



TriMet Honored Citizen Fare Outreach Report and Public Comment Summary

Overview

To inform TriMet's riders about the proposal to increase Honored Citizen fares, outreach efforts have focused on providing information about the proposed increase through numerous channels. TriMet has contacted Honored Citizen riders to encourage their feedback through personal meetings, email and direct mail, advertisements, listening sessions, and going into the community to meet with Honored Citizens.

Initial Outreach

- Bob Nelson, Interim Deputy General Manager, and Bernie Bottomly, Executive Director Public Affairs, have met with the Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) and Elders in Action.
- The Diversity and Transit Equity Department has informed participants in the Access Transit Program of the proposed increase and have held informational sessions with organizational representatives to discuss mitigation alternatives. TriMet's Transit Equity Advisory Committee (TEAC) also reviewed the proposal and provided additional feedback on mitigation strategies.

Targeted Outreach activities to seniors and people with disabilities

- Emails were sent to about 600 individuals, nonprofit leaders, social service organizations, public agencies and others serving seniors and people with disabilities.
- Brochures were mailed to about 12,300 Honored Citizen card holders informing them of the proposed fare increase and avenues to provide feedback. The brochure was translated into five other languages.
 - Brochures were delivered personally to non-profit organizations to share with their constituents about the proposed fare increase.
 - TriMet's Ticket Office (TTO) at Pioneer Square has also distributed the brochures to all customers that have purchased Honored Citizen fares in person at the TTO.
- Phone calls were placed to stakeholders and community leaders to set up listening sessions at senior centers and other community based organizations.
- Online information was developed regarding the fare increase and ways to provide feedback.
- Targeted ads were created on Facebook to promote listening sessions on the proposed fare increase with seniors living in the TriMet district.
- Printed ads were published promoting the listening sessions and informing people about the proposed fare increase in the following newspapers: Star News, Gresham Outlook, El Hispanic News, Portland Tribune, Asian Reporter, The Skanner, Beaverton Times, Oregon City News, Clackamas Review, Tigard Times, Street Roots, and Hillsboro Tribune.

Listening Sessions

TriMet held 15 listening sessions around the Tri-County region to inform customers of the proposal and provide an opportunity to speak with TriMet staff, and to provide their feedback through verbal and written comment. The sessions were held at the following locations:

March 20	Portland Old Town Recovery Center
March 24	Rockwood Meals on Wheels (Gresham)
March 24	Hillsboro Community Senior Center
March 26	East County Health Center (Gresham)
March 31	Centro Cultural of Washington County (Cornelius)
March 31	Elsie Stuhr Center (Beaverton)
April 1	Independent Living Resources (Portland)
April 3	Meals on Wheels Hillsboro Center
April 6	Pioneer Center (Oregon City)
April 8	Urban League Multicultural Senior Center (Portland)
April 27	East Portland Community Center / Meals on Wheels
April 28	IRCO
April 29	El Programa Hispano
May 7	Africa House
May 18	Asian Health & Service Center

Feedback

In addition to soliciting feedback through listening sessions and community meetings, TriMet also accepts comments from the public via phone, email, and standard mail. A summary of all comments received on the Honored Citizen fare proposal is provided below. Please refer to Appendix A for the full text of comment from the listening sessions, and Appendix B for comment submitted to TriMet's Customer Service. Appendix C includes letters submitted directly to the General Manager and Board of Directors, as well as a petition submitted by the Rosemont Court Apartments. The CAT submitted a letter of support for the fare increase recommending suggestions to help mitigate the impact to low-income senior citizens and/or people with disabilities, which has already been provided to the Board.

Total Comments Received through May 19, 2015

Channel	Comments	Approve of Proposal	Opposed to Proposal	Neutral/ Other
Listening Sessions	139	17	112	10
Letters	9	0	9	0
Comment Cards	89	28	55	6
Petition	1 (19)	0	19	0
Customer Service	234	49	169	16
Totals:	490	94	364	32

General Themes

Common themes in the comments submitted on the Honored Citizen fare proposal include:

- Many users of Honored Citizen fares participating in the discussions and commenting on the proposal are on fixed incomes and/or social security. These riders feel they have a greater hardship than riders that are currently employed, and an increase may result in falling behind on other bills.
- Many riders in listening sessions advocated for the fare increase to be the same percentage as the rate of increase they receive from social security.
- Some riders advocated for not doing the fare increase if there was not a business case for it, for example, to fill a budget gap. Many suggested the additional revenue from an increase would not be significant enough to make up for the hardship placed on those affected by the increase.
- Others advocated for a smaller increase.
- Riders that expressed the proposal would be a fair increase tended to express an expectation for improved service.
- At the East County Health Center participants encouraged TriMet Board Members to live for a month on what some receive from social security (less than \$900 a month) to better understand their plight.