limited-English Proficiency:** This a term used in the United States that refers to a person who is not fluent in the English language, often because it is not their native language.

**Medicaid:** Medicaid is the federal low-income insurance option. Locally, many people may know about the Washington equivalent, AppleHealth. Molina is another common sub-contracted insurance for Medicaid recipients. Anyone mentioning these is generally referring to Medicaid.

**Mobility as a service (MaaS):** Mobility as a service refers to a type of service that, through a joint digital channel, enables users to plan, book, and pay for multiple types of mobility services. The concept describes a shift away from personally-owned modes of transportation and towards mobility provided as a service. It integrates various forms of transport services into a single mobility service, accessible on demand.

**Mobility network:** The mobility network refers to all modes of transportation – fixed-route, on-demand, personal, public, private, active, and beyond – that serve as options for individuals to get from one place to another. These options work together and separately to fulfill transportation needs.

**One-Call One-Click:** A One-Call One-Click (OCOC) service is a resource that centralizes diverse transportation information into one centralized website and call center. It offers full information and discovery about available options and has the potential to integrate ride booking and payment functionalities.

**On/Off-Peak:** “On-peak” time is when transit experiences its highest rider volume throughout the day. For example, rush hours of 7am – 9am when many people are traveling to work or 5pm – 7pm when many people are driving home from work. “Off-peak” is all other times.

**ORCA (One Regional Card for All):** This is the bus pass for the Puget Sound region accepted across many transportation providers, including King County Metro, Sound Transit, and Community Transit.

**Priority populations:** This is a qualifier used to group the communities that the King County Mobility Coalition elevates when assessing needs – including but not limited to people with disabilities, older adults, immigrants, refugees, youth, Veterans, and low-income populations.

**Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET):** Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation – Hopelink staffed workgroup whose goal is to increase the life-sustaining transportation services available to seniors, people with disabilities, low-income individuals, and other vulnerable populations in the event of a major emergency in the Central Puget Sound region.

**Specialized transportation:** This term refers to transportation services that provide a unique service often defined by scope through eligibility, trip type, or service area.

**Transit:** Transit is commonly used to describe public transportation or mass transportation. It includes bus, light rail, commuter train, ADA services, and other public transportation services.

**Transportation network companies (TNCs):** Also known or better described as on-demand transportation companies, these are private providers like Uber and Lyft.

**Transportation-Disadvantaged:** This term describes individuals who experience barriers to services or aid that impact transportation and mobility access.

## APPENDIX D: EXTERNAL SOURCES

### AGE FRIENDLY SEATTLE ACTION PLAN 2018-2021

Website: <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/livable-documents/documents-2018/action-plans/seattle-washington-action-plan-2018.pdf>

Date: 2018

**Summary:** The Age Friendly Seattle Action Plan was developed to identify strategies for improvement within the “eight domains of livability”, a framework developed by the World Health Organization to address the environmental, economic, and social factors influencing the health and well-being of older adults. It serves to work on existing efforts and identify opportunities for growth within the eight domains.

#### Insights:

- ▶ Affordability is a critical transportation issue for many older adults in Seattle.
  - Low-fare options seem to be underutilized, including the Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP) and Taxi Scrip.
  - Sound Transit and King County Metro have not invested much in promoting the RRFP.
- ▶ In 2009, 28% of infrequent King County Metro riders were age 55+. In 2015, this percentage increased to 43%, showing nearly half of all non-riders are age 55+.
- ▶ Information about transportation options is lacking due to language and cultural barriers, technology, service providers’ referrals to less efficient transportation options, marketing targeted to commuters and not individuals with special needs, misinformation, and fear. Expanded information and referral services are needed.
- ▶ Ongoing challenges include the provision of accessible walkways, safe crossings (including adequate crossing times), better ramps, benches at waiting areas, weather protection, hygiene amenities, and mobile apps for special needs populations, and the need for affordable, accessible vehicles for people who have disabilities but do not qualify for paratransit services.
- ▶ There is a need for more comprehensive healthcare access, particularly for those who do not qualify for non-emergency Medicaid Transportation, a service provided by Hopelink. Sound Generations provides Volunteer Transportation services—essential trips for older adults with limited transportation options; however, additional options are needed, particularly for:
  - Low-income Medicare beneficiaries who do not qualify for Medicaid services
  - Patients who need to visit multiple medical facilities in one day
- ▶ There is a need for better coordination between service providers to provide more efficient service and avoid unnecessary service duplications. Difficulties and areas of concern include:
  - Cross-county travel

- Transfers between different travel modes, including connections between volunteer services, shuttles, and fixed-route transit
- ▶ There is a need for more trip-planning tools that are designed with older users in mind.
- ▶ There needs to be more funding to support the design and building of new infrastructure for the transportation network, including sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure.

## AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES: AREA PLAN 2020-2023

**Website:** [https://www.agingkingcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/185/2019/10/AreaPlan2020-2023\\_toWASateUnitOnAging100419.pdf](https://www.agingkingcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/185/2019/10/AreaPlan2020-2023_toWASateUnitOnAging100419.pdf)

**Date:** December 2019

**Summary:** The Area Plan is produced by Aging and Disability Services to guide its work as the Area Agency on Aging for Seattle-King County. The plan received input from around 190 individuals to assess community needs and went through public review. The report assesses priority areas, service area trends and issues, and impacts to priority populations. A review of existing services and issue areas is included.

**Insights:** Transportation is frequently identified as among the most important issues for older adults in King County. During community engagement activities conducted in early 2019 and previously, ADS heard about transportation challenges, including the multiple barriers faced by those with special health needs, difficulty navigating the transportation system, and the acute need for improved transportation in rural areas. Approximately one-third of King County residents have some mobility challenge related to disability, age, or income. Additionally, due to the lack of affordable housing, some of the highest-need populations are being displaced to suburban and rural areas that are not well-served by public transit. In a recent community needs survey conducted by ADS, cost was the most commonly cited transportation challenge. Community transportation, also referred to as “special needs transportation,” serves as a lifeline that connects older adults to healthcare, supportive services, social and cultural engagement, and healthy food.

The older-adult population in King County has continued to grow, with many people migrating to areas outside of the urban core. This means they may face increased challenges to accessing adequate health care and support, exacerbated by limited transportation access, particularly for people with disabilities.

## AGING IN ISSAQUAH: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

**Date:** July 2016

**Summary:** The City of Issaquah engaged with local community members to discuss aging issues and better understand older adults' needs and aspirations. The project renewed focus on senior services with the identification of two major goals, which include seniors' ability to have their basic physical, mental, economic, and social needs met and access to community resources and services. The engagement activities included a survey, six focus groups, and two community workshops, with some explicitly seeking input from individuals 55 years of age and older. The engagement was open to the public, and therefore responses were not made from a representative sample of Issaquah seniors.

**Insights:** Findings were collected from a total of 480 participants. Member engagement demonstrated the diverse needs amongst Issaquah seniors. Transportation was identified as a critical topic of focus, with a need for improved safety, walkability, traffic mitigation efforts, additional support services, and shuttle service to key destinations. The following is how transportation and mobility intersected with various population needs examined throughout the report:

- ▶ Within the last ten years, Issaquah’s senior population has grown by over five percent. With this increase, so has the need for accessible services. Transportation assistance is a vital service for individuals needing food, healthcare, and community support. Without mobility, additional care is harder to access and utilize.
- ▶ Many respondents identified the use of senior facilities or alternative community facilities. However, barriers such as cost, program diversity, or limited mobility led to decreased attendance amongst respondents. 1 in 5 respondents reported that they access social, health, education, and other services. Concerns surrounding transportation availability and cost can greatly impact the overall choice to engage in these community activities and increase isolation.
- ▶ Participants consistently listed transportation as a barrier to access other services and programs.

## BELLEVUE HUMAN SERVICES NEEDS UPDATE

**Website:** [https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf\\_document/2020/hs-needs-2019-2020-whole-report.pdf](https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2020/hs-needs-2019-2020-whole-report.pdf)

**Date:** 2019-2020

**Summary:** As Bellevue continues to expand rapidly, much of the City also grows less affordable and, in some cases, inaccessible for minoritized populations living there. Rising costs of living cut into other resources such as access to medical care, food needs, transportation, and other needs. The document is a summarization of collected data across multiple neighborhoods and from a variety of sources. The City will utilize examples of the area’s growth, conditions, service trends, and community needs to plan future actionable projects.

**Insights:**

- ▶ Lack of reliable and coordinated transportation directly affects access to employment and healthcare. Higher paying job opportunities for immigrants and refugees living in Bellevue are less attainable without steady access to transportation. Transportation is a key piece to prevent homelessness or get full-time housing.
- ▶ Individuals that pay more than 30% of their household income on housing are at a severe disadvantage when affording additional necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. As of 2019, 40% of the general survey respondents found inadequate public transportation to be a community-wide problem, and 21% found it a household issue.
- ▶ Older adults in Bellevue are significantly affected by a lack of coordinated transportation. Aging adults lose the ability to drive personal vehicles or navigate public transit but are still in need of

transportation to reach medical care, food services, employment, and community engagement.

## CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PARKS IN KING COUNTY: A TRANSIT-TO-PARKS GIS ANALYSIS

Website: <https://www.wilderness.org/sites/default/files/media/file/White%20Paper%20website-compressed.pdf>

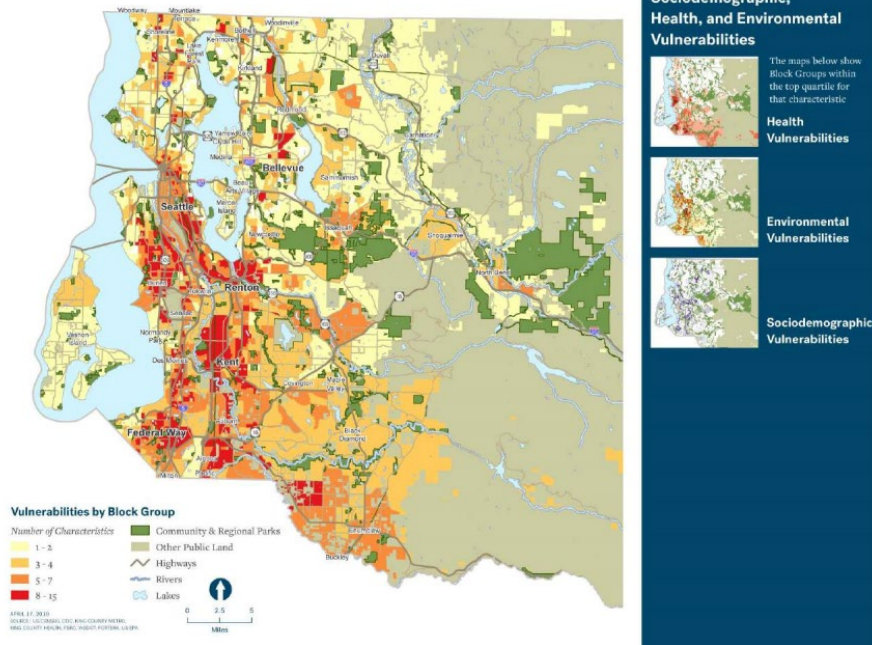
Date: June 2019

**Summary:** This analysis seeks to examine park equity and transit equity in intersection with each other, evaluating how opportunities to enjoy and benefit from proximity to the outdoors exists for those reliant on transit networks to experience open and green space. Access to public land and parks is not equitable across the county, and individuals who rely on public or specialized transportation face the most significant challenges to reaching green spaces. Only 46% of people living in the suburban areas of King County can walk to a park, below the national average and far below Seattle's access of 87%. South King County residents, particularly in Tukwila and Renton, have even less access, with fewer than half of the residents in predominately people of color neighborhoods living within half a mile of green space.

### Insights:

- ▶ While only 61 percent of King County's most vulnerable populations live within a half-mile of a park, 92 percent live within two miles of a Community or Regional park. Transit adjustments can close the gap between people and quality parks that are otherwise too far or too difficult to reach.
- ▶ Much of south King County lacks good transit access to parks, which the study defines as the ability to reach at least two parks, including one high-quality park (called a Premier park), within 45 minutes from doorstep to park.
- ▶ The most vulnerable populations live in south Seattle and south King County. In contrast, there are very few vulnerabilities present in north Seattle and the Eastside.
- ▶ South King County has the highest density of health, environmental, and vulnerable socioeconomic populations. See the image below.

