

Low-Income and Minority Populations in King County

Low-income definition:

ORCA LIFT and Rider/Non-Rider: Metro uses \$35,000 per year as a threshold in the Rider/Non-Rider, as it is approximately the 200% Federal Poverty Level for an average household in King County. The average household size in King County is 2.42.

Service guidelines: People with household incomes

of less than the federal poverty level (as established by United States Health and Human Services Department).

Household size	Maximum income for low-income definition	
	Service Guidelines	ORCA LIFT & Rider/Non-Rider
1	\$11,770	\$23,540
2	\$15,930	\$31,860
3	\$20,090	\$40,180
4	\$24,250	\$48,500
5	\$28,410	\$56,820
6	\$32,570	\$65,140
7	\$36,730	\$73,460
8	\$40,890	\$81,780

Minority definition: In Metro's service guidelines, minority is defined as all groups except White, non-Hispanic. The Rider/Non-Rider Survey does not define minority, however it does ask the self-identified race/ethnicity of those surveyed.

Minority and low-income populations in King County:

Minority population in King County:*

	Total (persons)	%
Minority	707,773	36%
Non-minority	1,266,794	64%
Total	1,974,567	100%

Low-income population in King County:*

	Below poverty level	%	Below 200% poverty level	%
Low-income	222,813	11%	466,050	24%
Total	1,945,421	100%	1,945,421	100%

* All data derived from the American Community Survey, 2009-2013.

Service to designated low-income and minority routes: A route is designated as low-income or minority if a greater percentage of the route's boardings occur in low-income or minority census tracts than the countywide average. A low-income or minority census tract is defined as a tract that has a greater percentage of low-income or minority population than the countywide average.

More than half of all transit service provided by Metro is within walking distance (1/4 mile) of low-income and minority populations:

	# of routes	Service hours	% of annual hours
Low-Income*	87	1,770,000	50%
Minority	99	1,880,000	52%

* Low-income as defined in the service guidelines (below the federal poverty level).

April 16, 2015

Service Guidelines Task Force
Dept. of Transportation
Metro Transit Division
King Street Center
201 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Service Guidelines Task Force:

Since the discussion of proposed cuts to transit service began last year the 10 community and technical colleges in King County have been in contact with Metro and the King County Council with our concerns.

In determining how cuts would be made Metro applied a point system based on several factors including 'Employer' and 'Social Equity'. The community and technical colleges were given points in the Employer category. This was appropriate since the colleges are major employers in their areas. In the case of Lake Washington Institute of Technology we are the fifth largest employer in Kirkland.

Not only are we major employers, but we are also significant players in the area of social equity. Even if our surrounding neighborhoods do not meet the definition applied to this category many of our students come from economically disadvantaged areas. Getting an education to set them on a path to a good career is the first step in breaking the cycle of poverty.

We understand that the Social Equity category is based on where the riders are coming from. In the case of higher education, we believe consideration should also be given to where riders are going. Our colleges offer special programs that draw students from throughout King County and beyond. In just one of our colleges, students come from over 100 different zip codes.

We believe that the community and technical colleges should be given points in the social equity category regardless of the demographics of the community where they are physically located. If that proposal is not acceptable, then we request that you give additional points within the Employer category for higher education institutions.

Attached is demographic information that we shared with the King County Council on the students served by the 10 community and technical colleges in King County. Some of the information is voluntary so not every student in that category has elected to self-identify. Therefore the numbers are likely higher than stated in this report.

As you consider this issue we ask that you keep in mind our students, and the economic contribution they will make to our regional economy once they have completed their education.

Sincerely,



Dr. Amy Morrison Goings, President

Enclosure: Student Demographic Information

Selected Student Demographic Information for the 10 Community & Technical Colleges in King County

The Community and Technical Colleges in King County work with many disadvantaged and underserved populations. Most of these students do not live in the immediate neighborhood of the college they attend and therefore must commute.

Opportunity Grant program is designed to support and encourage low-income students to complete a degree or certificate by filling in funding gaps not addressed by existing financial aid programs.

Opportunity Grant	1,619
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A **Worker Retraining** student is a dislocated worker enrolled in training to gain skills to re-enter the workforce.

Worker Retraining	5,233
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WorkFirst students are TANF recipients enrolled in college for short-term vocation training.

