

Metro Long Range Plan Visioning Event, March 31, 2015

Break Out Session Notes Highlights

Equity and Access

- ORCA can serve as an equalizer, as it improves access to transit. Access to transit translates to access to jobs, education, opportunity.
- King County Metro should do more to get ORCA cards into riders' hands – better promotions, more places to purchase them, lower costs
- All people should be treated equally through all of Metro's operations – accessibility, service, fare enforcement
- Transit is needed throughout the county to reach destinations from all origins

Education and Institutions

- A lot of students could be transit riders
- Metro work with institution's transit coordinators to customization programs, and incorporation technologies
- U-District: re-allocating transit service to better serve with changing transit network
- Integration with bike/pedestrian networks and bike storage
- Integrated technology that can help you choose what to take, i.e. tell me the cost/benefit of different modes
- Private and public partnerships to improve information sharing

Technology and Innovation

- How can technology make transit greener and faster?
- Passenger Information
 - Building on the success of ORCA
 - Trip planning
 - Consistency and good data
 - Funding and implementation systematically
 - Information like disruptions/delays
- Orca cards still being adopted by others?
 - Phone payment options
 - Near frequency payment options
 - Carpooling with other transit riders
 - On-demand transit
- Cashless and off-board fare payment
- Ad-supported stops

Future Policy and Funding

- Transit is important to growth
- Good funding sources are important
- Transit intersection w/ housing
- Grounded in comprehensive planning
- Revenue ideas:
 - Increase parking taxes to encourage bus riding and raise revenue
 - Employee hour tax
 - Low income fare doesn't go far enough – but in the right direction
 - Raising fares will discourage ridership
 - MUET
 - Parking tax
 - Charging for park & ride; sell, lease
 - Income tax
 - Advertising
 - Retail space

Business and Economy

- Ease of getting Orca pass can be an issue – keep it simple
 - Span of frequency can be barrier for reliance on transit
 - Accommodate 24-hr businesses
 - More bus priority (3rd Ave)
 - Purchase of ORCA cards at more stops
 - Real time information – including delays
- Overcrowding is a big issue for attracting business commuters

Integrating Transit Modes

- Integration = how transit agencies work together
 - ST3, +1M in region by 2040
 - What should we be thinking about?
- What is Metro thinking about vis-à-vis Sound Transit's plans?
- KCM + ST should have single fare structure
- How are we addressing first/last mile issues?
- How do we integrate car share, vanpool, etc.?
- Is there a long range strategy for planning?
- What is UW doing with the bus system with opening of Link light rail

**King County Long Range Plan
Community Visioning Workshop - March 31, 2015
Breakout session flip chart transcription**

Future Policy and Funding

- Transit important to growth
- Long range future
- Good funding sources important
- Unclear funding
- Transit intersection w/ housing
- Save our buses campaign
- Grounded in comprehensive planning
- Concerned about affordable housing, health of city; need to look at big picture
- What about income tax?
- Revenue ideas:
 - Increase parking taxes
 - Encourage bus riding
 - Raise revenue
 - Employee hour tax
 - Low income fare doesn't go far enough – but in the right direction
 - Raising fares will discourage ridership
 - MUET
 - Parking tax
 - Charging for park+ride; sell, lease
 - Income tax
 - Advertising
 - Retail space
- Sales tax is unstable
 - Not equitable
 - Want better info on finances
 - Is bus ride \$10
 - We need more park and rides → park and rides are full
 - No access after early morning
 - Pricing p=r as idea
 - Balance between appropriate price + discouraging riders
 - Can it be more efficient?
- International best standards for funding?
- Make ORCA cards free, pay for decorative cards

Integrating Transit Modes

- Integration = how agencies work together
 - ST3, +1M in region by 2040

- What should we be thinking about?
 - Strategies?
 - Goals?
 - Etc.?
- What is Metro thinking about vis-à-vis Sound Transit's plans?
- KCM + ST should have single fare structure + interface
- Why are there two transit orgs?
- 4 transit agencies in region – there should be one. Need to tie better to land use.
- Is there a long range strategy for planning?
- Is there a process for simpler branding (e.g., RapidRide, ST, KCM, etc.?)
- Integration is reciprocal
- Remember that not everyone has a smart phone in usability
- How are we addressing first/last mile issues?
- How do we integrate car share, vanpool, etc.?
- How do agencies address forecasting of ridership?
- How are we addressing transit dependents outside of typical transit areas?
- How are we planning beyond office workers?
- Here: not a seamless system (vs. Europe), frequency is low, loading speed is slow
- What are the obstacles to integrating ST, KCM, etc.?
 - Communication with the population
- What is UW doing with the bus system with opening of LRT?
- What is the relationship of tolling to transit?

