

Low Income Fare Program Research Update

**Board Briefing
September 28, 2016**

Project Background: Investigating the feasibility of a broader low-income fare program

Sustainable: Funding is ongoing and costs are shared with regional partners.

Meaningful: Program is designed to address needs of low-income riders.
Access should be convenient and easy for customers.

Targeted: Benefits should be directed to those that need them most, by way of established eligibility criteria. Program employs eFare technology to maximize direct impact.

Manageable: Administering the program requires minimal cost and leverages existing agency agreements with nonprofits and community based organizations. Eligibility should be managed by organization(s) that have expertise in screening for income-based programs.

Project Approach

Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Fall /Winter 2016
Research Low Income Fare Programs	Convene Regional Taskforce & Stakeholders	Complete Final Program Report

1. Synthesize characteristics of peer low-income fare programs (e.g., verification thresholds, subsidy levels, efare applicability, agency costs, program funding structure, etc)
2. Determine potential cost to TriMet based on 150%, 185% and 200% FPL at 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% end-user subsidy levels.
3. Develop potential funding models and strategies, and summarize what kinds of partnerships could be formed to underwrite such a program

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1. Establish a common understanding of the mobility needs and barriers of low-income populations.
2. Review a range of options to meet the mobility needs of low-income persons.
3. Review the costs of potential options.
4. Review funding options and identify potential funding partners.
5. Recommend a framework for balancing the costs of a low-income fare mitigation program with the impact to transit availability to both low-income and the broader community. This will include consideration of the opportunity costs associated with any additional resource requirements.
6. Make prioritized recommendations.

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1. Integrate data, research and findings from peer study, program model, and financial review
2. Combine Taskforce recommendations with stakeholder input, and feedback from riders and community based partners
3. Synthesize findings into final program report and next steps

2016 Timeline & Process

- **March** – Low Income Fare formally adopted as a TEAC work plan area
- **April**– TEAC reviewed & informed Low Income Fare research SOW contract areas
- **May** –Procured Four Nines to research current programs, costs models, & funding strategies
- **June** – Received first product – a review of existing low income fare programs, and present to TEAC
- **July** – Briefed TriMet Board on our efforts and work in support of researching a Low Income Fare Program
- **August** – Partnered with Metro staff to identify members for a regional Low Income Fare taskforce
- **September** –Working with Four Nines TriMet Staff will complete the cost & threshold models
- **October** – TriMet & Metro will convene the regional taskforce and TriMet will conduct community outreach
- **November**- TriMet will complete a final report with recommendations for next steps using the findings from the research, the work of the regional taskforce, and input gathered from a series of community engagement efforts

Next Steps

1. Complete Research
2. Convene Partners & Stakeholders
3. Develop Final Report