

## **Follow Up on April 30 Task Force Meeting Discussion about Social Equity**

At the Task Force meeting on April 30<sup>th</sup> several ideas began to emerge regarding the current social equity gaps in transit services, possible changes to the service guidelines methodology, and possible changes to the service planning and community engagement process used by Metro when it considers changes in transit services.

### **Possible Social Equity Gaps in the Current System of Services**

- *Youth, disabled and elderly.* The Guidelines do not seem to explicitly address those populations.
- *While the current transit system prioritizes getting workers to major job centers, we should also make sure that low-income workers are getting to job centers throughout the county.* It was suggested that the current system does not account well for low-income workers attempting to travel between suburban centers (from where they work to where they live). Multiple transfers may be required, or workers may need off-peak transit services for shift jobs.

### **Suggestions for Possible Changes to Service Guidelines**

- *Consider placing a stronger emphasis on whether corridors serve low-income areas.* There was discussion about the two factors that are used to conduct the social equity analysis of corridors: Riders in Low Income Areas and Riders in Minority Areas. It was suggested that by focusing on low income areas a priority would be placed on those most in need of transit service, cutting across ages, races and ethnicities. For example, some minority census tracts are not low income neighborhoods. (NOTE: In discussions with staff after the meeting it was noted that both federal law and county policy require that Metro consider both the race and income factors when considering social equity.)
- *Create a point system that allows for a scaling of points,* depending on the number of boardings. The current system awards either “0” or “5” points for boardings in low income areas, and “0” or “5” points for boardings in minority areas. A system of scaling would provide more graduation to the scoring system.

### **Suggestions for Possible Changes to Service Planning and Community Engagement**

- *Use the service planning and community engagement process to more thoroughly and explicitly address issues regarding origin and destination, including frequency of service.* It was suggested that it will be very difficult to incorporate a list of destinations in the Service Guidelines methodology. However, a data base of destinations could be used to explicitly engage communities in discussions about key destinations that are part of a social safety net and should be incorporated into the service planning process.

- ***Use the planning process to better identify the needs of those taking the transit trips.***  
For example, it was suggested that the planning process could be used to identify impediments to service access, such as grade changes for elderly or disabled populations using transit.
- ***Identify potential new community partnerships that would support transit options for low income workers.*** It was suggested that there may be opportunities to work with additional employers and others to create partnerships for fixed route or alternative services.

DRAFT