



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**June 26, 2018**

**Motion 15171**

**Proposed No. 2018-0255.3**

**Sponsors Dembowski, McDermott and Kohl-  
Welles**

1           A MOTION requiring the executive to transmit a report  
2           identifying opportunities to make public transit more  
3           affordable and accessible to people in need.

4           WHEREAS, the King County council has worked with the King County  
5           executive and Metro Transit to implement a number of programs to make public transit  
6           more affordable and accessible to people in need, and

7           WHEREAS, Ordinance 12643 authorized the sale of transit tickets to human  
8           services agencies at a discounted price to allow human services agencies to provide free  
9           or low-cost transit tickets to the people they serve, and

10          WHEREAS, Ordinance 12643 established the regional reduced fare program,  
11          which provides a reduced transit fare for people with disabilities and seniors over age  
12          sixty-five, and

13          WHEREAS, Ordinance 13480 authorized transit pass agreements with public  
14          school districts and established a no-charge child fare and a reduced-price youth fare for  
15          younger transit riders, and

16          WHEREAS, Ordinance 17757 authorized the use of region's transit fare card, the  
17          one regional card for all ("ORCA"), for a low-income fare for transit ("LIFT"), for people  
18          with household income of less than double the federal poverty level, and

19          WHEREAS, Motion 14772 approved a report outlining opportunities to make

20 transit more accessible to college students, including by extending the ORCA LIFT  
21 program to students meeting ORCA LIFT eligibility guidelines, and

22 WHEREAS, Motion 14998 directed Metro Transit to increase efforts to enroll  
23 eligible adults in the ORCA LIFT program before July 1, 2018, and

24 WHEREAS, Ordinance 18609 increased the total discount to be provided under  
25 human services transit ticket program, beginning in 2018, to distribute discounted fare  
26 payment media to human service agencies, and

27 WHEREAS, Ordinance 18610 authorized Metro Transit to waive the three dollar  
28 administrative fee for the regional reduced fare program for people with disabilities and  
29 seniors over age sixty-five, and

30 WHEREAS, Metro Transit has currently implemented transit pass agreements  
31 with nearly one thousand local employers to provide ORCA cards to their employees, and

32 WHEREAS, Metro Transit has also implemented an ORCA multifamily  
33 development passport program, through which owners of multifamily properties can offer  
34 ORCA cards to their residents, and

35 WHEREAS, Metro Transit has currently implemented transit pass agreements  
36 with five public school districts, with costs paid for by the school districts, through which  
37 eligible students, with eligibility determined by income level or distance from school, are  
38 provided with an ORCA card that allows them free fare on transit during the school  
39 months, and

40 WHEREAS, the city of Seattle has provided funding to supplement the transit  
41 pass agreement for the Seattle public school district so as to provide eligible students,  
42 who are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and are in grades six through

43 twelve, with an ORCA card that allows them free fare on transit year-round, and

44 WHEREAS, in 2017, Metro Transit implemented a summer reduced ORCA youth  
45 fare that was one-third of the regular youth fare for young people between the ages of six  
46 and eighteen during the summer months, and

47 WHEREAS, Metro Transit is planning a 2018 summer ORCA youth pass pilot  
48 program for the Highline and Lake Washington school districts, through which high  
49 school students who are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and are working  
50 during summer 2018 will receive an ORCA card that will allow them free fare on transit  
51 during the summer months, and

52 WHEREAS, the city of Seattle has announced the intention to fund the ORCA  
53 opportunity program, which will provide ORCA cards that will allow free fare on transit  
54 year-round to all high school students in the Seattle public school district, as well as  
55 college students who are participating in the Seattle Promise program, with a contribution  
56 to be provided by Metro Transit during the first year of program operations, and

57 WHEREAS, Metro Transit is engaged in an ongoing work program related to  
58 fares, which aims to increase equity and social justice opportunities, while increasing  
59 affordability, speeding passenger boarding, and increasing safety for bus drivers and  
60 riders, and

61 WHEREAS, the King County council and King County executive have expressed  
62 the goal of working with Metro Transit to provide additional opportunities to make public  
63 transit more affordable and accessible to people in need;

64 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

65 A. The executive is requested to submit a report that provides an update on its

66 work program related to fares and that includes information on additional opportunities to  
67 make public transit more affordable and accessible to people in need, who include low-  
68 and moderate-income people and each category of persons identified in section B.

69 B. The report should include, but not be limited to:

70 1. Opportunities to make public transit more affordable and accessible to youth,  
71 including options to extend transit pass agreements to additional public school districts,  
72 to offer other reduced-fare or no-fare options for youth;

73 2. Opportunities to make public transit more affordable and accessible to  
74 students in postsecondary, job training and apprenticeship programs, including options to  
75 extend transit pass agreements to local colleges, universities, postsecondary programs,  
76 job training, or apprenticeship programs;

77 3. Opportunities to make public transit more affordable and accessible to  
78 residents of subsidized housing, including options to implement ORCA multifamily  
79 development passport programs with local public housing authorities or non-profit  
80 housing developers for their residents; and

81 4. Opportunities to make public transit more affordable and accessible to low-  
82 income employees, including options to implement transit pass agreements with local  
83 labor unions for employees working for employers that do not provide a transit pass  
84 program, or to franchisees or other types of employers of low-wage workers that have not  
85 historically provided transit pass programs.

86 C. For each of the opportunities identified in section B. of this motion, the report  
87 should include information about the potential to implement pilot projects in conjunction  
88 with the work program on fares. It should also include, for each opportunity, but not be

89 limited to:

- 90 1. A potential timeline for each identified opportunity;
- 91 2. A cost estimate or range, including information about potential opportunity  
92 costs, including but not limited to potential implications for fare box recovery and  
93 regional service delivery;
- 94 3. A list of potential partners, with an estimate of the share of program costs  
95 each partner could be expected to cover;
- 96 4. Information about how the identified opportunities would align with King  
97 County's equity and social justice goals; and
- 98 5. An assessment of how identified opportunities could provide countywide  
99 benefits, consistent with the goals of geographic value identified in the Strategic Plan for  
100 Public Transportation 2011-2021, as updated by Ordinance 18301, or other adopted  
101 county policy.

102 D. The report shall also include the information on very-low-income fare options  
103 required by Ordinance 18409, Section 115, Proviso P1, including but not limited to:

- 104 1. A study of the feasibility of establishing a very-low-income Metro fare for  
105 individuals who are in households with incomes of two hundred percent or less of the  
106 federal poverty level and are unable to afford the ORCA LIFT fare;
- 107 2. Estimates of changes in ridership, fare revenue and farebox recovery ratio  
108 resulting from the implementation of a very-low-income Metro fare;
- 109 3. Strategies to minimize any impacts on the farebox recovery ratio;
- 110 4. Analysis of how implementing a very-low-income Metro fare will effectuate  
111 the county's Equity and Social Justice Initiative; and

112           5. The financial and technical considerations that would affect implementation  
113 of the very-low-income Metro fare program.

114           E. The executive should file the report required by this section by September 27,  
115 2018, in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council,  
116 who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the

117 council chief of staff, the director of legislative analysis and the lead staff for the mobility  
118 committee, or its successor.  
119

Motion 15171 was introduced on 5/21/2018 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 6/25/2018, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles and Ms. Balducci  
No: 0  
Excused: 1 - Mr. Gossett

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:



Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council



**Attachments:** None