Figure 15. All Vulnerabilities



## DOWNTOWN CIRCULATOR FOCUS GROUPS/LISTENING SESSIONS (SUMMARY)

**Date:** September 2018

**Summary:** The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Solid Ground, Hopelink Mobility Management, and King County Metro held four listening sessions in June 2018 as part of a customer satisfaction review mandated by the King County Council to release funding for the Downtown Circulator. The Downtown Circulator is a circulator service that provides a no-cost option for riders to access healthcare clinics, food banks, and other essential services in the downtown core. A total of 27 riders and non-riders participated in two focus groups. The other two focus groups offered opportunities for service providers – being Recovery Café, Chief Seattle Club, Compass Housing Alliance, Pike Market Senior Center, and the Salvation Army – to provide feedback. The purpose of these listening sessions was to identify successes and areas of improvement for the service, identify why people use the Circulator, and identify transit needs.

### Insights:

Findings were organized as follows:

#### ► Benefits of the Circulator

- No cost or eligibility requirements, and therefore no barriers to entry;
- Positive and polite drivers;
- Effective routing that gets people to the destinations they need to go to (with some suggestions of expansion);

► Issues with the Circulator

- Clients experiencing homelessness experience institutional barriers in registering for other transportation programs, like low-cost or eligibility-based ORCA cards;
- Signage, schedule communication, and accessible information with the Circulator can be confusing – for example, a lack of timetables, lack of signage, and a lack of integration with other kinds of trip planning technology;
- Limited or no weekend service options;
- Not enough recognition of distinct barriers faced by diverse populations.

From these summarized findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Expand marketing and advertisement of service so that more people are aware of its existence. Contribute to more wayfinding, as well;
- Expand Circulator operations to 7 days a week with later times in the afternoon;
- Serve more communities and locations;
- Expand senior and homeless discount programs more widely; and
- Implement better customer service from King County Metro.

## EASTSIDE EASY RIDER COLLABORATIVE MOBILITY COFFEE TALKS

Bellevue: [https://irp-](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Bellevue%20Mobility%20Coffee%20Talk%20Event%20Summary%20Final.pdf)

[cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Bellevue%20Mobility%20Coffee%20Talk%20Event%20Summary%20Final.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Bellevue%20Mobility%20Coffee%20Talk%20Event%20Summary%20Final.pdf)

Issaquah: [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/EERC-Coffee-Talk-Issaquah\\_Event-Summary-FINAL.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/EERC-Coffee-Talk-Issaquah_Event-Summary-FINAL.pdf)

Kirkland: <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Kirkland-Coffee-Talk-Event-Summary.pdf>

Redmond: [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/EERC-Coffee-Talk-Redmond\\_Event-Summary.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/EERC-Coffee-Talk-Redmond_Event-Summary.pdf)

**Date:** 2018-2019

**Summary:** Mobility Coffee Talk is a recurring outreach event that focuses on regions within East King County to serve City residents with education, resources, and opportunities to speak directly with representatives from transportation agencies and organizations. Each event is tailored to meet the needs of the community it serves and concludes with feedback surveys for attendees and providers serving Issaquah, Redmond, Kirkland, and Bellevue. Participants were encouraged to share in an open conversation while being prompted to share a success of getting where they would like to go by transit or through alternative transportation options. Resource sharing and group learning were heavily encouraged amongst all meeting attendees to educate each other and gauge what information needed more support.

**Insights:** Most participants found that increasing education and outreach opportunities positively impacts their access to regional mobility.

- ▶ Gaps identified included a lack of bus stops, services, and routes in East King County cities. The most significant needs were found within rural neighborhoods in Kirkland, Issaquah, and Sammamish. Many participants wanted more options for curb-to-curb transportation.
- ▶ Participants avoided utilizing curb-to-curb or door-to-door transportation services due to the variation in fare fees. When asked if they would use these services if a flat-rate charge was implemented, attendees felt that they would have greater access to mobility.
- ▶ Eastside residents living in Bellevue and Redmond were interested in utilizing the upcoming light rail connection from Seattle. Participants hoped that more bus stops created to serve the light rail station riders would lead to higher visibility and safety.
- ▶ Attendees lacked a thorough understanding of “beyond the bus” transportation options. Participants sought in-depth information about Access, Medicaid Transportation, Taxi Scrip, and volunteer driver programs from providers.
- ▶ Neighborhoods in Bellevue and Redmond were identified as places with high displacement risk due to the increasing city centers and career opportunities but lack of housing security.

## EASTSIDE PATHWAYS LATINO COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

**Website:** [http://eastsidepathways.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/EP-Latino-Community-Survey-Summary-Promotores\\_June-2017\\_FINAL.pdf](http://eastsidepathways.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/EP-Latino-Community-Survey-Summary-Promotores_June-2017_FINAL.pdf)

**Date:** 2016-2017

**Summary:** Eastside Pathways is a community-based partnership comprised of roughly 70 different public, private, and non-profit organizations on the Eastside. They aim to support children and youth's lives and well-being by breaking down systemic barriers in education, at home, and in their communities. They do so by utilizing the collective impact framework and through collaborative engagement. Eastside Pathways brought the *Promotores* Project to survey and address the need for enhanced support amongst the Spanish-speaking community in Bellevue. The *promotores* conducting outreach and education were selected amongst Bellevue's Hispanic community members to act as liaisons for information. They conducted 170 surveys amongst local Spanish-speaking community members to inquire about local strengths, challenges, and gain insight into areas of greater interest and needs amongst the community.

**Insights:** This report is a summary of their final survey results. The survey focused on results from diverse participants within Bellevue. The survey was made up of six sections to engage with participants on their community characteristics, community needs and issues, accessible education, health and safety, additional information or resources, and an opportunity for further comments. The summary report presented these results in four different sections, these areas being: Community, Needs, Service Utilizations and Outcomes, and Information and Referral. The summary identified transportation needs directly in Part 3: Service Utilization and Outcomes. The following is how transportation and mobility intersected with various population needs examined throughout the report:

- ▶ Lack of access to current services and a need for more effective services in an area were emerging trends that dealt directly with transportation accessibility.
- ▶ Only eighteen percent (18%) of responses were satisfied with their access to basic needs like food, housing, and transportation. Lack of transportation links to ongoing issues to access affordable and healthy food.
- ▶ Participants reported a lack of access to job sites or opportunities, childcare, parent support, legal assistance, and other programs.
- ▶ Other needs identified were increased community-based services and cultural integration. These opportunities do exist but need to be endorsed through resources that support education, communication, and economic security. Affordable and equitable transportation options are required to encourage community movement and socialization.

## FARE REVIEW COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION OUTREACH

**Date:** June 2017

**Summary:** King County Metro and Hopelink partnered to administer a survey and solicit feedback from diverse community groups and organizations on various fare restructures – considering eliminating zone and peak surcharges, long-term pilot projects related to fare, improving service transfers, speed of boarding, safety for bus operators, and overall affordability of transit. This survey received 107 responses through outreach at Hopelink centers and during Hopelink Mobility Management outreach events.

**Insights:** Survey respondents consisted of 77 people who use public transit and 30 who did not – with Bellevue Hopelink clients making up the highest amount of respondents who used transit and Redmond and Carnation/Sno-Valley clients using the least.

Key takeaways of this survey include:

- ▶ Many barriers to accessing transit revolve around awareness gaps.
- ▶ There is a high dependency on using cash over ORCA cards – some of the reasons cited for this preference include certainty, as opposed to feeling unsure of the amount loaded onto an ORCA card, and convince.
  - Other reasons cash was preferred to ORCA cards include:
    - Delay in loading money onto ORCA cards
    - Barriers to receiving ORCA cards in-person
      - For example, not wanting to go down to King Street Center or grocery stores having ORCA cards unavailable
    - Respondents also preferred human-bus service tickets because they did offered a single-fare option, opposed to peak and non-peak hours
- ▶ Residents of East and North King County felt that cars were necessary for them to get around.
  - To improve service in their areas, they site more bus routes, better location of routes, more rural routes, and better affordability.

- ▶ People cited time constraints and convenience as large factors as to why they prefer driving themselves.
- ▶ People also cite driving to be more feasible for their work situations and when transporting kids.

This outreach effort noted many lessons learned about the survey instrument that limited findings.

## IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE ELDERS TRANSPORTATION PROJECT REPORT

**Website:** [http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/kccsnt/pdf/immigrant-and-refugee-elders-transportation-project\\_summary.pdf](http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/kccsnt/pdf/immigrant-and-refugee-elders-transportation-project_summary.pdf)

**Date:** 2011

**Summary:** The King County Mobility Coalition embarked on the Immigrants and Refugee Elders Transportation Project after an Easter Seals Accessible Transportation Coalition Workshop in 2010. The workshop identified two urgent issues around the lack of awareness and knowledge of transportation options for older adults and the transportation challenges of refugees, immigrants, and people with limited English proficiency. The National Center on Senior Transportation funded the Project to increase the availability of culturally and ethnically appropriate transportation resource information for newly arrived immigrant and refugee elders in King County. The Project has five parts: Community Conversations and Surveys, Summary Report, Transportation Summit, Action Plan, and Ethnic Advisory Council.

**Insights:** This summary will go over the needs found in community conversations and surveys. The Project gathered data from Bhutanese, Burmese, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Russian, Somali, and Ukrainian elders. The study's sample size was 120 focus group participants, 121 client surveys, and 11 provider surveys.

The report goes into rich detail on each community conversation with unique communities, but common themes are summarized here:

- ▶ Elders identified transit bus as their preferred method of travel, second to walking.
- ▶ The top two barriers that limited elders from using public transportation were their inability to speak, read, or understand English and their lack of knowledge of available services.
- ▶ All elders preferred to learn about transportation services through community organizations and information in their native language, both oral and written.
- ▶ Lack of travel knowledge and awareness of existing services limits public transportation use by refugee and immigrant elders. Elders shared that they have limited knowledge and understanding of existing transportation resources. They also do not know where to go or how to access information on available transportation resources.
- ▶ Language barriers dissuade elders from using transit services. Many participants have limited English proficiency, which directly impacts their ability to travel independently. The elders reflected a fear of getting lost and not being able to ask for directions as materials are not in

their native language. They also reported a low literacy rate, which would prevent them from utilizing resources in their native language.

- ▶ Financial difficulty limits how often and what kind of transportation services elders use.
- ▶ Community organizations play an important role in sharing information with refugee and immigrant elders and should be used to distribute transportation resource information. Some organizations have community newspapers, radio stations, and television channels that publicize information.
- ▶ Elders receive lots of information through word of mouth, neighbors, family, friends, church, and community leaders.
- ▶ Many elders cited that they learned how to use transportation from others in their community, including family and friends.
- ▶ Physical abilities and fear around these health concerns can prevent elders from utilizing public transportation.
  - This also applied to infrastructure; for example, some cited complaints about the lack of benches at bus stops.

## KAISER FOUNDATION HEALTH PLAN OF WASHINGTON COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Website:

<https://about.kaiserpermanente.org/content/dam/internet/kp/comms/import/uploads/2019/09/Washington-Region-CHNA-2019.pdf>

**Date:** June 2019

**Summary:** This needs assessment asked respondents across Washington questions on a wide range of subjects, including social and economic factors, health behaviors, physical environment, clinical care, and health outcomes. The goal was to identify health needs in the community. The ability to access care, including transportation, was recognized as one such need. The assessment drew from populations in 19 out of Washington's 39 counties based on Kaiser service areas.

**Insights:**

- ▶ Transportation is increasingly a barrier to access as more people move further away from services seeking affordable housing. In most Kaiser Permanente service counties, public transport is limited, especially in rural areas.

