



***Fare Enforcement  
Overview  
Presentation to the  
City of Seattle Transit Advisory Board***

July 2019



# Sound Transit is regional

- Sound Transit serves jurisdictions within Pierce, Snohomish and King counties
- Our service partners include Pierce Transit, Community Transit, and King County Metro

# Sound Transit Board of Directors

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Redmond Mayor

**Kent Keel**  
University Place Mayor

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Snohomish Executive

**Dave Upthegrove**  
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King County Councilmember

**Victoria Woodards**  
Tacoma Mayor

# *Fare policy applies everywhere we serve*

Everett 

Lynnwood

Woodinville

Bothell

Kenmore

Mountlake Terrace

Shoreline

Lake Forest Park

Edmonds 

Mukilteo 

Kirkland

Redmond

Sammamish

Bellevue

Newcastle

Mercer Island

Renton

Issaquah

Burien

Seattle  

Tukwila 

SeaTac 

Angle Lake 

Kent 

Des Moines

Auburn 

Federal Way

Sumner 

Puyallup 

Bonney Lake

Tacoma  

Lakewood 

DuPont

A light rail train is stopped at a station platform. The train is white with a teal stripe and has the number '139B' on its side. The words 'METRO TRANSIT' are visible on the front of the train. The platform has a metal railing in the foreground and a yellow tactile strip along the edge. The background shows the station structure and some overhead equipment. The text 'Our current fare enforcement program' is overlaid in a large, white, italicized font across the center of the image.

***Our current fare  
enforcement program***

# *ST Fare Enforcement – Board Adopted Policy*

- Adopted in 2009, the Board established procedures to assure fare payment on ST's barrier-free system by:
  - Designating fare enforcement officers to enforce fare payment
  - Establishing procedures to address repeat evaders, and use of a standard civil infraction form and fine of \$124
  - Authorizes CEO to establish, monitor and update fare enforcement procedures



# *Fare Enforcement - Program Priorities*



**1. Customer Service** | *Treating every customer equally and with respect*

**2. Security of ST Passengers and Property** | *Responding to potentially dangerous situations to keep people safe*

**3. Enforcement of fare** | *Since fares do not cover the full cost of service, ensuring that customers pay for a portion of the service they receive*

# Current Inspection Procedure

Fare enforcement officers enter train car from both ends, and announce that they will be checking fares. Starting from each end, officers check every rider, working back toward the center of the vehicle



- Current procedure adopted in 2010 to ensure equal treatment of all passengers, and to eliminate of possibility of unfair “profiling” practices



# *Process for Repeat Evasion*

*Within a rolling 12-month period:*

- **1<sup>st</sup> contact** | Warning issued; recorded in ST Fare Enforcement Database
- ● **2<sup>nd</sup> contact** | Civil infraction issued; \$124 ticket
- ● ● **3<sup>rd</sup> contact** | Civil infraction issued; \$124 ticket
- ● ● ● **4<sup>th</sup> contact** | Theft of service; law enforcement processes criminal charge

# Performance Data - What We Track



- Inspection rates
- Ridership
- Evasion rates
- Estimated loss due to fare evasion
- Demographics of evaders
- Complaints
  - Process vs. Conduct
    - Conduct: Bias vs. Professionalism

# Inspections and Citations

## Total ridership and inspections

**2016**

Ridership:  
23,298,616

■ **Inspections:**  
1,389,148 (5.9%)

**2017**

Ridership:  
27,618,117

■ **Inspections:**  
1,375,091 (4.9%)

**2018**

Ridership:  
29,036,077

■ **Inspections:**  
2,542,173 (8.76%)

