

Fare Engagement Update

*Board of Directors Meeting
March 25, 2021*



Agenda

Executive briefing with no action required at this time.

- Timeline
- Engagement:
 - Sounding Board
 - Community engagement sessions
- Current program planning updates
- Program risks
- Next steps

Upcoming Timeline

March



- Full Board update
- Community conversation and Sounding board results

April



- Finalize training plan for fare checkers & engagement staff
- Refining fare checker pilot
- Budget analysis

May



- Announce launch for fare checker pilot & youth program
- June 24 next board update

Community engagement process to date



Online and Onboard Surveys

◆ 1,100 completed onboard surveys

◆ 8,000 completed online surveys



Community Conversations

◆ 5 listening sessions in Pierce, King, and Snohomish Counties

◆ Community Report-Out

Engagement 2.0 topics- pilot program

Fare checker name, uniform training, and metrics

- Name and uniform of fare checkers?
- Training needs of fare checkers?
- Metrics for success beyond ST metrics?

Engagement 2.0 topics- policy

How to address non-payment

- Warnings - how many, how?
- Citations - amount and resolution pathway?
- How to address repeat non-payment?

Sounding Board

Sound Transit's online input community

- A panel of ~550 riders that participate in frequent research activities
- Focus on rider experiences and customer service aspects
- December activity on fare collection program and policy

Sounding Board

Sounding Board results

- 72% of respondents felt the current system is fair
- 46% do not feel that citations should be resolved in court. A large percentage neither agree nor disagree and 29% feel that they should be handled in court
- 48% of respondents are more likely to agree that the system should focus on education more than enforcement
- 30% support enforcement over education