## KING COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Website: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/data/community-health-indicators/~media/depts/health/data/documents/2018-2019-Joint-CHNA-Report.ashx>

**Date:** 2018 - 2019

**Summary:** The King County Hospitals for a Healthier Community (HHC) collaborative is comprised of 11 hospitals, health systems, and Seattle and King County Public Health. This report assesses the community health needs of King County, including social, cultural, and environmental factors that impact health. It is meant to support the hospital community by providing data to describe community needs and highlighting disparities to, in part, inform strategies to target communities experiencing inequities.

**Insights:** Findings from this report were broken down to highlight needs elevated throughout different populations. Out of the five themes identified by the community, three included mentions of transportation needs. The following is how transportation and mobility intersected with various population needs examined throughout the report:

- ▶ Many older adults are challenged by limited transportation options and physical isolation from their communities. This happens either because they live in rural communities or due to mobility limitations. Residents emphasized that solutions to this include ensuring caregivers are given support to provide this service and less reliance on volunteer services, which can be inconsistent.
  - Older women are specifically at risk of access to transportation issues.
- ▶ Input from across the county revealed concerns over racial and socioeconomic disparities in transportation.
- ▶ Lack of transportation services in rural areas can limit healthcare and wellness access, especially for people with disabilities.
- ▶ Access to affordable and healthy food is systematically linked to problems with transportation.
- ▶ Transportation and the location of healthcare facilities had a high impact on healthcare access, a number one health need.

## KING COUNTY FARE STRUCTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**Website:** [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/KCMC\\_Fare\\_Structure\\_Needs\\_Assessment\\_Feb\\_2018\\_FINAL.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/KCMC_Fare_Structure_Needs_Assessment_Feb_2018_FINAL.pdf)

**Date:** February 2018

**Summary:** Through the Access to Work and School Committee, the King County Mobility Coalition assessed public transportation's current fare structures (namely King County Metro and Sound Transit). This comes from robust discussion related to fare issues from human service agencies, clients, and other individuals. The report serves to create awareness around current fare structures and their challenges and highlight how the fare system impacts various populations.

**Insights:** This report included feedback and insights on the then-current fare structure issues for King County Metro and Sound Transit. The feedback was as follows:

- ▶ Improvements can be made to the Human Services Bus Ticket Program, including integration into the ORCA system, so individuals are not traveling from agency to agency to retrieve tickets themselves.

- Many riders prefer Human Service Bus Tickets over ORCA because they are provided at no cost to the rider. Social services agencies cannot load money onto individual ORCA LIFT cards. This creates a burdensome process for social service agencies that encourage enrollment in ORCA LIFT but see riders prefer Human Service Bus Tickets for the reason as mentioned earlier.
- ▶ Understanding fare prices and payment methods are confusing.
  - Many individuals unfamiliar with the network are confused by the current fare structure, specifically the differences between King County Metro and Sound Transit.
  - The complexity of different pricing depending on the time, type of ORCA card, length traveled, transfers, and more can be confusing.
  - Using cash over ORCA can be confusing, as well; riders are unsure of what services accept cash and have to do their own calculations to ensure they have enough cash to cover a trip, especially since change is not offered.
- ▶ There is confusion over the way the fare structure and tickets related to transfers.
- ▶ The plethora of eligibility requirements that accompany ORCA card options and the different processes of receiving these cards are confusing.
  - Places to re-load ORCA cards are often broken and unrepaired, making it unclear where to go.
- ▶ Communities with limited English proficiency lack resources that help them navigate the transit network.
  - These communities also face barriers related to providing personal information, which can be fear-inducing, for programs like ORCA.
- ▶ Affordability, in general, is a large issue.
  - Low-income riders don't always have the lump-sum payment needed to purchase a monthly transit pass, which would lower their expense; instead, they have to pay for one-off tickets or ORCA contributions, which increases their cost.
  - Some riders are unable to meet the \$5 minimum load requirement for ORCA and therefore prefer cash.
  - Many riders prefer receiving Human Bus Service tickets over ORCA LIFT enrollment because they do not receive assistance in putting money on their ORCA LIFT cards but are provided the Human Bus Service tickets without cost.
- ▶ Without support from school districts, youth use public transit that can be unaffordable for them. When they cannot pay, this leads to fines, which criminalizes poverty for these students.

The report's main takeaways from these findings relate to standardizing fare payment methods, fare amounts, and overall messaging. It also recommends making the transfer and cross-county traveling process less confusing and more affordable. Lastly, there is a general recommendation to consider affordability and transportation into human service integration both broadly.

# KING COUNTY METRO/CITY OF BELLEVUE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

**Date:** 2018

**Summary:** This 20-question survey was distributed by King County Metro and the City of Bellevue in 2018 as part of a Special Transportation Needs Assessment. A maximum of 421 individuals responded to the survey.

## **Insights:**

Demographics on survey respondents were as follows:

- ▶ 65% were age 55 or older
- ▶ 42% are on a fixed or low-income and cannot afford to use taxicabs or similar services
- ▶ 36% do not have or drive a car
- ▶ 4% use a wheelchair, scooter, or walker
- ▶ 9% have a disability that prevents them from getting to/from a bus stop or riding a lift-equipped bus
- ▶ 3% were currently staying in a shelter or experiencing homelessness

Relevant findings are pulled here:

- ▶ 79% of respondents used a transportation network company once during their typical week
- ▶ 31% of respondents used a taxi once during their typical week, and 62% of respondents used a taxi two days of the week
- ▶ 42% of respondents walked every day of the week
- ▶ 32% of respondents drove in a vehicle alone every day of the week
- ▶ In Northwest Bellevue, respondents visited the following destinations in order of frequency:
  - Grocery store or pharmacy (52%)
  - Bellevue Square (51%)
  - Library (45%)
  - Medical facility or doctor's office (40%)
  - Senior or community center (31%)
- ▶ In Northeast Bellevue, respondents visited the following destinations in order of frequency:
  - Crossroads mall (58%)
  - Grocery store or pharmacy (51%)
  - Library (40%)
  - Medical facility or doctor's office (37%)

- Overlake/Fred Meyer (34%)
  - Overlake Hospital/Kaiser Permanente (30%)
  - Senior or community center (29%)
  - Hopelink (17%)
- In South Bellevue, respondents visited the following destinations in order of frequency:
- Factoria mall (54%)
  - Grocery or pharmacy (45%)
  - Eastgate plaza (32%)
  - Medical facility or doctor's office (25%)
  - Don't frequently visit South Bellevue (22%)
- When asked the question: how much of a barrier are the following in preventing you from taking other means of travel (besides driving alone), respondents were provided 12 options to identify as "not a barrier", "partial barrier", and "significant barrier". Analysis of responses find that the top five highest barriers were as follows, in order of greatest barrier:
- I cannot afford to use taxicabs or similar services.
  - Having to plan around the bus stop/transit center/park & ride.
  - Finding neighbors to carpool with.
  - Challenges in traveling between home and bus stop/transit center/park & ride.
  - Challenges in traveling between bus stop/transit center/park & ride and your destination.
- When asked what type of non-work travel needs respondents normally have, the most prominent answers were as follows:
- Medical appointments (68%)
  - Social/recreation/entertainment (61%)
  - Errands (58%)
  - Meals (47%)
  - Religious services (33%)
- What are the top three things that would help you get to, from, or around Bellevue without driving alone?
- Transportation service when I need it that connects to transit or local destinations (46%)
  - Transportation service that gets me to destinations I can't get to now on the bus or train (39%)

- Transportation service that costs the same as the bus or less than alternative services currently available (such as taxi, Uber, or Lyft) (29%)
- Guaranteed ride home in case of an emergency (free taxi, Uber, or Lyft) (22%)
- ▶ When asked to check boxes under the question “Which of the following do you have?”, the majority of respondents indicated they had a valid driver’s license and a smartphone, with just under half indicating they have access to a vehicle for personal use and an ORCA card.
  - 22% had an RRFP card, and 21% had a rideshare app

## KING COUNTY METRO FARE PROGRAM – REPORT ON EXISTING CONDITIONS

**Date:** July 2019

**Summary:** King County Metro has produced this report to summarize what Metro knows about transit affordability for their priority populations, being people of color, low-income residents, limited or non-English speaking communities, and immigrants and refugees. The findings from this report were used in the development of their income-based fare program.

**Insights:** This report brings many takeaways on the intersection of poverty, place, and mobility in King County. Using data collected from Metro’s Rider/Non-Rider Surveying, U.S. census tracts, and much more, the report details how mobility relates to demographic and socioeconomic trends in King County and how affordability plays a role in access for King County Metro’s priority populations. Through this, the report forms five main points:

- ▶ The affordability of transit and transportation is a key racial justice issue.
  - Poverty in King County impacts priority populations disproportionately.
- ▶ The need for affordable transportation is exacerbated by the increasing cost of living in King County.
  - Increased living costs are causing low-income residents to the suburbs, causing more transit-dependent riders to live in less dense areas traditionally underserved by transit.
- ▶ Mobility for low-income populations depends on the development of high-quality alternatives to driving.
- ▶ Existing data does not make it clear how vital lower fares are for low-income populations.
- ▶ Further work is needed to ensure that those eligible for Metro’s lowest fares are using them.
  - Over half of transit riders eligible for LIFT are still paying the adult fare.
  - Multiple diverse focus groups that Metro conducted with members of priority populations showed that very few knew they were eligible for ORCA LIFT.
  - Beyond lack of knowledge, difficulty in use and enrollment were noted as barriers to access and participation.

It also informs on how low-income riders use transit, sharing that 71% of boarding for those enrolled in ORCA LIFT were on Metro buses, with 21% being on Sound Transit services. Metro notes a decrease to LIFT enrollments in the first few months of 2019 compared to the same period in 2018 but recognize in one of their main points that many low-income individuals are not using the LIFT program at all. Metro's survey data also indicates that improvements to transit service quality – meaning service availability, frequency, and travel time – are the most important drivers of overall rider satisfaction across all income levels.

## KING COUNTY METRO MOBILITY FRAMEWORK – APPENDIX ITEM A

**Website:** <https://kingcounty.gov/~media/depts/transportation/metro/about/planning/mobility-framework/metro-mobility-framework-report.pdf>

**Date:** October 2019

**Summary:** King County Metro's Mobility Framework asks the agency and region to achieve an integrated, innovative, equitable, and sustainable mobility future. To inform the greater Mobility Framework recommendations, consultants Fehr & Peers and BERK conducted research and a subsequent report to understand how priority populations in the region are moving today and some of the associated patterns and trends. This report, noted as Appendix Item A in the link, takes a look at the state of transportation as well as unmet needs and more for five population groups: limited-English speakers, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, low- and no-income individuals, and black, indigenous, and people of color.

**Insights:** A lot of in-depth research and analysis went into developing needs, barriers, and emerging trends for the Mobility Framework. They are sorted here by overarching topic:

- ▶ “[R]ising housing costs contribute to increased displacement pressures among some vulnerable communities, including low-income residents, people of color, limited English speakers, and people with disabilities. Many of these residents are being pushed from urban centers to less expensive areas like south King County. Many of these south County communities do not currently have the same transit service level as an urban center. This is because more dispersed and lower-density development patterns limit the opportunities to provide more extensive fixed-route transit service efficiently.”
- ▶ “[N]orth and east King County have better access to jobs by transit as compared to south and southeast King County.”
- ▶ “With a large amount of population growth in King County occurring in larger cities like Seattle and Bellevue, new households benefit from a transit network designed to serve those in dense urban centers as well as more rural areas.”
- ▶ Average vehicle miles traveled has decreased over time for automobile trips but increased for transit riders.
- ▶ “Transit mode share is highest in north King County with pockets of higher transit mode share in east King County. There is generally lower transit mode share in south King County, which correlates with lower job accessibility via transit...”
- ▶ Growth in transit ridership from 2005-2017 was highest in workers earning \$75,000 or more.

- ▶ Metro’s 2018 Rider/Non-Rider Survey Report indicates level of service, transfer, comfort, and cleanliness as the highest factors relating to low user satisfaction.
  - Within the level of service category, availability of service, frequency of service, and travel time were rated as the most important customer expectations.
  - 20% of non-riders stated that they would regularly use Metro bus service if available for their commute and 50% stated that they’d occasionally use it for personal trips if available.
  - Other high-level barriers of use for non-riders included long travel times, a lack of flexibility in planning their travel, and a lack of great connections between bus lines. These responses from non-riders and infrequent riders indicate that improved service in terms of availability, frequency, and coverage would encourage more County residents to use transit on their commute and personal trips.
- ▶ Since 2016, all Metro ridership has only increased 0.65%, with fixed-route ridership rising 1%. Several services (ST Express, Vanpool, and Access) have faced declines in ridership.
- ▶ “From an equity and sustainability perspective, travel patterns for lower-income households generally are different from the County as a whole, with higher demand for transit during the midday and evening periods. Access to jobs and services during these periods is not as extensive as during the traditional peak periods, and transit ridership for lower-income commuters has generally leveled off in the past decade.”
- ▶ “Similarly, other priority populations, including black, indigenous, and people of color, immigrants, and people with limited English proficiency, are also moving to east and south King County, where transit service is generally less frequent.”; “Low-income populations are increasingly located in less-dense areas of the County, particularly in portions of east King County, Renton, South Seattle, and southern King County.”
- ▶ “Meanwhile, a considerable amount of population growth (that is generally higher-income populations) has occurred in Seattle and portions of Bellevue, areas that generally have strong transit service.”
- ▶ As priority populations continue to move to lower density, less transit-rich parts of the County, improving midday and off-peak transit services could ensure that residents in these areas who rely on transit are not unduly isolated from employment services. Ultimately, new mobility strategies outside of the framework of traditional fixed-route service will be needed to connect people to productive and frequent routes. King County Metro must balance these needs with its equity and sustainability goals.

## KING COUNTY MOBILITY COALITION: INCLUSIVE PLANNING GRANT ROUND 1 OVERVIEW

Website: [https://irp-](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Inclusive%20Planning%20Grant%20Summary%202019%20DRAFT.pdf)

[cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Inclusive%20Planning%20Grant%20Summary%202019%20DRAFT.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/Inclusive%20Planning%20Grant%20Summary%202019%20DRAFT.pdf)

Date: 2018 – 2019

**Summary:** The King County Mobility Coalition received a grant from the Community Transportation Association of America to undertake an inclusive planning process to learn how older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers find and secure transportation in King County. Through this grant, the KCMC hosted two Mobility for All Transportation Summits, held listening sessions, and distributed a survey that reached a total of 580 individuals. This report summarizes the findings of outreach efforts done during the Round 1 grant period.

**Insights:** The following represent needs and challenges that we brought up through surveying and summits in the Inclusive Planning Round 1 process:

- ▶ Improvements to the pedestrian environment needed for improved safety and wayfinding, including pedestrian safety to bus stop access.
- ▶ Better kept bus stops that are well lit, cleaner, more accessible, and safer; in general, increased accessibility in finding bus stops, too.
- ▶ More inclusive eligibility for specialized programs that is not limitingly restrictive and does not necessitate long processes for enrollment.
- ▶ Standard practices for terminology and translations are needed to standardize wayfinding.
- ▶ Language barriers prevent resources from being accessed by diverse populations, including by not having multi-lingual staff at transportation or community organizations meant to help.
- ▶ Systems that allow for others to secure transportation on behalf of someone.
- ▶ Coordination across agencies to reduce the overwhelming nature of securing transportation.
- ▶ A single destination or point of entry for transportation information that stays updated and centralizes information.
- ▶ More on-demand or same-day options that reduce advanced notice barriers.
- ▶ Better connection between drivers and riders when transportation does arrive and real-time communication updates for door-to-door services.
- ▶ Public transportation and general transportation options need to be more affordable.
- ▶ Overcrowded buses and not enough seating can disincentivize riders.

## KING COUNTY MOBILITY COALITION: INCLUSIVE PLANNING ROUND 2 ONE-CALL ONE-CLICK FEEDBACK SUMMARY

**Website:** <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/One-Call%20One-Click%20Feedback%20Summary%20Round%201%2B2.pdf>

**Date:** January 2020

**Summary:** During the King County Mobility Coalition's Inclusive Planning Round 2 work, feedback from various participants across King County provided input on how a One-Call One-Click system can use a lens for accessibility. This feedback – gathered through surveying, interviews, and meetings – exposes needs, barriers, and gaps in the way participants interact with transportation resources that can be improved upon through a One-Call One-Click.

**Insights:** Insights relate strongly to how technology and resources can be made more accessible to be used by a more inclusive audience. As related specifically to wider accessibility, the following findings stood out:

- ▶ A need for technology to include environmental contexts, like elevation and crosswalks with accessible pedestrian signals.
- ▶ The ability for technology to be less dependent on specific addresses and more on locations or landmarks.
- ▶ Easily accessible translation or interpretation services.
- ▶ Technology that can be used by a user's caretaker or a medical provider.
- ▶ An emphasis on intuitive navigation and accessibility screen settings.
- ▶ Resources available that accommodate specialized mobility needs.
- ▶ Readily available information on affordability.
- ▶ Available feedback loops to support satisfaction surveying.
- ▶ Options for off-line use.
- ▶ Call centers for those who need technology support or training in using wayfinding or navigation services.

## KING COUNTY MOBILITY COALITION MEETING: NEEDS AND GAPS ANALYSIS ACTIVITY

**Website:** [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/KCMC%20Meeting%20Activity\\_Needs%20Assessment%2005%2015%2018.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/KCMC%20Meeting%20Activity_Needs%20Assessment%2005%2015%2018.pdf)

**Date:** May 2018

**Summary:** At a King County Mobility Coalition meeting in May 2018, the Coalition engaged in an activity to identify needs and gaps for the Coalition's priority populations. It sought to understand and discuss the greatest barriers and issues facing these populations using a dot-prioritization process to group categories of needs.

**Insights:** Below is a list of the most prominent needs displayed for each population group, although the notes go further into detail about an expansive list of needs and gaps. The entire document contributes to this needs assessment.

- ▶ Transportation Needs of Limited English Proficiency Populations:
  - Access to translated materials
  - Interpretation/Bilingual staff
  - Training for staff/cultural competency
  - Fares

- Wayfinding/signage
- ▶ Transportation Needs of Low-Income Households and People Experiencing Homelessness
  - Affordability
  - Service hours and frequency
  - Destinations
  - Rural and suburban transportation
- ▶ Transportation Needs of Older Adults
  - Education and awareness
  - Technology
  - Current system issues
  - Service expansion and additional options
- ▶ Transportation Needs of Veterans
  - VA barriers / medical system
  - Coordination of services and systems
  - Rural and suburban transportation
- ▶ Transportation Needs of Youth
  - Cost of fares
  - Coordination of services and systems

## KING COUNTY VETERANS TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Website: [https://irp-](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/KCMC_FINAL%20Needs%20Assessment%20Veterans%20Transportation_uMbhz6kTqyEbfKtVNYu.pdf)

[cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/KCMC\\_FINAL%20Needs%20Assessment%20Veterans%20Transportation\\_uMbhz6kTqyEbfKtVNYu.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/KCMC_FINAL%20Needs%20Assessment%20Veterans%20Transportation_uMbhz6kTqyEbfKtVNYu.pdf)

**Date:** June 2015

**Summary:** As part of the King County Mobility Coalition’s Veterans Transportation Initiative, the Coalition produced the King County Veterans Transportation Needs Assessment to understand Veterans’ mobility challenges and determine how they may be addressed. This research conducted by Hopelink and the University of Washington included a literature review, interviews, focus groups, community meetings, and surveys.

### Insights:

The central findings of the research conducted are:

- ▶ Veterans in King County have relatively high rates of disability, homelessness, and poverty. Connecting Veterans with necessary social services is crucial.

- ▶ Some Veterans are transit-dependent and lack the awareness of available transportation options beyond public transit.
- ▶ Even when Veterans do have an awareness of other transportation options, the cost is sometimes a barrier.
- ▶ Veterans who have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, or similar conditions may feel uncomfortable using public transit.
- ▶ The VA Medical Center in Seattle is an essential destination for many Veterans. Other popular destinations include local food banks, employment centers, shelters, and transitional housing programs.
- ▶ There is no single strategy to share transportation-related information with Veterans. A multifaceted approach will be more successful.

Through this, the Needs Assessment produced several recommendations, as follows:

- ▶ Because King County has many Veterans of limited means, free or low-cost transportation options are needed. This includes programs that assist Veterans with affording public transit.
- ▶ More flexible vans/shuttles and volunteer driver options are needed by Veterans who cannot use the bus due to trauma experienced while in the military.
- ▶ Improved access to the VA Medical Center would benefit a broad cross-section of the Veteran population.
- ▶ While some Veterans have a reduced transit fare card (LIFT or RRFP) or participate in specialized transportation programs, many others who would qualify are unaware of these programs. More education, training, and marketing targeted to Veterans are needed.
- ▶ Increased awareness of transportation options may improve mobility for Veterans who are faced with mobility barriers due to age, income, disability, or another limiting factor.

## KING COUNTY MOBILITY COALITION NEEDS ASSESSMENT MEMBER SURVEY

**Date:** November 2020

**Summary:** The King County Mobility Coalition distributed a survey to KCMC members and partners in November 2020 to rank the needs that emerged through the Community Transportation Needs Assessment literature review and provide additional input on needs and gaps. The survey was open for two weeks and received 22 responses. Of respondents, around 55% served all of King County; two respondents exclusively served East King County, three exclusively Snoqualmie Valley region, four solely in South King County, and one exclusively in Seattle and the Eastside.

**Insights:** When provided 10 of the most prominent needs from the literature review, respondents of the survey ranked the following as the highest priority needs:

1. Fast and efficient access to urban centers for rural and suburban riders.
2. Better connectivity within local neighborhoods for rural and suburban riders.

3. Better translated and culturally-sensitive education, outreach, and transportation dissemination.
4. Consolidated and centralized access to transportation information.
5. Reliable and quick mobility options during off-peak hours, evenings, and weekends.

Respondents also offered their insights on needs not listed in the priority ranking. Themes from these responses include:

- ▶ Bus shelters
- ▶ Funding uncertainty
- ▶ COVID-19 safety concerns
- ▶ Wheelchair accessible services
- ▶ Rural and urban connectivity
- ▶ Meeting the needs of older adults aging in place

Input regarding emerging trends included themes of:

- ▶ Rebuilding ridership and trust after COVID-19
- ▶ Urban to rural movements
- ▶ Diversifying funding

## KING COUNTY VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION GUIDE

**Website:** <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/king-county-volunteer-transportation-guide-v2-final.pdf>

**Date:** January 2018

**Summary:** The King County Mobility Coalition, through Hopelink and others, partnered to create a guide that detailed existing information on volunteer transportation programs in the Puget Sound Region. The guide goes into depth about service, eligibility, area, contact information, and more on the various programs to centralize this information. As part of the survey instrument used to collect information for this guide, several findings on volunteer driver program operations were compiled.

### Insights:

In the Guides “Moving Forward” section, general takeaways found in the volunteer driver programs survey are analyzed for their value as possible strategy shifts. This analysis produced the following findings as recommendations, needs, and suggestions:

1. Organizations can expand their pool of potential volunteer drivers by conducting targeted outreach to populations that are limited English speakers.
2. There is a need to create a more streamlined process by which potential volunteer drivers, or riders who cannot be matched with services, are shared with other volunteer driver programs that may be better fitting.

3. Instilling agency-pride and reaffirming a volunteer driver's impact as the representative of an organization can validate a driver's contributions within the service they provide.
4. Eligibility requirements can be strict for volunteer drivers. A potential solution is to make eligibility requirements more lenient and provide more training.
5. Exit interviews with volunteer drivers can be incredibly insightful and should be implemented as a best practice.
6. Transportation Network Companies (TNCs; like Uber and Lyft) offer lots of potential for partnership to assist clients who cannot get their rides fulfilled by volunteer driver programs.