## From total inspections

**Evaders:** 42,647

**Warnings:** 38,794

**Citations:**  
3,853

**Evaders:** 48,112

**Warnings:** 44,366

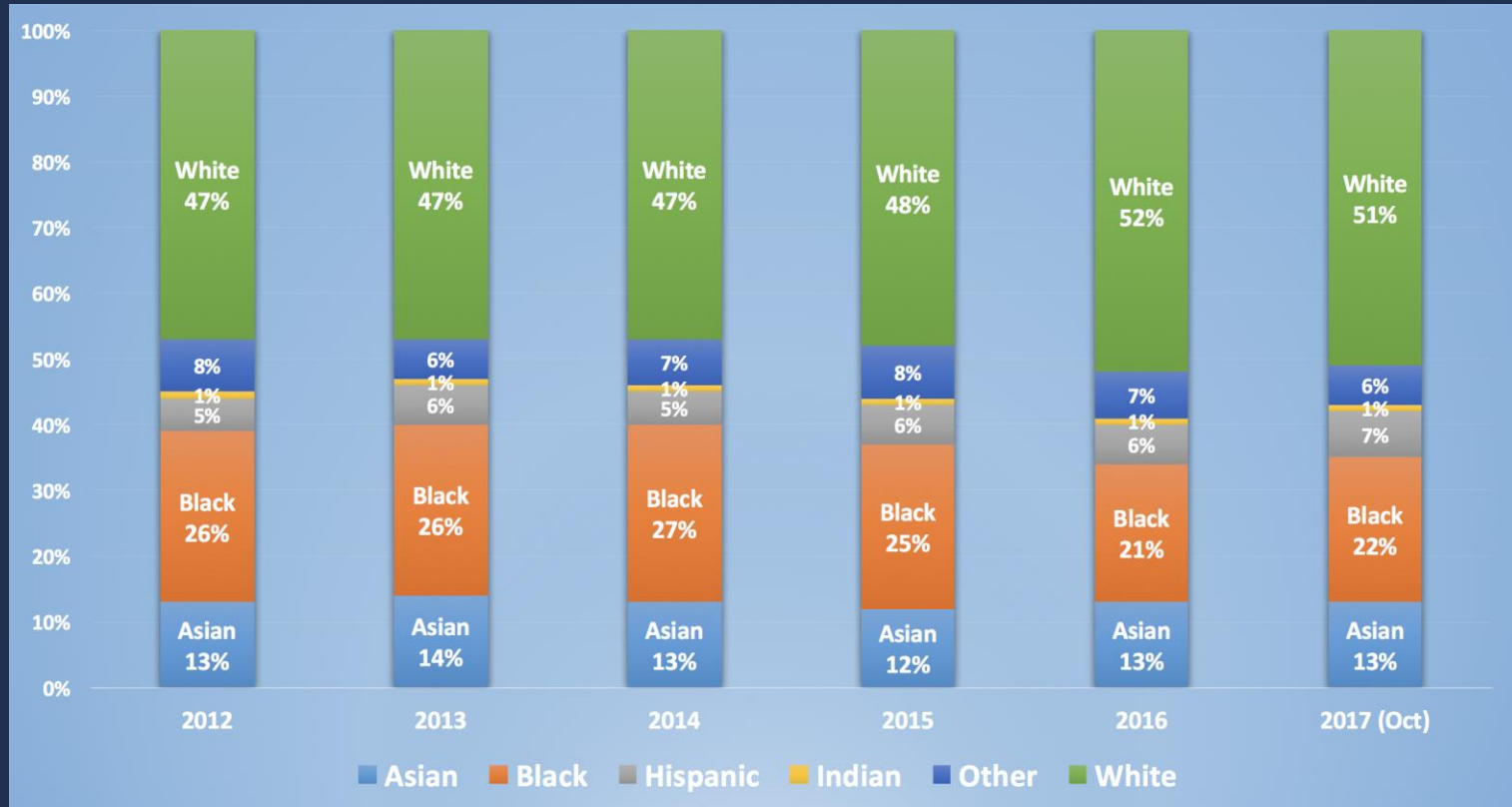
**Citations:**  
3,746

**Evaders:** 63,021

**Warnings:** 58,098

**Citations:**  
4,923

# Demographics of Fare Evaders



# *Performance Data - What We Still Need To Know*

- Demographics, including housing status and income, of ST ridership as a whole
- How many citations are resolved and the impacts of unresolved citations
- Region-wide community perspective of the program and needs
- Barriers to payment and riding patterns for those who do not or cannot pay
- Training effectiveness for fare enforcement officers