Technology and Innovation

- Passenger Info
- Shared Transportation
- Payment Systems – off vehicle payment system
- How can technology make transit greener and faster?
 - Electrifying Transit Buses with batteries or other sources
- Trip Planning
 - Checking multiple sources
 - Real-time information
 - Electronic readers
- Technology Overload
 - Puget Sound trip planner app
 - Specific apps may give you info quicker
- Transit signal priority
- Passenger Information
 - Building on the success of OBA
 - Trip planning
 - Consistency and good data
 - Funding and implementation systematically
 - Information like disruptions/delays

- Integration between modes
- Route planning to determine when/where people are going
- Security and privacy
 - Aggregating data to determine trip patterns
 - Linking sensitive sources of data
- Origin and Destinations
- Orca cards still being adopted by others?
 - Phone payment options
 - Near frequency payment options
 - Carpooling with other transit riders
 - On-demand transit
- Electric shuttle systems to solve last mile
- Cashless and off-board fare payment
- Ad-supported stops
- Location-based passenger information for disruptions
- Screens at stations with real-time information
 - Includes ad-based revenue
- Bus transfers at stops

Education and Institutions

- Access to education
- Sustainability
- Parking on campus
- Connections
- Students don't live on campus
- Most educational institutions don't have enough housing for all students
- A lot of students could be transit riders
- This part of conversation was about how do we get those students who aren't riding transit to start? This led us to the topics of information sharing, technology, fares, managing parking on campus
- Cuts on Eastside in local routes hurting the students
- Subsidized bus fares for students
- Other transit options:
 - Vanpool
 - Ridematch
- Students often have economic constraints
- Orca lift
 - More assistance is needed
 - More awareness
- Introduce programs to attract ridership
- Metro working with institutional transit coordinators
 - More customization of programs
 - Incorporation of technologies

- Since information sharing, BC has 17% decrease in SOV trips
- U-District: re-allocating transit service to better serve with changing transit network
- Integration with bike/pedestrian networks
 - Bike storage
- Sharing the road
- Technology
 - Tell me the cost/benefit of different modes
- Integrated technology that can help you choose what to take
- Private and public partnerships to improve info-sharing
- Concurrency planning between different institutions to support future growth

Equity

Take aways

- *ORCA can serve as an equalizer, as it improves access to transit. Access to transit translates to access to jobs, education, opportunity.*
- *King County Metro should do more to get ORCA cards into riders' hands – better promotions, more places to purchase them, lower costs*
- *All people should be treated equally through all of Metro's operations – accessibility, service, fare enforcement*
- *Transit is needed throughout the county to reach destinations from all origins*
- Transit for all – pathway to opportunity
 - Provides access to jobs, education, etc.
- More dedicated routes to medical facilities
 - Additional service to medical facilities? Include medical facilities as part of a route that may have other destinations
- Different treatment for different people
 - Fare enforcement – light rail
 - Equal treatment for all
- Services should be available to and used by all
- ORCA LIFT is a great program – need more of these
 - Marketing & outreach needed to educate about its availability; only certain agencies distributing – better access needed
- Why is a picture needed on disabled card?
 - Why is it more likely to be abused than regular cards?
- More promotion of ORCA card – ability to link multiple systems; reduce minimum purchase requirement
- More service/network for non-commuters
- Fare system – fare more commensurate w/ length of trip – similar to Link - tap on/tap off
- Use of ORCA cards for infrequent riders/visitors
- Convenience & energy needed to utilize the system – multiple transfers needed, more frequent service needed
- Not enough service – over-crowded buses on popular routes

- Nicer buses serve the eastside
- Preference for a flat rate
- Service to health care, proximity to affordable housing
- Need for an all-day network
- Terminology used for ORCA “e-purse” “Puget pass” what do they mean?
 - Not all people use the traditional banking methods
- ORCA is not exciting – needs more marketing; make it more interesting
- Metro working with regional partners to promote non-motorized travel & ensure safety
- East-west connections are challenging ability to reach destinations
- Ability to connect between south and east King County
- Disability programs make a significant difference – makes transit affordable
 - Promote LIFT program
 - Better information about available services
- Affordable rates for health care patients
- Non-profits should invest in the community
- Fares – ORCA
 - Use
 - Availability
 - Promotion
 - Equal treatment
 - ORCA can serve as an equalizer for transit service
 - One regional card for all
- How can ORCA get into the hands of more people?
 - Success stories from other places?
 - How can Seattle be a model?

Business and Economy

- Employer benefits
 - Subsidized transit pass
 - Opportunity with large employers (First Hill)
 - Ease of getting Orca pass can be issue – keep it simple
- Transit access
 - Span of frequency can be barrier for reliance on transit
 - Access to non-downtown job centers
 - Enforcement an issue with bus lanes (Aurora)
 - Accommodate 24-hr businesses
 - More bus priority (3rd Ave)
 - Crowding (bus) at stops can be an issue at peak
 - Purchase of Orca cards at more stops
 - Real time information – incl. delay
 - Email updates useful, but can also cause their own jams
 - Push notifications via app?
 - Fare policy gradation for small businesses and small non-profits

- How econ. Dev. On South Seattle
 - Light rail
- Overcrowding is a big issue
 - Also for attracting business commuters (hard to do work on RR when standing room only)

Transit as an Equalizer: Orca Technology & Integration

- Smart cards if fares are equitable
- Transparent/creative
- Access to education can be a barrier
 - How can tech – an incentive
 - Transit <-> other modes?
- Invent services (pronto) for Last Mile
- Transit help employers help employees
- Help employees make an active option in other hours (non-peak)
- Frequent network
 - Integrate with other options
- Last mile other options – shared vehicles/G.R. Home
- Best exp. Of technology
 - What are our problems <-link-> to tech solutions
 - Tech just tools
- Metro/St Integration
 - How do other cities adapt to new transit
 - Big investment → more opportunity integrated
 - Total network – frequent
- Realistic funding sources?
- Through land development