## MORE PLACES, BETTER CONNECTIONS: TRANSIT PRIORITIES FOR RESIDENTS OF SOUTH SEATTLE AND SOUTH KING COUNTY

Website: [https://www.pugetsoundsage.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/PSS-Report\\_More-Places-Better-Connections.pdf](https://www.pugetsoundsage.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/PSS-Report_More-Places-Better-Connections.pdf)

Date: September 2020

**Summary:** Puget Sound Sage and Transportation Choices Coalition conducted research throughout the fall of 2018 and early 2019 by partnering with five community-based organizations in Seattle and South King County to better understand mobility and transportation priorities through a survey of their members. A total of 532 responses were collected through the surveys over four months. This research supports the argument that the most effective way to maximize our public investment in transportation is to center racial equity and ensure that Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), people with low-incomes, and people with disabilities are the most direct beneficiaries of these investments. It provides evidence for planning regional transportation based on the idea of community-centered mobility.

**Insights:** The following insights have been extracted from the survey associated with this research. This survey, which received 532 responses, was targeted to reach people of color, people with disabilities, people with low-income, and people who are likely immigrants or refugees.

- ▶ For people of color, people who use public assistance, people who have a disability, and people who speak a language other than English in the homes, a minimum of 45% and a maximum of 54% of respondents indicated they use transit as their only mode of transportation.
- ▶ For people of color, people who use public assistance, people who have a disability, and people who speak a language other than English in the homes, a minimum of 20% and a maximum of 33% of respondents indicated that their daily commute was longer than 60 minutes.
- ▶ For respondents who reported using transit as their only mode of transportation:
  - 80% identify as people of color
  - 64% report speaking a language other than English at home

- 70% live outside of Seattle City limits
  - 25% report have a commute longer than 60 minutes
  - Nearly 60% report leaving home for their most frequented destinations outside of normal commute hours
- ▶ 73% of respondents commute to a destination outside downtown Seattle, and 40% of those respondents use transit-only modes to get to their destinations.
  - ▶ A total of nearly 40% of respondents report leaving home to get to their most frequent destinations outside of regular commute hours, defined as before 6am and after 12pm, or had variable schedules with more than one standard commute time.
  - ▶ 90% of respondents who report using only transit to get around live near a transit stop.
  - ▶ While more than most (64%) of respondents report living near a transit stop, only 29% and 38% of respondents feel that transit got them places on time and on a day-to-day basis.
  - ▶ Nearly 60% of respondents said transit was unaffordable or somewhat unaffordable.
    - Respondents with an accessibility need and transit-only respondents report that transit was more affordable than other respondents. The transit-only group also reported the highest utilization of ORCA LIFT.
  - ▶ The largest priorities identified by respondents that would increase their transit use are:
    1. Reducing overall commute times.
    2. Investing in improvements that reduce the number of transfers or create a more direct route to the most frequented destinations.
    3. Ensure that the places people need to go, like work, childcare, healthcare, and groceries, are near transit.

The report shared the following takeaways:

- ▶ We need a distinctly better understanding of the travel patterns of BIPOC, people with low-incomes, and people with disabilities.
- ▶ Investing in service that connects people to employment, services, and education outside downtown Seattle.
- ▶ Invest in and preserve low-income housing, community-serving businesses, and cultural centers near transit so that we ensure core riders continue to have access to transit and create more opportunities for those with the fewest choices to live near high capacity transit.
- ▶ Transit performance measures should focus on commute time.
- ▶ Increase land uses that co-locate different destination types near transit (e.g., childcare, grocery stores, schools, and jobs), centering equitable development outcomes.
- ▶ Increased use of bus speed and reliability improvements to help buses compete with car travel times.

- For affordability, the following should be considered:
  - How to make discounted transit benefits available through other means than large employers.
  - Bolstering transit pass benefits through schools, small businesses, multi-family or multi-business buildings, or by groups of smaller employers.
  - How to incorporate ORCA LIFT subsidies into business passports.
  - Adopting monthly fare capping policies to provide the benefit of discounted trips to those who cannot afford the up-front cost of a pass.
  - Strategies to improve enrollment in existing reduced fare programs.
  - Very low-income/no-income fare programs.
  - Stop policing people who cannot afford to pay fares; a failure to pay a \$2.50 fare should not result in bodily harm or civil or criminal charges.
  - Mitigating budget cuts as a result of COVID-19 and using a just recovery and equitable mobility framework lens to guide service planning.

## NORTH KING COUNTY GAPS ANALYSIS

**Date:** December 2020

**Summary:** The North King County Mobility Coalition Gaps analysis is a document created to understand the mobility challenges in the North King County region for populations with special transportation needs, and in doing so, better coordinate members and service providers to facilitate mobility improvement projects. Populations identified include youth age 5-17, older adults 65+, individuals with disabilities, low-income households at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level (FPL), households with limited English proficiency, and households who do not own a vehicle.

**Insights:** Through the analysis, several key gaps in transportation service were identified. These include:

- The need to directly engage with cities in North King County around issues discovered in the analysis.
- A need for increased outreach to underserved communities, especially limited English speakers.
- A need for alternative services to be low-barrier in their intake process.
- Increased coordination of cross-county travel for fixed-route and paratransit services.
- Increased transit access to several areas within North King County:
  - Neighborhoods near to but not immediately along the SR 522 corridor
  - Neighborhoods near to but not immediately along the Bothell/Everett Highway
  - Access to Bellevue, nearby Snohomish County, and Ballard
  - Access in and around Kenmore and northeast Seattle

- Improvement of sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure in North King County cities.

Moving forward, the North King County Coalition hopes to directly engage with community members, city representatives, and human service providers on these issues to achieve change in the area.

## NORTHWEST HARVEST'S COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES: IMPROVING FOOD ACCESS

**Website:** [https://www.northwestharvest.org/wp-content/uploads/Community-Perspectives-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.northwestharvest.org/wp-content/uploads/Community-Perspectives-Report_FINAL.pdf)

**Date:** September 2020

**Summary:** Northwest Harvest produced their Community Perspectives: Improving Food Access report to understand the unique needs of their focus populations – being African-born, African American, and Asian American populations in south Seattle, SeaTac, and Tukwila – related to food access. The goal was also to define strategies to improve access to culturally relevant foods. The report was informed by a literature review, surveying, and multiple listening sessions organized by community-based organizations. These feedback opportunities included specific asks about transportation as a variable to access.

**Insights:** Feedback was collected from a literature review, listening sessions, and surveying. After compiling feedback, insights were organized into two main categories – the first being the accessibility and environment of food banks. This section includes data around transportation, amongst other factors. The following insights were extracted from these data sources:

- ▶ Seniors and individuals with disabilities within the African American population noted the need for transportation as a barrier to accessing food banks.
  - These populations also suggested having their food delivered.
- ▶ The African American population recommended that food banks be located near bus stops or within walking distance of others.
- ▶ The Asian American population noted the need for delivery or provided transportation for those with mobility issues who cannot come in to get their food themselves.
- ▶ Members of the African-born groups spoken with who did regularly visit food banks mention that proximity to a bus stop is a factor in accessing this resource.
- ▶ The Congolese, Central African, and Kenyan group assembled during this review period stated a lack of transportation to food banks as a serious issue to accessing food.
- ▶ Most Eritrean, Sierra Leonean, and Ethiopian group participants assembled during review could not drive themselves and expressed the need for more convenient locations and accessible hours.
- ▶ Asian Counsel and Referral Service indicate mobility and transportation as a common factor for the populations they serve, specifically seniors, not accessing food banks. They seek solutions that can bring groceries to seniors – like a mobile food bank.

- This report recommends establishing community resource rooms at food banks that provide access to resources like transportation.

## OPERATION EASY ACCESS BUSINESS PLAN / HEALTHCARE ACCESS MOBILITY DESIGN CHALLENGE

**Website:** [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/OEA%20Business%20Plan\\_Hopelink%2003%2015%2016.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/OEA%20Business%20Plan_Hopelink%2003%2015%2016.pdf)

**Date:** March 2016

**Summary:** In 2015, Hopelink's Access to Healthcare group was awarded funds through the National Center for Mobility Management's Healthcare Access Mobility Design Challenge. This grant allowed a group of relevant stakeholders to develop an innovative solution to improve access to post-hospitalization medical appointments, rehabilitative therapy, and other services to help low-income and older adults in King County avoid re-hospitalization. This project, deemed the Care Mobility Rewards Program, was informed by strategic outreach with target populations, including interviews and surveys and robust workshopping with relevant partners.

**Insights:** This report goes into rich detail about an innovative solution; however, insights can be gathered from the primary and secondary research conducted to create the solution. Over 40 riders and potential riders were interviewed, including patients who had been readmitted to MultiCare Auburn Medical Center, residents at senior housing facilities, seniors who take van transportation to a community center, a user of Senior Services' Volunteer Transportation, and clients of a refugee resettlement agency. Other stakeholders spoke to included hospital case managers, mental health providers, a cultural navigator who works with refugees and immigrants, and a community center director. Findings were organized as follows:

- Patient Experience
  - Older adults in South King County face diverse challenges that make navigating the transportation system difficult, including:
    - Lack of information
    - Limited English proficiency
    - Safety concerns
    - Housing challenges
    - Mental health conditions
  - Lack of transit availability in South King County presents challenges for seniors who are unable to drive
  - There is a need for low-cost medical transportation in South King County
  - There is a gap between riders in-need of low-cost options but who do not qualify for Hopelink's Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation due to income eligibility.

- Advanced requirements and limited hours restrict the value in options for riders.

► Provider Experience

- Hospital staff, or patient navigators, who assist in referring patients to resources are often siloed by disease type within hospitals – and transportation is usually separate from other community resources.
- Staff in charge of helping clients navigate post-hospitalization resources are often at capacity.
- Transportation is in the top five barriers to healthcare delivery.
- Some providers have experimented with innovative models, like navigator programs, to assist patients' connection to resources.
- Many patients no longer drive and do not have funds for transportation.
- Many hospitals don't have the capacity or don't go beyond discharge care – so consideration in the continuum of care varies greatly.
- Hospitals sometimes feel their efforts have more impact on helping patients with rising risk than high-risk patients.
- Social workers or non-clinical lay navigators usually help patients with transportation needs.
- Hospitals use a variety of different unstandardized tools to assess patient risk of readmission.

Overall, all contribute to a greater understanding of the vital link between lack of transportation services and high readmission risk in South King County for vulnerable patients.

## ORCA YOUTH TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT GRANT

**Website:** [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/18-19\\_ORCA%20Youth%20TDM%20Grant\\_Final%20Report.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/18-19_ORCA%20Youth%20TDM%20Grant_Final%20Report.pdf)

**Date:** January 2020

**Summary:** In 2018 and 2019, King County Metro worked with Hopelink to execute an ORCA Youth Transportation Demand Management grant to distribute \$10 pre-loaded ORCA Youth cards and transit education materials to high school students in King County, Washington. This facilitated the distribution of nearly 6,000 pre-loaded ORCA cards through various events, tabling, marketing, and partnerships with youth-serving institutions, from school districts to nonprofits. Through reaching 11 school districts, 35 high schools, and 35 youth-serving organizations, lots of feedback on youth needs related to mobility and transportation was gained.

**Insights:**

- Offering pre-loaded ORCA cards and removing ID and guardian signature requirements decrease barriers for youth and encourage them to try transit.
- Transit routes should better connect schools to transit centers and community hubs.

- ▶ ORCA Youth enrollment should be made simpler.
  - Beyond the complex ORCA mail order form, the only other option is to go to a designated location in-person; most of these locations close outside of school hours.
- ▶ Students who participate in after-school programs should receive transportation options.
- ▶ Bus stops should be reachable by safe routes for students who walk or use a mobility device.
- ▶ Youth-specific training should be developed for educators to distribute and share.
- ▶ Involving school staff and hosting events during school hours increased youth enrollments.
- ▶ Schools should invest more time, or make information more available, about transportation resources to youth.
- ▶ Lack of transportation can be a barrier for a student participating in after-school activities or needing to arrive to school on-time without alternative transportation.
- ▶ School staff and students had an interest in continuously learning more about transit.
- ▶ Developing relationships between school districts, schools, and transit agencies will create valuable in-roads to continue gathering youth engagement in transportation topics.

