

EQUITY AND TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Outreach Summary | December 2015

To learn more about the effects of selected transportation revenue sources on equity, Transportation Futures Task Force staff conducted outreach throughout the Puget Sound area.

The outreach focused on understanding how the specific populations or groups listed below may be affected by different transportation funding mechanisms:

- people from rural communities
- people with low incomes
- communities of color
- people with limited-English proficiency
- people with disabilities
- youth
- seniors

These discussions supplemented the existing body of research about public perceptions of transportation revenue sources.

OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES

- Decision-makers should consider how revenue sources may affect quality of life for target populations.
- Invest in expanding public transit and improving intermodal connectivity.
- Consider reduced fees for people with low incomes and progressive funding for transportation.
- Transportation funding is more likely to be perceived as fair and equitable if government is transparent in how it is using the revenue.
- Public education can overcome misperceptions and build support for funding.

WHAT WE DID

- Facilitated roundtable discussions in King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties with social service organizations and community leaders.
- Conducted individual interviews with eight community leaders.
- Reviewed existing research on perceptions of target groups about transportation funding.



ROUNDTABLE AND INTERVIEW KEY MESSAGES

- Participants widely support reduced fees for people with low incomes.
- Participants strongly urged jurisdictions collecting transportation funding to increase their transparency.
- Overwhelmingly, participants rejected any funding measures they perceived as regressive and called for more progressive funding for transportation systems.
- Participants expressed strong interest in increased flexibility in revenue usage.
- Public education is needed regardless of which funding mechanisms are implemented.
- Policy makers should carefully consider any possible invasions of privacy in transportation funding systems.
- Participants called for increased investment in public transit and increased inter-modal connectivity.
- Decision-makers should consider how revenue sources might affect quality of life for the target populations.

LITERATURE REVIEW KEY MESSAGES

- All travelers, including those in the target populations, are willing to pay for transportation alternatives.
- Many members of the target populations mistrust government.
- People will support a funding mechanism if it is perceived as fair and equitable.
- Policy makers should be mindful of unintended outcomes such as creating additional congestion on surface roads.
- People want viable, affordable alternatives.
- Many people, including target populations, are unfamiliar with different transportation funding sources. Research on attitudes and awareness and targeted public education help build acceptance.

