



Resolution No. R2022-08

Amending the Adopted 2022 Budget for Fare Ambassador Program

Meeting:	Date:	Type of action:	Staff contact:
Executive Committee	04/07/2022	Recommend to Board	Mary Cummings, Chief Administrative Officer
Board	04/28/2022	Deferred to May	Russell Arnold, Chief Passenger Experience and Innovation Officer
Board	05/26/2022	Final Action	Sandee Ditt, Manager, Fare Engagement, Passenger Service and Accessibility

Proposed action

That (1) funding to continue the Fare Ambassador Program based on the pilot program initiated in August 2021 is approved through December 31, 2022 and (2) amends the Adopted 2022 Annual Budget to increase the Transit Operating budget by \$1,300,000 from \$440,862,228 to \$442,162,228 to account for the establishment and delivery of the Fare Ambassador Program in 2022.

Key features summary

- The Fare Ambassador Program was not included in the 2022 Annual spending for Transit Operations pending the outcome of the Fare Ambassador Pilot program that began in August 2021.
- The Fare Ambassador Program will be administered by the Passenger Experience Division within the Executive Department and will cover Link light rail, Tacoma Link, Sounder commuter rail, and Stride bus rapid transit.
- Forecasted spending includes:
 - Costs for ambassadors, supervisors and a manager (up to 56) materials and equipment through the end of the year
 - Marketing and communication materials
 - Other program support costs.
- This funding would support the Fare Ambassador program through the end of the year.
- After the implementation of a revised and adopted fare compliance program, staff will return with recommendations on the structure, cost and size (with a minimum of doubling the size of the current program) of a permanent Fare Ambassador program to the full board by the end of 2022.

Background

In 2019, Sound Transit began reviewing the agency's fare collection system based on community concerns. The agency evaluated fare collection policies and historic enforcement data and gathered community feedback to identify where improvements should be made.

The agency's extensive survey of passenger activity and review of existing Sound Transit policy, revealed that people of color were found to be disproportionately without fare and persons of color were

disproportionately more likely to be fined or referred to the court system than white or Caucasian passengers. As a result, the staff has recommended a suite of policy changes, budget actions, and fare changes to address the inequitable results comprehensively.

Informed by this analysis and community input, the agency developed a new fare engagement pilot project with the goal of preventing the inequitable effects that often result from unpaid fines and contact with the court system.

The Board adopted Motion No. M2020-74 directing staff to seek diverse voices in communities most impacted by fare compliance policies and complete further analysis to recommend to the Board an updated policy on fare compliance to supersede Resolution No. R2009-02 on fare enforcement. The agency has moved away from using the term fare enforcement towards fare compliance to better reflect the pilot project and updated policy considerations.

The Fare Ambassador program and proposed Fare Compliance Policy respond to the community and Board concerns. This action would continue the Fare Ambassador program consistent with the agency's goals to provide high-quality public transportation that is accessible to all and create a welcoming, respectful, and compassionate customer service approach to fare compliance that prioritizes passenger education and improved access to public transit.

The Board will also consider a separate action, Resolution No. R2022-07 to adopt an updated Fare Compliance Policy. This policy designates fare compliance personnel to monitor fare pursuant to RCW 81.112.210(2)(a) and establishes requirements for alternative resolution options for passenger interactions without proof of payment. It also commits the agency to establishing an alternative fare enforcement system pursuant to RCW 81.112.210(1)(b), which was amended by the legislature.

The Fare Ambassador Program will provide the fare compliance personnel needed to monitor fares under the proposed policy and test its effectiveness in increasing overall fare compliance.

Program Implementation

If this action is approved, Sound Transit will hire a Fare Resolution Policy Manager that will report to the Deputy Director of Passenger Success and will be responsible for implementation of the in-house adjudication program for violations issued by Sound Transit Fare Ambassadors. This internal resolution program will then provide service to riders for resolution of warnings, fines and civil infractions issued for non-payment of fare on Sound Transit proof-of-payment modes. Sound Transit is instituting Board-driven policy and process changes for fare compliance which includes the requirement that Sound Transit work directly with riders who have received penalties for non-payment of fare, ending the prior practice of referring non-compliant actions directly to the court system, which the Board has found to result in racially inequitable outcomes. This position will provide access to resources to support individuals to successfully resolve fare compliance infractions.

The Fare Engagement program will begin hiring and training fare ambassadors to issue fines and citations in order to assess the adopted fare compliance policy's effectiveness. Staff will also finalize and recommend that standard operating procedures and processes developed during the fare ambassador pilot program be adopted.