## PSRC COORDINATED TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN – CHAPTER 3: MOBILITY NEEDS AND GAPS

Website: <https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/sntc201806-handout-chapter3excerpt.pdf>

Date: 2018

**Summary:** The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) developed this chapter of their larger Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan to outline needs and gaps. These needs and gaps were assessed throughout the planning process through outreach to transportation providers, local mobility coalitions, and community-based organizations (CBOs). Outreach was targeted to reach seniors, people with disabilities, and others with special transportation needs. Subject matter experts on PSRC's Special Needs Transportation Committee provided insight into the needs and gaps throughout the region's special needs transportation network. The intent was to inform and update the prioritized strategies that will guide transportation and information service providers in overcoming these gaps.

**Insights:** The Puget Sound Regional Council outlined gaps in the special needs transportation network into five categories: spatial, temporal, institutional, infrastructure, and awareness. The following trends are extracted from these five general categories and the emerging trends section:

- ▶ There is a need for more travel training, information assistance, and referral services for available mobility options to close awareness gaps within the region.
- ▶ Cross-county trips lack coordination among service providers, human service agencies, or program regulations.

- ▶ Transportation systems have varying eligibility requirements that make things like transferring, applying, or booking a trip cumbersome.
- ▶ Transportation providers use different scheduling, dispatching, and reporting software, making information sharing and coordination difficult.
- ▶ There is a need to provide programming and help in diverse languages.
- ▶ Existing transportation programs do not have the funding capacity to meet the growing demand for their services, and new programs must enter challenging competitive processes.
- ▶ There is a need to have better connectivity and transportation services within rural areas to urban areas and vice versa, as concentrated around job centers.
- ▶ Paratransit systems do not provide same-day service.
- ▶ There is a need for comprehensive access to non-emergency healthcare and associated critical services related to healthcare outcomes that provide beyond Medicaid NEMT or Access. This includes affordable options.
- ▶ There is a lack of accessible infrastructure in the pedestrian environment – including benches, weather protection, walkways, safe crossings, signalized intersections, and more.
- ▶ There is a need for better coordination between transportation providers and human service agencies to provide more efficient service and avoid duplications.
- ▶ There is a need for sustainable funding sources to support existing special needs transportation services that are experiencing growing operation costs.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT INFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION SURVEY

**Date:** April 2016

**Summary:** Hopelink Mobility Management was contracted by King County Metro to administer a short survey and conduct a series of listening sessions with diverse community groups to better understand how particularly low-income, limited English proficiency, and elder communities receive public transit information. The survey sought to gain see how calling Metro’s customer service phone number, mobile phone applications, online websites on the computer, posted transit schedules, and printed paper timetables are ranked and prioritized as ways of receiving information. This feedback project hosted five listening sessions across King County and received 121 responses to the survey.

**Insights:** Findings from the survey and listening sessions were separated by the five communication channels that Metro sought to get feedback on.

### 1. Customer service representatives by phone

- a. This option was the second least overall preferred option, second to last in front of online websites.
- b. Half of Chinese Information Service Center respondents to the survey stated they were unaware of this option.
- c. Populations with the lowest English proficiency level tended to indicate they preferred to use the CSR option “never/sometimes.”

- d. Senior populations with higher English proficiency levels preferred the CSR option as to indicate a “sometimes” usage. In listening sessions, this population explained that customer service quality prevented them from making more use of it.
- e. Participants reported they would use the number if they knew what it was. One participant also acknowledged they would use the service had they known translation was possible.
- f. Some complaints about using this option included customer service representatives who spoke too quickly or not loudly enough.
- g. One participant requested this option be available on weekends.
- h. At varying listening sessions, multiple participants stated it was often hard to tell the CSR where they were calling from to receive help.

## **2. Mobile phone applications**

- a. No one from Chinese Information Service Center had ever received public transit information using a mobile phone application.
- b. Senior participants ranked this option very low. They detailed problems with visibility and financial means as barriers.
- c. Mobile phones ranked highly with participants who did not identify as seniors and was the third place (out of 5) preference overall.
- d. One Bus Away was the most popular choice of phone apps, ahead of Trip Planner.
- e. Participants explain they often take screenshots of their bus routes on their phones and send them as messages to family members.
- f. Affordability or understanding how to use smartphones is a barrier.

## **3. Online websites on the computer**

- a. Adult participants, on average, indicated they “never” preferred online websites. Reasons stated include that they could not print pages or they lacked computers in their home.
- b. This was the least preferred option to find public transit information.
- c. Senior participants would use online resources when family and friends helped.
- d. While people mainly used Google to find resources, those who used Trip Planner stated they’d use it to double-check information.
- e. Trip Planner was the preferred desktop website.

## **4. Posted schedules at bus stops**

- a. This option was tied as the most preferred option.
- b. Respondents from South King County who commute daily to and from Tukwila International Blvd preferred this option most heavily.
- c. Some suggestions for improving posted schedules include dedicating extra time and attention to making them more noticeable, readable, and color coordination.
- d. Students indicated they often take pictures of the schedules on their phones.

- e. The organization of bus “bays” at transit hubs can be confusing, particularly for people with lower English proficiency.

#### 5. Printed Paper timetables

- a. This option was tied as the most preferred option.
- b. Respondents from senior groups, including IAWW and Northaven, preferred this choice heavily.
- c. Reasons respondents liked printed paper timetables were because they are convenient, financially attainable, and accurate. They cited them as being more reliable than technology.
- d. Listing of the timetables using numbers instead of English words helps with translation and understanding.
- e. Suggestions on printed paper timetables include increasing font sizes and possibly listing popular destinations reachable by the routes.

## PUGET SOUND ENERGY & HOPELINK ELECTRIC MOBILITY WORKSHOP FINAL REPORT

**Website:** <https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3Aascds%3AUS%3A66f3d114-aadb-4612-a5b4-2d516122b18e>

**Date:** June 2019

**Summary:** Puget Sound Energy solicited The Athena Group and Hopelink's assistance to organize opportunities for guidance and feedback on their Low-Income Pilot Program outcomes.

**Insights:** This resource detailed findings from a survey and workshop conducted in 2019. The survey sought to understand base-level knowledge for EV systems and perspectives on the needs and resources available to be incorporated in a possible EV pilot program. The workshops assembled attendees who provided housing, jobs, food, and health services to South King County's low-income residents and those with electric vehicle and transportation expertise. The Workshop asked attendees about what projects could facilitate electric mobility in filling gaps identified in the community. The top six projects included:

- ▶ Mobile food distribution
- ▶ Electrification of public transit
- ▶ Healthcare/medical electric transport
- ▶ Electrification of the SeaTac airport fleet
- ▶ Muckleshoot electric transit
- ▶ Electrifying school buses and serving shift workers

## RARET: FEBRUARY 2019 KING COUNTY SNOW EVENT AFTER ACTION REPORT

Website: <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/After-Action%20Report%20February%202019%20Snow%20Event.pdf>

Date: March 2019

**Summary:** The King County Winter Weather Mobility Taskforce activated the King County Winter Weather Medical Transportation Procedures with adaptations during a large snow event in February of 2019. This report summarizes the process and outcome of this winter weather procedure for non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) in King County. This resource lists areas for improvement to the procedures that highlight gaps in the existing emergency preparedness NEMT plans.

### Insights:

- ▶ There is a need for a more streamlined coordination channel for all transportation resources during an emergency, particularly for medical transportation providers and Metro Access.
- ▶ More education is needed around emergency numbers and coordination channels. Most coordination was done outside of the system in place during the February snow event.
- ▶ Many providers who ceased operations during the snowstorm referred clients to call 911 if they needed critical medical transportation. There is potential to align communications so that clients can be referred to alternative resources before escalating to 911.
- ▶ There is a need for precise, real-time information about road conditions in localized areas so providers can make informed decisions before fulfilling a ride.

## REDMOND COMMUNITY MOBILITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Date: April 2016

**Summary:** This report summarizes work done under the City of Redmond TDM for Diverse Communities grant. This work has used various data collection methods to identify the main barriers to transportation in the City of Redmond and the surrounding region.

### Insights:

The main transportation barriers identified through this work are summarized here:

- ▶ A Transit System Geared for Commuters
  - Most routes are focused on bringing people into Downtown Redmond and Overlake during peak hours.
  - Many routes that connect Redmond to neighboring communities do not run outside peak periods.
- ▶ Lack of Frequent Service to Neighboring Cities
  - No transit service from Issaquah/Sammamish to Redmond during off-peak hours.

- Limited connections from Redmond to the Snoqualmie Valley. Many living in Snoqualmie travel to Redmond for healthcare and other services.
- ▶ Limited Options for Redmond Residents to Travel Within the City
  - Most services connect neighborhoods to Downtown Redmond/Overlake, so there are limited options to connect other parts of the city with each other.
  - Services are spread out through the city, not just concentrated in Downtown Redmond and Overlake.
  - The Redmond LOOP achieves this, but with some limitations due to the vehicle's size, frequency, and service hours.
- ▶ The Cost of Using Transit
  - While LIFT brings down the cost of fares, it remains costly for those with very low-income.
  - Many riders are dependent on bus tickets provided by human service agencies.
- ▶ Difficulty in Using the Transit System
  - Confusion regarding different fare structures and transit agencies.
  - Lack of translation at transit stops, park and rides, and transit centers.
  - Limited wayfinding and signage at transit centers and park and rides make transfers more challenging.
- ▶ Cost of Housing
  - Redmond's high rent cost is pushing residents further out, limiting access to transit and human services.
  - While some housing assistance exists, it remains limited in comparison to the scope of the problem.

The report then details robust recommendations, which can be viewed through the original document.

## RESILIENT KING COUNTY

### Website:

[https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/safety/prepare/documents/SpecialEvents/CEOSummit\\_Resiliency/ResilientKCWhitePaper\\_Jan2014.ashx](https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/safety/prepare/documents/SpecialEvents/CEOSummit_Resiliency/ResilientKCWhitePaper_Jan2014.ashx)

**Date:** 2014

**Summary:** This white paper compiled by King County as a part of their *King County Strategic Plan* provides a summary of the resiliency of vital services in King County to operate in and recover from a catastrophic hazard event. Transportation is identified as “lifeline infrastructure,” a critical sector.

### Insights:

- ▶ In the event of a 7.2 magnitude earthquake, transportation infrastructure would only be able to operate at 59% capacity. This would increase to 85% capacity 90 days after the event. This

decrease in capacity is problematic for special needs communities who are already underserved by the public transit system.

## RIDE2 EASTGATE FINAL REPORT

**Date:** December 2018

**Summary:** Hopelink partnered with King County Metro to better understand how the Ride2 service at Eastgate can better serve Metro customers. In doing so, Hopelink sought to promote marketing materials, host an open house event, and facilitate two user-experience focus groups. Feedback was received at the open house and focus groups. These events had 29 open house participants and 20 focus group participants.

### **Insights:**

The report includes detailed feedback on the many topic areas covered in conversation at these events. Below is a summary of the general likes and dislikes compiled from more thorough feedback.

### **Users liked:**

- ▶ For their overall experience, users liked that the service was convenient, flexible, prompt, and alleviated the barrier of a congested park and ride.
- ▶ When using the app, users liked that the app provided notifications, was responsive, and could show when a ride was approaching.
- ▶ Regarding the pick-up/drop-off experience, riders appreciated the short pick-up time at the station and home, the convenience, the shuttle waiting a few minutes for riders, and the flexibility of drivers related to the drop-off location.
- ▶ Related to rider experience boarding and during the ride, users appreciated the excellent customer service, that they were the only riders within a vehicle, that a pre-scheduled trip was prioritized over a hop-on ride, and that it was a convenient way to transport shopping bags.

### **Users disliked:**

- ▶ For their overall experience, users disliked the service's lack of cohesion and the limitations compared to Uber or Lyft.
- ▶ When using the app, users disliked:
  - The need to reenter email when opening the app;
  - Challenges with scheduling trips;
  - Inaccurate GPS calculations;
  - Difficulty in selecting pick-up locations;
  - Lack of address provided for pick-up locations;
  - Too short of a time limit for completing the scheduling process; and
  - No option to edit trip details.

- Additionally, several recommendations were made on making the app more user-friendly, including translation into other languages beyond English, the option to book rides for several people, saving favorite addresses, showing user-history, showing how far users are from the service area, and more.
- ▶ Regarding the pick-up/drop-off experience, users dislike the confusion about exact pick-up locations, the unpleasant waiting experience in adverse weather, and drivers not always receiving trip updates as fast as riders.
- ▶ Related to rider experience boarding and during the ride, users dislike the difficulty in getting into the vehicle for older adults and people with disabilities and the difficulty in getting the door to close.
- ▶ Users wished the service had more service hours, stating they had to adjust their schedules to align with the service hours.
- ▶ Users were confused about the borders of the service area and felt it was limited.

The report expands upon these findings in more detail and also offers areas of improvement for each conclusion.

## SAMMAMISH ALTERNATIVE SERVICES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

**Website:**

<https://www.sammamish.us/attachments/events/45960/Sammamish%20Alternative%20Services%20-%20Needs%20Assessment%20Survey%20Summary%20Report.pdf>

**Date:** January 2017

**Summary:** King County Metro conducted the Sammamish Needs Assessment Survey Summary Report to better understand the need for mobility and transportation within the community. Respondents were classified into four quadrants within Sammamish, representing the Northwest, Northeast, Klahanie, and Southwest portions of the city. Northwest Sammamish had the highest representation in responses at 28 percent, followed by Northeast Sammamish at 26 percent, and Southwest Sammamish at 22 percent. Klahanie had the lowest responses at 19 percent. In addition to Sammamish, survey responses were gathered from Issaquah and Redmond residents.

**Insights:**

- ▶ Responses showed that Northeast Sammamish residents drive a single-occupancy vehicle five or more days per week and are less likely to utilize public transit. In contrast, 44% of Southwest residents reported public transit use of five or more times a week. This could directly correlate to the lack of bus service in more remote areas of Sammamish, as this was the most significant barrier to using transit reported at 44%. Overall, comments showed that the Plateau lacked effective bus service options in general and that long trip times and overcrowded buses discouraged them from riding.

- ▶ Another significant barrier to transit use was the lack of evening service and difficulty in trip planning around the current bus schedule. Alternative options for ride sharing like VanPool or carpooling were responded to with little interest.
- ▶ The top three responses to the survey's question about what new transportation services from Metro residents would like to see developed were more frequent and reliable services in general.

## SAMMAMISH TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

Website: <https://connect.sammamish.us/transportation-master-plan>

Date: May 2020

**Summary:** In 2017, the City of Sammamish created their first transportation master plan to address the short- and long-term strategies for their transportation mission and goals. The most recent Transportation Master Plan draft compiled the transportation framework and priorities. Utilizing community feedback, experiences, data collection, and analysis, the City has identified the region's needs and transportation priorities to address.

### Insights:

- ▶ Many of the City's streets do not connect to the more extensive regional network due to many non-arterial streets. However, the few streets that connect are not within the City's jurisdiction, which causes barriers to the City's ability to control "bottlenecking" and peak-hours traffic. The report found that partnerships with jurisdictional stakeholders would be required to address these issues.
- ▶ To evaluate and understand the challenges of non-motorized travel, the City utilized stakeholder interviews for direct feedback, in addition to online mapping and workshops. Sammamish residents reported that the environment was hostile to alternative transportation modes, especially along the 228<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. Due to long distances and low visibility, safety and accessibility were the main barriers.
- ▶ Overall, the City of Sammamish's greatest mobility challenges are the sprawling neighborhoods, limited connections to regional streets, density, and City's location primarily on a plateau.
- ▶ The City must address the location of bus stops, distances between trip origins/destinations, and urban or employment centers improvements to reach safe, accessible, and fiscally reasonable transportation goals.

## SEATTLE 2035: GROWTH AND EQUITY ANALYSIS

Website:

<https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/OngoingInitiatives/SeattlesComprehensivePlan/FinalGrowthandEquityAnalysis.pdf>

Date: May 2016

**Summary:** The Seattle Growth & Equity Analysis is a document intended to inform elected officials and the public about potential future displacement impacts on marginalized populations and ways these potential impacts could be mitigated through strategies to increase access to opportunity. Marginalized populations were defined within the report as “persons and communities of color, immigrants and refugees, English language learners, and those experiencing poverty.” Access to opportunity was defined as “living within walking distance or with transit access to services, employment opportunities, amenities and other key determinants of social, economic and physical well-being.” The report identified several neighborhoods in the city of Seattle which may be at increased risk for displacement. When people are displaced from their neighborhoods, they tend to have less access to resources and services such as transportation, which adequately work for their needs.

**Insights:**

- ▶ Several neighborhoods within Seattle were identified as places with high displacement risk and high access to opportunity. These included North Rainier, North Beacon Hill, Columbia City, Lake City, Northgate, U District, and First Hill. These regions may not need increased transportation investment.
- ▶ Areas with high displacement risk and low access to opportunity were identified. Neighborhoods included South Park, Bitter Lake, Rainier Beach, and Othello. The report recommends increasing transit and housing growth in these areas while engaging in “displacement mitigation strategies,” which may include increased social services investment. When planning transportation services in the future, these areas should be targeted for increased transit investment.
- ▶ Proximity to transit was noted as one of the factors which influence access to economic opportunity. When people who already experience barriers in linguistic isolation, high housing costs, or the like are faced with low ranges of available bus service, they are less likely to have access to economic opportunity. Areas with a low degree of available bus service, defined as between 1-100 daily unique transit trips within a quarter-mile walking distance, include the Lake City and Sandpoint neighborhoods and West Seattle and parts of South Seattle like the Duwamish valley and Rainier Beach. For context, neighborhoods in the core downtown have upwards of 1,000 daily unique transit trips.

## SHORELINE RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

**Website:** <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=40945>

**Date:** 2018

**Summary:** The City of Shoreline conducted a satisfaction survey in the summer of 2018 to determine if the city’s priorities continued to match residents' needs and desires. The survey's scope included a large variety of city projects, from public safety to overall city perceptions. The report included several questions on transportation and land use infrastructure, which provide insight into Shoreline residents' opinions of local mobility resources.

**Insights:**

- ▶ The highest area of overall satisfaction percentage for various transportation aspects was the availability of public transportation options. 59% stated they were either Very Satisfied or Satisfied with public transportation options.
- ▶ The two lowest levels of satisfaction related to sidewalks. 48% of people reported they were dissatisfied with the quality of sidewalks for people with mobility challenges, and 54% of people said they were dissatisfied with the availability of sidewalks in their neighborhood overall.
- ▶ The top two projects people believed should receive the most emphasis in Shoreline over the next two years included the availability of sidewalks in their neighborhood and the availability of public transportation options.

## SNOQUALMIE VALLEY: A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY FOR ALL COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**Website:** [https://asupportivecommunityforall.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/SCFA-FINAL-Needs-Assessment-2019\\_0812.pdf](https://asupportivecommunityforall.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/SCFA-FINAL-Needs-Assessment-2019_0812.pdf)

**Date:** May 2019

**Summary:** This assessment aims to develop a shared understanding of the demographics in Snoqualmie Valley, identify the unique needs of Snoqualmie Valley residents in the realm of health and human services, present learnings about barriers to accessing services, inventory the current service providers and system of supports available in the Valley and the surrounding area, and facilitate the identification and development of one or more strategies to better coordinate delivery of services and increase connectedness across the community.

**Insights:** Transportation is a high priority need and a barrier to accessing services.

- ▶ Residents indicated inadequate availability and connectivity of public transit exacerbates isolation due to the Valley's rural geography and affects quality of life by reducing access to services, jobs, retail and social opportunities, the availability of caregivers, and increases the overall cost of living.
- ▶ Because of a lack of public transit, 98% of Snoqualmie Valley workers have access to a vehicle, compared to 95% in King County overall. Using a car and traveling long distances to job centers, schools, and other resources can result in higher transportation costs due to fuel and parking costs and commuting time. Moderate-income households in Snoqualmie Valley spend more of their income on transportation compared to King County overall.

Engagement revealed that increased transit service is especially needed for transit-dependent people – primarily older adults, youth, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Some transit-dependent populations with special mobility needs use Snoqualmie Valley Transportation (SVT) and Metro's Access program. However, many transit-dependent residents, such as those outside these programs' service areas, low-income individuals, and youth, have unmet mobility needs.

# SNOQUALMIE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION COALITION 5-YEAR TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Website: <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/SVTC-5-year-plan-digital%20%281%29.pdf>

Date: January 2020

**Summary:** A variety of unique transportation challenges and gaps face the Snoqualmie Valley. With the support of an Easterseals grant, transportation providers, members of the Snoqualmie Tribe, city officials/staff, human service providers, King County elected officials, medical providers, school district staff, and concerned citizens formed a coalition to address these needs. The plan aims to create a coordinated transportation plan uniting all cities in Snoqualmie Valley and the surrounding region. In 2017, the Coalition initiated a needs assessment, mailing a survey to over 26,000 households. In the summer of 2019, the Coalition conducted another community survey via online and in-person channels to garner feedback on transportation priorities over the next five years. Respondents were also allowed to rank their top three public transportation priorities and indicate their satisfaction level with how existing services are meeting those needs. The survey was completed by 646 Snoqualmie Valley respondents, capturing the desired goal of 1% of the incorporated population. Between these two surveys, regular coalition meetings, and stakeholder interviews, both qualitative and quantitative data have informed this plan's priority of projects.

## Insights:

### Current Transportation Use:

- ▶ Larger proportions of youth, older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low-income actively use public transportation than all of the population combined.
- ▶ The percentage of respondents who have never used public transportation is highest in unincorporated areas and the Census Designated Places of Fall City/Preston.

### Use of Transportation Providers:

- ▶ When all responses are included, King County Metro is reported as being the most used provider.
- ▶ Youth, people with disabilities, and individuals with low-income use Snoqualmie Valley Transportation's services the most.

### Service Preferences:

- ▶ The top service priority for all respondents is getting to their destination quickly.
- ▶ Youths' top priority is weekend service.
- ▶ Older adults' top priority is connecting to transit hubs.
- ▶ People with disabilities' top priority is getting to their destination quickly.

- People with low-incomes' top priority is weekend service.

## SOUND GENERATIONS HYDE SHUTTLE FORMER CUSTOMER SURVEY

**Date:** 2020

**Summary:** Sound Generations, Hyde Shuttle operator, conducted in-depth community outreach to better understand why former riders had stopped utilizing their services. Hyde Shuttle provides door-to-door van transportation services to older adults and adults with disabilities throughout King County. These two demographics have been identified by the KCMC as vulnerable populations and are important to include. This study is also important because Hyde Shuttle is a flexible, community-based service, and often these types of services are not studied as much as larger fixed route services.

**Insights:** Survey respondents identified various reasons why they might no longer use Hyde Shuttle; however, most responses tended towards three top reasons. These included:

1. They had access to a private car, friends & family members drove them, or their housing provided transport
2. They felt the service area boundaries were too restrictive
3. They felt that reserving the shuttle three days in advance was too much time.

Additionally, the top three transportation services the former riders currently used included:

1. Transportation from family & friends
2. Metro Access
3. A personal vehicle.

As evidenced by the responses, there remains a strong need for reliable, accessible alternative services for older adults and people with disabilities. Many former riders identified that they were still dependent on others for transportation, despite having left the Hyde Shuttle program. Other key themes that emerged were that riders felt that the service was restrictive due to long reservation times and limiting service boundaries. Each shuttle only covers a limited area and cannot travel across the boundaries of the service area. Education and outreach about transportation were also highlighted as being a barrier. Some riders had left the service due to a change in address but were unaware Hyde Shuttle operated in their new area.

## TECHNOLOGY ACCESS & EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE WOMEN IN SEATTLE & KING COUNTY REPORT

**Website:** <https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/46221/Technology-access-education-refugee-women-Seattle-King-County.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

**Date:** August 2020

**Summary:** The University of Washington's Technology and Social Change Group within the UW's Information School conducted research to understand the role of technology access and education for women who have arrived in Washington state as refugees. The study included interviews with 21 service providers in King County. The analysis was performed because technology access and education are important ways refugees learn to navigate systems when arriving in the U.S. For this research, technology is considered to include navigating transportation through driving, using transit card readers, and apps.

**Insights:** This research included insights on the way refugee women in King County navigate the transit system. These insights include the following:

- ▶ Cultural and social factors mean some refugee women do not feel comfortable using public transportation alone. Organizations that offer services or training with the expectations that refugee women will travel independently to receive these services do not adequately account for this barrier.
- ▶ Service providers noted that refugee women's ability to use navigation apps and public transportation is linked to a sense of feeling safe and taking up space in public. This can support family life, community, and well-being for women having to renegotiate their familial and societal roles upon arrival to a new country.
- ▶ Many service provider interviewees noted secure childcare and transportation funds would make it more feasible for refugee women to receive training and support, as they are commonly conducting most of the unpaid domestic labor for their families.

## TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS AND NEEDS FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES: AN EXPLORATORY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**Website:** [https://irp-](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/King%20County%20Immigrant%20and%20Refugee%20Transportation%20Needs%20Assessment%20May%202019.pdf)

[cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/King%20County%20Immigrant%20and%20Refugee%20Transportation%20Needs%20Assessment%20May%202019.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/King%20County%20Immigrant%20and%20Refugee%20Transportation%20Needs%20Assessment%20May%202019.pdf)

**Date:** June 2019

**Summary:** Hopelink Mobility, through the King County Mobility Coalition, worked with the University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy and Governance Student Consulting Lab to gain a better understanding of the gaps immigrants and refugees face in accessing transportation services in King County. UW Evans School students conducted a literature review and performed background research on demographic and transportation details relating to the immigrant and refugee populations. This exploratory needs assessment used document analysis, an online survey geared at service providers, and a paper survey distributed to target populations to gather information reflected in the findings.

**Insights:** Cost, level of transit service, and information or language gaps are barriers that immigrants and refugees experience when attempting to access transportation in King County. Public transit fares present a significant barrier to immigrants and refugees. A lack of service routes in suburban and rural areas and long travel times on public transit also pose a challenge for these populations. Language and the lack of translated transit information available as written materials, signage, and announcements are

also significant barriers among immigrant and refugee communities. More needs to be done by the King County Mobility Coalition and King County Metro to better engage and serve these communities. The following insights are extracted from this needs assessment:

- ▶ Access to transportation is a quality of life issue. When travel is too difficult, people's needs may remain unmet. Lack of access to transportation can be thought of as a form of social exclusion. It can result in limited job choices, limited housing options, barriers to accessing social services, reduced savings due to individuals needing to use more expensive private transportation options, and may limit women's participation outside of the home.
- ▶ Low-income immigrants face some of the same transportation barriers as non-immigrant low-income individuals, namely the cost of public transportation. Purchasing monthly passes can significantly reduce the cost of transit, but the upfront cost can be prohibitively expensive.
- ▶ On average, immigrants have more children than non-immigrants, and traveling with children on transit can be difficult to the point of being a barrier.
- ▶ In multiple studies of immigrant transportation needs, discrimination from bus drivers emerged as a barrier to public transit use. Discrimination from bus drivers appears to be a concern for LEP immigrants.

## TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES LINE 2020 DATA

**Date:** 2019/2020

**Summary:** Hopelink Mobility Management supports the Transportation Resources Line, an information and referral number used to help people with unique mobility challenges find transportation options that meet their needs. Data is recorded on the calls received to track patterns and follow-up.

**Insights:** Calls made to the Transportation Resources Line in 2020 had the following demographic breakdown:

- ▶ 38% were 60+ years old
- ▶ 40% were low or very low income
- ▶ 49% had some kind of disability
- ▶ 10% were Veterans
- ▶ 36% were calling for medical-related trips but were non-Medicaid eligible
- ▶ 20% were calling for general needs (grocery, pharmacy, recreation)
- ▶ 18% cited an inability to pay
- ▶ 16% of calls had origin locations of Bellevue
- ▶ 15% of calls had origin locations of Seattle

From calls in 2019 and 2020, the following requests were unable to be met by the mobility network:

- ▶ A man is trying to go from Renton to VA. He is unable to pay anything, and his appointments are unpredictable. He has no other options besides the kindness of strangers. He has already

maxed out his ACS funds. Both services the TRL staffed recommended were booked up and unable to serve him.

- ▶ A client needs door-to-door to get to his court appointment within 24 hours, but nothing is running that can help with short notice.
- ▶ A caller with a disability inquiring about transportation for a service animal to/from a vet appointment in Auburn. Auburn Humane Society referred her.
- ▶ A caller is receiving a specialized cancer treatment appointment in Portland and needs transportation to the Amtrak train station. They are unable to drive on icy streets.
- ▶ A woman has a fractured hip and shoulder due to a fall caused by poor balance. She needs a ride from Queen Anne Healthcare to her house around 97th and west of I-5. Our TRL staff told the caseworker about Hyde Shuttle, but she would have to get over the bridge to Fremont first. Also talked about Uber/Lyft. No option worked for her.
- ▶ Staff at Virginia Mason in Seattle wants to know if drivers can help the client get from her apartment on the 2nd floor to the vehicle. The client has a neurological disorder and is home-bound. No solution for them at the moment.
- ▶ Medical Provider is looking for next-day transportation for a client who just had bladder surgery and is non-Medicaid eligible. Needs to get from Seattle to a Franciscan Medical Clinic in Tacoma. Considered that he should call BCBS—his insurance—to see if they would cover transportation for him as some plans do. His best bet would be public transportation unless he wanted to pay high costs.
- ▶ Mother is looking for resources for her son with hyperacusis. He cannot function on buses or even a Hyde Shuttle model. TRL Staff told her about Taxi Scrip, but an intake person told her that someone MUST be on SSI. TRL Staff referred her to Hyde Shuttle, but his condition makes any crowd noise excruciating. TRL Staff told her about CCSWW, but there is no guarantee they can help.

## TUKWILA AND SOUTH KING COUNTY COMMUNITY MOBILITY ASSESSMENT

**Website:** <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/c86a044e/files/uploaded/tukwila-and-skc-mobility-assesment-report-2016-2017.pdf>

**Date:** 2016/2017

**Summary:** This report summarizes the work done under the TDM for Diverse Communities grant, in which Hopelink was contracted to address non-drive alone trips with an origin or destination in the city of Tukwila. A second regional grant allowed Hopelink's contract to be expanded and include a scope of work that covered five partnering south King County jurisdictions, being Burien, Federal Way, Kent, Renton, and SeaTac. This report includes results from several data collection methods – including surveying, qualitative feedback from in-person outreach, and interviews – to identify barriers to transportation in south King County.

**Insights:**

The survey distributed received a total of 4,399 responses and was translated into multiple languages. Limitations of the survey, along with a more detailed breakdown of survey results, are listed in the full report. The findings also represent feedback heard in interviews and events.

The main takeaways are shared here:

- ▶ Limited Accessibility of Park-and-Rides and Transit Centers
  - Low-density land-use patterns of south King County necessitate the use of cars to access transit centers.
  - Parking supply is limited, with efforts to expand the amount of parking being expensive and conflicts with the aim of reducing automobile dependency.
- ▶ Limited Neighborhood Connections and First-Mile/Last-Mile Issues
  - A lack of neighborhood connections from residential areas to transit centers.
  - Lengthy transfers between routes, with many routes not operating outside peak periods.
- ▶ Limited each of Alternative Services
  - Most alternative services are limited to a specific population, with trips being restricted towards a single purpose.
  - A lack of funding for alternative services. While funding levels have remained stagnant, demand for these services increase every year.
- ▶ The Costs of Using Transit
  - While LIFT brings down the cost of fares, it remains costly for those with very low-income.
  - Many riders are dependent on bus tickets provided by human service agencies.
- ▶ Difficulty in Understanding the Transit System
  - Confusion regarding different fare structures, location of bus stops, and differences between transit agencies.
  - Limited wayfinding and signage at transit centers and park and rides make transfers more challenging.
- ▶ Language Barriers
  - Most signs at bus stops are English only, along with online trip planning tools.
  - The increase in population from immigrants and refugees is increasing the need for translations.
- ▶ Cost of Housing
  - An increase in housing costs is pushing lower-income individuals and their families to the periphery of King County.
  - These populations are moving to areas with less transportation and social services.

The report then provides a variety of recommendations to address needs.

## UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON ADVANCING BICYCLING FOR ALL

Website: [https://cbc-drupal-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/Tam-CBC\\_Capstone-Report\\_FINAL\\_180605.pdf?QmVo\\_eEoh.RUKTvN3D.ZcdUxKXWbPhWe](https://cbc-drupal-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/Tam-CBC_Capstone-Report_FINAL_180605.pdf?QmVo_eEoh.RUKTvN3D.ZcdUxKXWbPhWe)

Date: June 2018

**Summary:** This resource aimed to discover barriers to active transportation in the White Center unincorporated area of King County by conducting five listening sessions in four languages in White Center. Active transportation can include walking, biking, or other forms of self-powered transportation. This needs assessment is valuable because it conducted specific outreach to non-English speaking groups, which are often not represented adequately in community needs assessments. The languages chosen were English, Spanish, Somali, and Vietnamese.

### Insights:

- ▶ Across all five focus groups, recreation represented the most common reason for engaging in active transportation, followed by commuting to school or work and walking to access transit.
- ▶ Participants noted several barriers to walking and cycling with increased regularity in White Center. The top three reasons were concerns about safety such as crime or theft, car-related safety concerns such as speeding, and a lack of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Additional problems included poor road conditions, lack of education around biking, and visibility issues such as a lack of streetlights.

## URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE: A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR URBAN DISABLED AND ELDER NATIVES

Website: <http://www.uihi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/UIHI-Disabled-and-Elders-Needs-Assessment-Dec2018.pdf>

Date: December 2018

**Summary:** The Urban Indian Health Institute used a survey and interviews with key informants in King County to better understand the disabled and elderly American Indian / American Native community's needs. The survey and interviews sought to identify the community's most pressing health needs, the social services and assistance programs most utilized, what services could help better serve the community, and how long-term services could help.

**Insights:** Insights from this needs assessment cover several quality-of-life topics. The following are those that relate specifically to transportation and mobility:

- ▶ Many respondents indicated that they had fallen or were concerned about falls while using public transportation.

- ▶ The Access program's need for improvements was expressed – specifically shorter wait times and door-to-door service as many Elders have limited mobility.
- ▶ Improved transportation options would not only create easier access to medical services but would aid in connecting Elders with the community.
- ▶ In a question about what assistance this community is currently using and what types of help they would potentially use if offered, transportation assistance was the most identified assistance need among respondents (50.5% said they are currently using and 20.8% said they would respectively use).
- ▶ Better transportation options were one of the most important desired services. This mostly roots back to experiences with falls or injuries while trying to use public transportation with walkers.

## VOLUNTEER DRIVER SUMMIT EVENT SUMMARY

**Date:** October 2017

**Summary:** In October 2017, the South King County Mobility Coalition and multiple planning Committee partners hosted a Volunteer Driver Summit in Kent. The event was an all-day summit that brought together stakeholders to build awareness of volunteer driver programs, learn best practices, and strategize on this transportation resource's future. An estimated 60 people attended the event throughout the day. Sessions included a track for beginning programs on How to Recruit Volunteers alongside a Best Practices and Solutions track for existing programs, a funding streams panel, and a brainstorming session on recruitment.

**Insights:** Insights were gained mainly through the post-event survey and sessions during the event that were open to attendee feedback. While the event primarily focused on networking and learning, some needs were uncovered and are highlighted here:

- ▶ Volunteer drivers must be recognized for their work to strengthen volunteer driver program recruitment.
- ▶ Offering professional development opportunities for volunteers can strengthen their investment in an organization.
- ▶ Marketing efforts should highlight human-centered stories.
- ▶ Organizations need to have online applications for volunteers.
- ▶ Organizations need to have volunteer applications for non-English speakers.
- ▶ There is a need for more marketing outreach at churches and places of worship and private companies with employee volunteer programs.
- ▶ A streamlined referral process for volunteers across volunteer driver programs could be useful.
- ▶ There is the possibility to widen the possible volunteer driver pool by lessening eligibility requirements for the role and increasing the amount of training given.
- ▶ There is potential for volunteer driver programs to partner with TNCs to fulfill gaps.

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