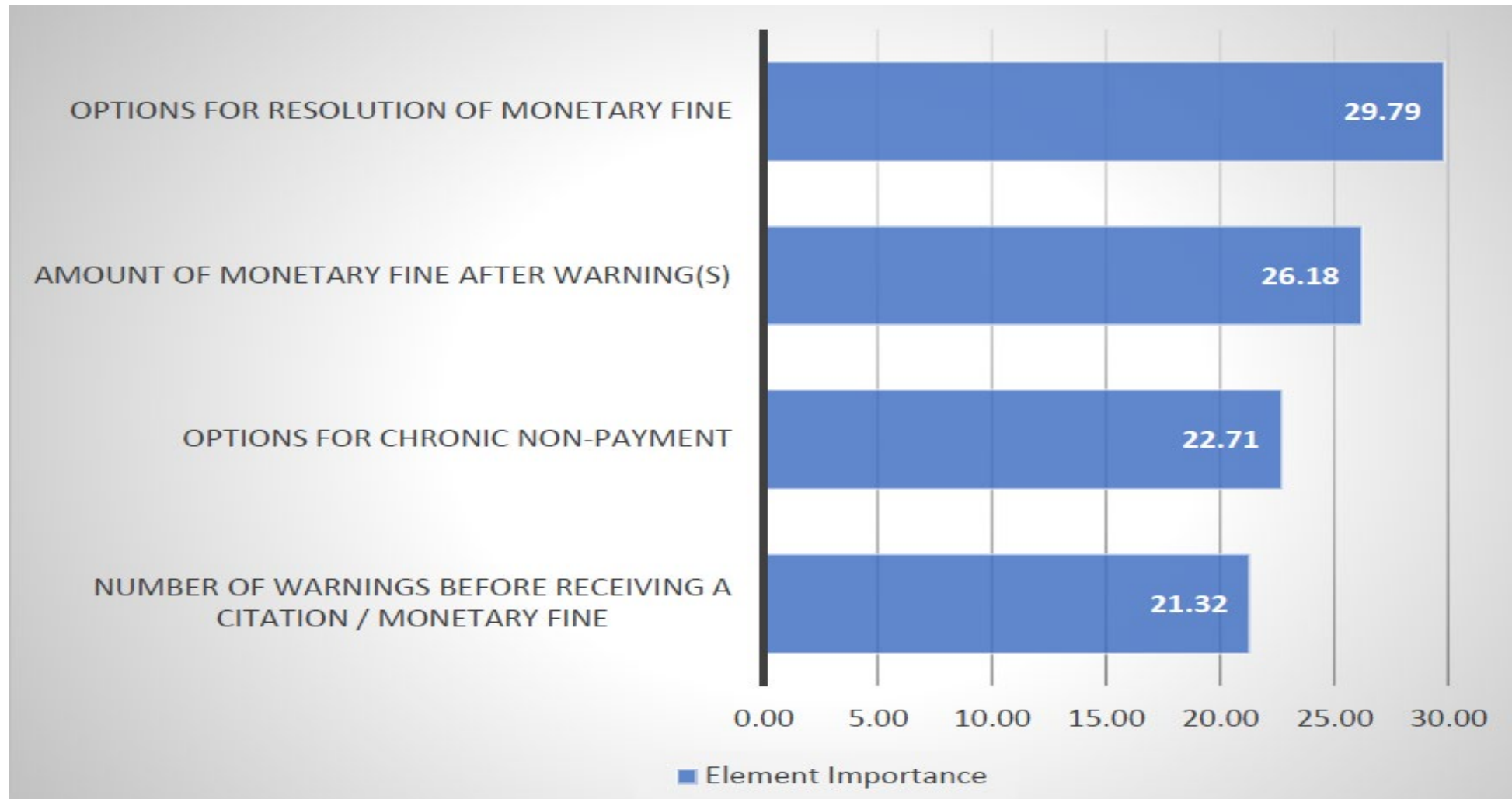
Sounding Board

Engagement vs Enforcement

"I strongly believe education instead of punitive action is the most important. There should be programs for people that are unable to pay."

"I support requiring fare payment and having some kind of 'stick' for non-payment of fare. I don't think people should go to jail or anything for not paying, but getting caught non-paying should be enough of a hassle that people will strongly avoid doing it."

