

Human Services Bus Ticket Campaign

progress report & call to action

April 25, 2016



Progress!

- **The problem:** Toward the end of last year TRU started realizing that the expansion of Link Light Rail and the Metro bus service restructure would raise barriers for people who use bus tickets, since the tickets and paper transfers are not accepted as proof of payment on light rail.



- **The pressure:** After a letter and meetings with councilmembers produced inconclusive results, we started a petition and announced a public action for April 16th. The KC Exec's office quickly got in touch to tell us they were working on a solution.
- **The solution:** This “combo-ticket” will be available starting mid-June, at a cost \$11 for a booklet of 10. (It is priced at 20% of the value of the bus tickets, with no extra cost for the light rail pass.)

It will also be possible to swap out tickets already purchased. Until then, King County Metro has said that if organizations purchase Sound Transit Link day passes at \$1 each, they will throw in twice as many bus tickets for free. (Contact: Brandon Banks, brandon.banks@kingcounty.gov, 206-477-6664.)

More in the works...

- **Raising the cap:** Since we've heard from many organizations that they were not allocated their full ticket request this year, we have also urged county councilmembers to raise the cap. Councilmember Dave Upthegrove has been very responsive on this issue (call or email him to say thanks!) and we understand that legislation is in the works to raise the cap in the near future, hopefully in May.
- **Reducing the “match”:** Clearly many organizations are unable to purchase enough tickets not because of the cap, but because of the cost. We've begun push for the tickets to be priced at less than 20% of face value, and CM Upthegrove has expressed willingness to have this conversation. We don't have any firm commitment yet, though, so we need your help. If the cost of the tickets is a burden for your organization, please address this issue in the survey (see below)!

For the future

- **Card-based solutions:** One thing that has emerged clearly through this campaign is that for many low-income, no-income and homeless people, acquiring enough tickets to meet their transportation needs is a time-consuming and frustrating daily process. Although some need for single-use tickets will remain, many people could be better served by an unlimited monthly ORCA pass, or a card that could be refilled by social service organizations at a deep discount. We have suggested this to Metro and to councilmembers and they have expressed a willingness to explore options.

What you can do

- **Take the survey:** King County created an online survey of organizations that distribute the tickets, to help them assess the program and make decisions about raising the cap and reducing the match. The deadline was April 8, but since the word seems not to have got out to everyone, they have opened it back up till May 6. If you submitted a response between April 8 and April 25, it was not received (even though the survey still appeared to be live), so please fill it out again! The survey can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B73JFLB>
- **Stay in touch:** TRU will continue working with SKCCH, but if you'd like to get direct communications on this specific issue from TRU, email or call Katie Wilson (contact info below) and introduce yourself.