# *ST Interdisciplinary Working Group*

- **Established in February 2019**
- **Participants represent:** CEO's Office, Public Safety & Operations, Communications, Customer Experience, Government and Community Relations, Equity and Inclusion, Legal & Title VI

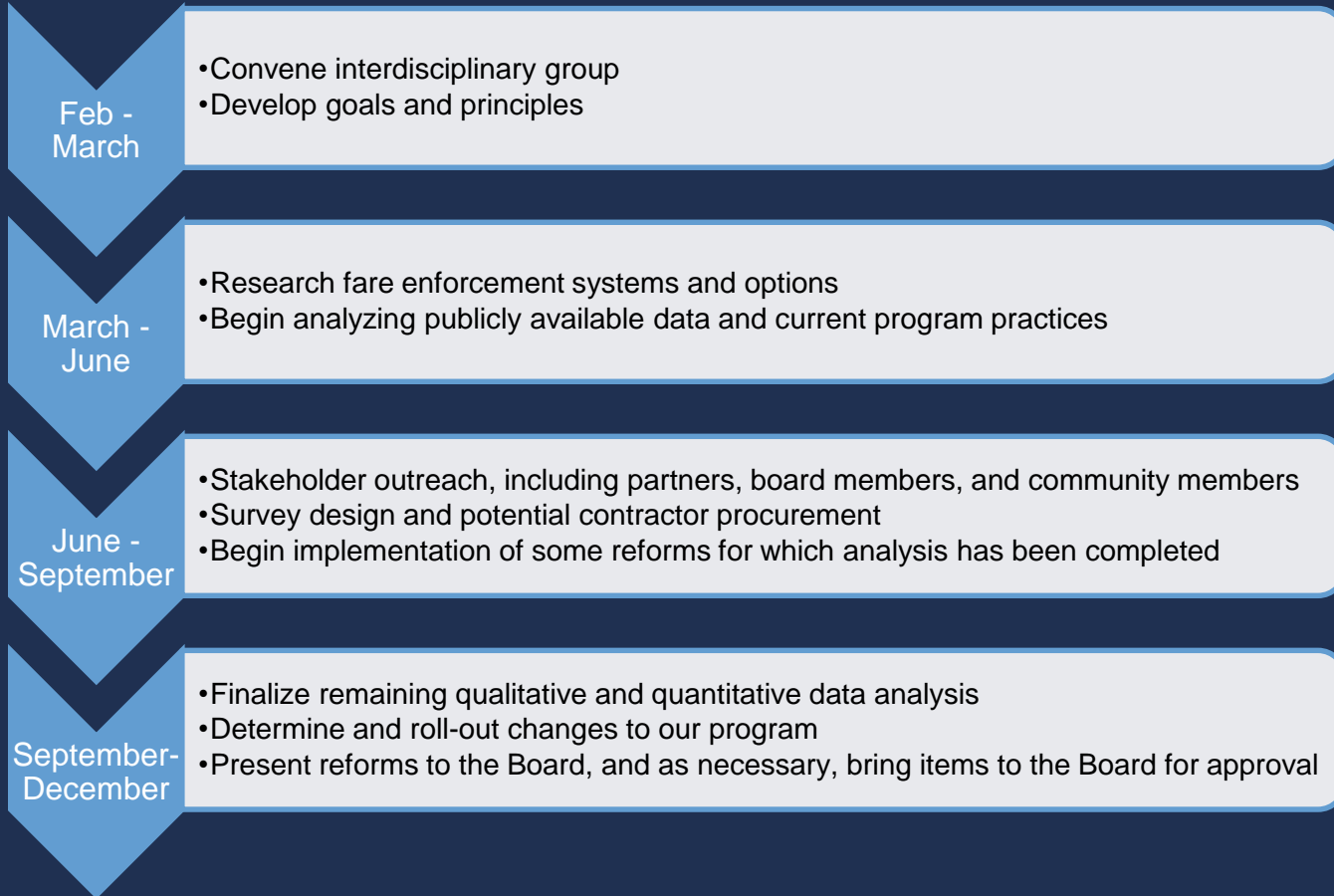


# *ST Interdisciplinary Working Group*

**VISION:** A system where everyone taps—where everyone who has fare media can get to where they want to go, and everyone who needs fare media can get access to it.

**MISSION:** To understand the impacts of our current program, and to develop recommendations that provide an equitable and customer-focused experience for our riders while ensuring strong financial stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

# Work Group Timeline



# Proposed Fare Enforcement Regional Engagement

GOALS FOR ENGAGEMENT	Develop shared principles, goals, evaluation criteria, program options	Feedback on program options, evaluation, public feedback, conduct focus groups, input on survey	Report back, share results, finalize program	Finalize program and board action
Audiences	July	Aug	Sept	Oct-Dec
Riders	Develop and review survey	Finalize survey for deployment	Deploy region-wide survey of riders	Analyze and present results
Community- people of color and people experiencing poverty*	Identify participants and start to form groups	King initial focus group  Snohomish initial focus group discussion  Pierce initial focus group discussion	King County focus group closing session  Snohomish focus group closing session  Pierce focus group closing session	Report back
Stakeholder engagement	Engage with Transit Access Coalition (TAC) members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seattle King County Coalition for the homeless, TCC, SAGE, TRU, Downtown Seattle Association</li> </ul>	Pierce stakeholder meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tacoma on the Go, PT CTAG, board identified groups</li> </ul> Snohomish stakeholder meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Alliance of SC, SC Transportation Coalition, board identified groups</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobility Partnership- KCM, PT, CT</li> </ul>	Report back get further input	Report back