WorkFirst	2,472
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Students with Disabilities	2,806
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Immigrants & Refugees	8,011
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Working Part-time	13,830
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Seeking Employment	14,120
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Students with less than a High School degree (Not running start or other H.S programs)	614
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Single with Children	4,331
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TOTAL	53,036
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Some Metro service to be restored

By [KATIE METZGER](#)

Mercer Island Reporter Staff Writer

April 21, 2015 · 4:00 PM

0 Comments



The shuttle route runs from the North-end of the Island into First Hill and downtown Seattle. / KING COUNTY METRO

Mercer Island commuters who found their bus routes to Seattle cut last September may soon have an option for alternative Metro service.

The city has been working with King County Metro over the last few months “to design and implement alternative transportation services that will help mitigate for service lost on routes 202 and 205, including a community shuttle and innovative ridesharing solutions,” according to the City Council’s April 20 agenda bill.

Per City Council approval of an agreement with King County Metro and the City of Seattle, a Mercer Island Shuttle will operate between S.E. 46th Street and Island Crest Way and downtown Seattle via Seattle’s First Hill, with flexible on-call service to the Shorewood neighborhood. The County is looking at leasing additional park-and-ride spaces near the intersection of S.E. 46th Street and Island Crest Way.

The shuttle will have five trips in the morning and five trips in the afternoon—running about every 30 minutes between 6:15-8:15 a.m. and 4-6:30 p.m.—to and from Seattle, and scheduled to align with riders’ desired arrival and departure times.

The Mercer Island Shuttle will be designated as Metro route number 630 and be included in Metro’s Online Trip Planner. The 19-passenger vehicle will be operated by Hopelink, a contract service provider with Metro. It will have a rack for 2 bikes in front and be equipped with a lift and ORCA card reader. Standard Metro fares apply.

Last year, Mercer Island lost 75 percent of its Metro service as part of budget and service reductions made by King County. Metro set aside funding for an Alternative Services program, geared toward putting service of the

right size, scale and type into each community served. City staff and Mayor Bruce Bassett worked with Metro to find a solution for Island commuters.

There were three possible services for Mercer Island: a community shuttle that would connect North Mercer to First Hill and downtown, a TripPool that would provide flexible commuter options to South Mercer Island, where Metro would own and operate the vehicles, or a community van that would provide customized transportation to Shorewood Heights, where Shorewood Heights would schedule and run the van.

The city conducted a survey of displaced riders to find out what would work best. Ashley Arai from King County Metro spoke about alternative services at the Council's January planning session, noting that core travel, commuter and basic mobility needs were assessed through the survey.

There were 240 survey respondents, 90 percent of which said they would be interested in using a new shuttle, and 65 percent of which said they would use the shuttle three or more times per week.

The city will contribute \$80,000 annually (50 percent of which the city of Seattle will reimburse to Mercer Island as part of its \$3 million fund for regional transit partnerships) with Metro funding the remaining costs.

Mercer Island's 2015-2016 adopted budget includes \$150,000 per year as a placeholder in the Street Fund for transit funding, an amount proposed by Bassett and Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz at the planning session.

The funding source for the shuttle service will be the newly instituted Transportation Benefit District (TBD) vehicle license fee, which is \$20 per car—though that could go up to \$40 if certain measures in the State Legislature's proposed transportation package pass.

The city's website will be updated to reflect that "TBDs can fund transportation improvements. Transportation improvement is defined to include not only maintenance and improvements of arterial streets, but also investments in public transportation."

The shuttle service will run for an initial demonstration period from June 8, 2015 to Sept. 11, 2017, and be evaluated on cost per rider, trip utilization rate, daily ridership and rider and stakeholder satisfaction survey results.

As part of a demonstration project, Metro staff will be required to report to the King County Council and the Mercer Island City Council with progress.

Updates from April 20 City Council meeting:

The shuttle will provide 2,600 annual hours of service and cost \$300,000, Metro staff said.

Leasing 28 parking spaces at the Congregational Church will cost \$2,000 per year, which will be covered by Metro.

Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz noted that he was worried about the shuttle filling up at the First Hill Park and Ride with riders who are not Mercer Island residents. He also said that between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., the shuttles would be empty, and that the city should look at using them to transport people from the South to the North end of the Island.