Sounding Board



Sounding Board

Resolution

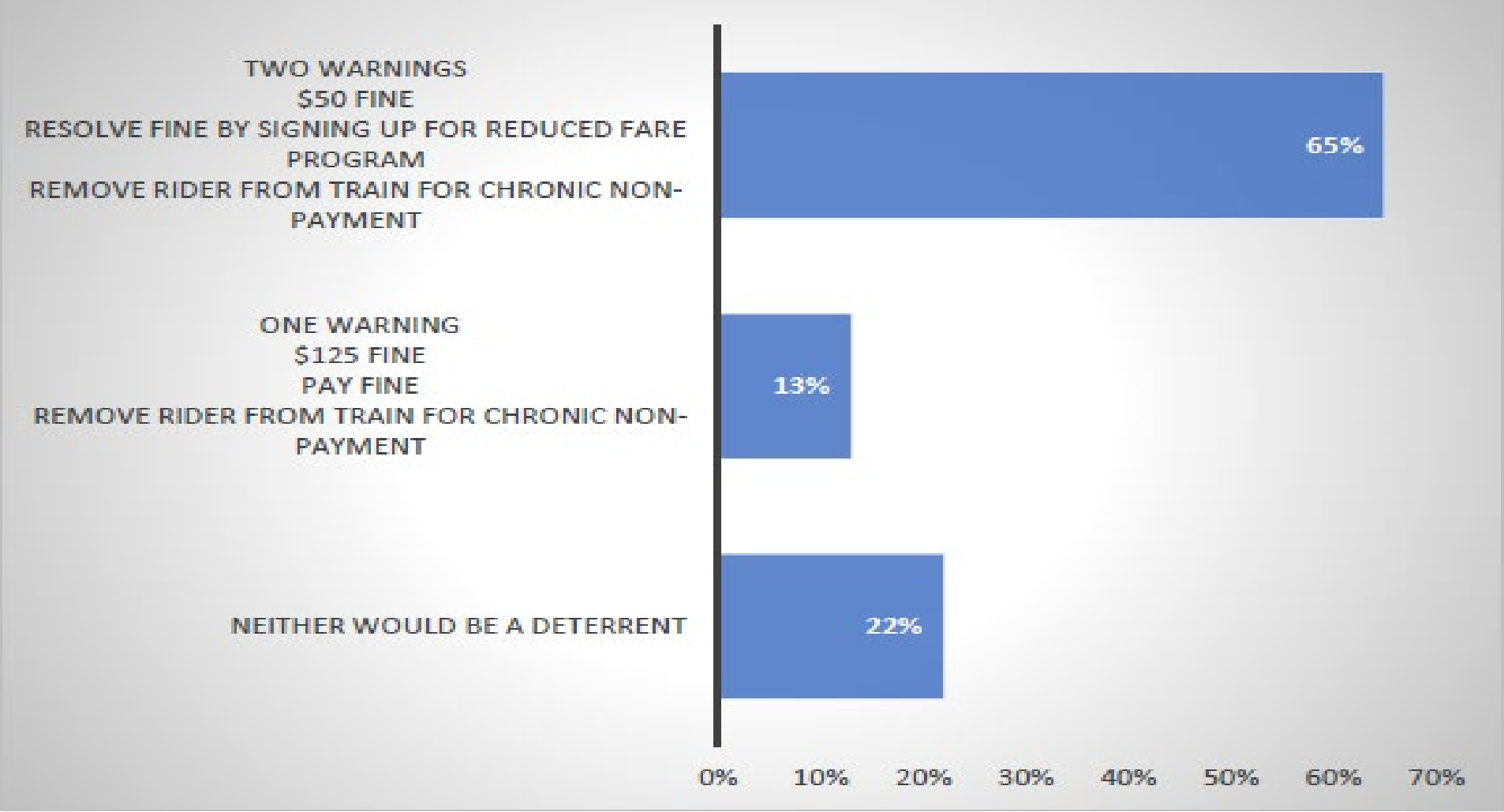
- Participants clearly feel that fines could be resolved if the passenger qualifies for and signs up for a reduced fare program
- They also feel that fines can be resolved if the passenger can show proof that they have a monthly pass on their ORCA Card or have added money to their E-Purse
- Distributing a \$5 pre-loaded ORCA card, payment of full fine, and attending a class on why it is important to pay, were not popular options.

Sounding Board

Warnings, Fine and Chronic Non-payment

- Participants clearly feel that a reasonable fine (between \$25 and \$50) is effective as both good policy and a likely deterrent.
- For chronic non-payment, respondents strongly favor an immediate consequence (removal from train) over a suspension.
- Two warnings are viewed as better policy than one in 12-month period.

Current policy vs preferred policy



Engagement updates

Community conversations 2.0

- Continuing engagement with stakeholders and black-led organizations

HB 1301

- Legislation under consideration in Olympia that would amend current RCW and allow more policy flexibility for the Sound Transit board

Criteria for Fare Checker Pilot

- Cost-efficient, timely, and feasible implementation
- Racial equity
- Customer-focused experience
- Rider safety and security
- Impact on fare evasion rates
- Community support

Program features in progress

- Review the role of fare enforcement officers to make customer service the top priority
- Change fare enforcement uniforms to project customer relations focus
- Review current training modules and protocols to prioritize training in customer service, de-escalation, and anti-bias training
- Bring fare checkers in-house
- Define parameters for times to suspend inspections during special circumstances, such as severe weather

Fare checker attire

The new fare checker pilot program will have different uniforms that are less like law enforcement



Fare checker training

ST has identified the following training

- Anti-bias/implicit bias*
- De-escalation*
- Strategies for youth*
- CPR/FA*
- Equity and Inclusion
- Mental health first aid training
- Assisting people in distress
- Disabilities sensitivity training

*FEO are currently trained in these areas

Potential Program Risks

- Competing priorities can create communication confusion
 - New ORCA payment system – launch/roll out
 - Northgate opening
 - Passenger confidence messages
- Staffing hire/retention of fare checkers
- Evasion rate

Next steps

- *Continued engagement sessions with community*
- *Youth Program*
- *Refine pilot checker program*
- *Next board presentation June 24*

Thank you.



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