\*Equity & Inclusion will stand up community groups for each County. Fare enforcement focus group will be first topic for these groups.

# *Sample Stakeholder Feedback*

- People with very low or no income cannot afford to pay fare, but still have mobility needs
- Many people may not know what payment options, subsidies, benefits or programs are available to them
- Fare enforcement officers are perceived as aggressive or intimidating by some riders, including those with limited English skills, those experiencing homelessness, and visitors
- Some riders feel that fare enforcement officers may be biased
- Citations are too expensive and do not fit the “crime”
- Citation resolution process may be confusing and time-consuming, especially since all cases are heard in Shoreline only

# *Areas of Opportunity*

# *Guiding Principles*

In addition to Sound Transit's vision and mission,

- Sound financial stewardship, as indicated by high compliance, low evasion, and achieving farebox recovery targets
- Equity and fairness to our riders, stakeholders, community members, and taxpayers
- Continuous improvement that is measurable and accountable
- Sound Transit's values, including Customer Focus, Inclusion and Respect, and Safety



# *Areas of Exploration*

## Increase access to fare media

- Invest in and execute robust outreach, including to hard-to-reach communities, to expand awareness and access to fare media
- Offer fare evaders on-the-spot education about ORCA Lift or other relevant programs

## Improve opportunities for resolution

- Increase the number of warnings and/or reduce amount of time for infractions to accumulate
- Board considers changing fine structure and levels
- Administer resolution of fare violations internally, with non-monetary options
- Request expansion of available court venues for resolution

# *Areas of Exploration*

## Improve accountability

- Review fare enforcement policy, training, and practices, including during inclement weather events
- Collect new data to better understand rider behavior and ensure that our policy and practices are effective responses to the root causes of fare evasion
- Implement agency-wide equity tool

# Questions?

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*Thank you*



**SOUNDTRANSIT**