Fiscal information

This action will amend the annual Transit Operating budget by \$1,300,000 from \$440,862,228 to \$442,162,228, which will, in turn, increase the 2022 annual budget for the Executive Department by \$1,300,000 to establish and deliver the Fare Ambassador Program in 2022. The program will be managed and administered by the Passenger Experience Office within the Executive Department.

This resolution is part of the implementation of the Fare Ambassador program. Additionally, a program manager and non-labor costs for an internal resolution program is needed to implement the proposed fare compliance policy with new internal resolution options for passengers during this period.

The requested budget amendment to the 2022 Budget for these programs is \$1.3 million or 0.3 percent. Assuming that this program continues into the future, the impact on the long-term financial plan is estimated as \$443 million. These actions are being taken to recover revenues lost through fare non-compliance and prevent growing levels of non-compliance.

Disadvantaged and small business participation

Not applicable to this action.

Public involvement

Not applicable to this action.

Time constraints

A one-month delay would not significantly impact the timing of this project.

Prior Board/Committee Actions

Resolution No. R2021-21: Adopting the Proposed 2022 Budget and 2022 Transit Improvement Plan.

Environmental review – KH 3/31/22

Legal review – DB 4/5/22



Resolution No. R2022-08

A RESOLUTION of the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that (1) funding to continue the Fare Ambassador Program based on the pilot program initiated in August 2021 is approved through December 31, 2022 and (2) amending the Adopted 2022 Annual Budget to increase the Transit Operating budget by \$1,300,000 from \$440,862,228 to \$442,162,228 to account for the establishment and delivery of the Fare Ambassador Program in 2022.

WHEREAS, the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, commonly known as Sound Transit, was formed under chapters 81.104 and 81.112 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) for the Pierce, King, and Snohomish Counties region by action of their respective county councils pursuant to RCW 81.112.030; and

WHEREAS, Sound Transit is authorized to plan, construct, and permanently operate a high-capacity system of transportation infrastructure and services to meet regional public transportation needs in the Central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, in general elections held within the Sound Transit district on November 5, 1996, November 4, 2008, and November 8, 2016, voters approved local funding to implement a regional high-capacity transportation system for the Central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, based on community concerns about fare collection, Sound Transit began a process to review the agency's fare collection system based on community concerns, evaluate fare collection policies and historic enforcement data and gather community feedback to identify where improvements should be made; and

WHEREAS, the review found that under existing Sound Transit policy, persons of color were disproportionately more likely to be fined or referred to the court system than white or Caucasian passengers; and

WHEREAS, informed by this analysis and community input, the agency developed a new fare engagement pilot project with the goal of preventing the inequitable effects that often result from unpaid fines and contact with the court system; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the Board adopted Motion No. M2020-74 directing staff to seek diverse voices in communities most impacted by fare compliance policies and complete further analysis to recommend to the Board an updated policy on fare compliance to supersede Resolution No. R2009-02 on fare enforcement and develop recommendations for a new fare engagement program; and

WHEREAS, the Fare Ambassador program is consistent with the agency's goals to provide high-quality public transportation that is accessible to all and creates a welcoming, respectful, and compassionate customer service approach to fare compliance that prioritizes passenger education and improved access to public transit; and

WHEREAS, in December 2021, through Resolution No. R2021-21, the Board adopted the 2022 Budget and Transit Improvement Plan (TIP) authorizing annual spending for operating costs and project costs by category; and

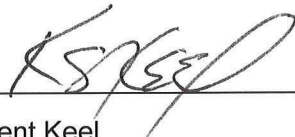
WHEREAS, the Board established an annual budget of \$444,304,103 for Transit Operations activities that was revised to \$440,862,228 as a result of the rebalance process; and

WHEREAS, increasing the Transit Operating budget by \$1,300,000 to cover anticipated 2022 spending will, in turn, increase the 2022 annual budget for the Executive Department by \$1,300,000 to establish and deliver the Fare Ambassador Program in 2022; and

WHEREAS, a two-thirds affirmative vote of the entire membership of the Sound Transit Board is required to amend the adopted 2022 budget.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority that (1) continuation of a Fare Ambassador Program based on the pilot program initiated in August 2021 is approved through December 31, 2022 and (2) the Adopted 2022 Annual Budget is amended to increase the Transit Operations budget by \$1,300,000 from \$440,862,228 to \$442,162,228 to account for the establishment and delivery of the Fare Ambassador Program in 2022.

ADOPTED by the Board of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority at a regular meeting thereof held on May 26, 2022.



Kent Keel
Board Chair

Attest:



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator