

28829 - Community Transportation Navigators

Application Details

Funding Opportunity: 27547-2025-2027 Consolidated Grant Program - Mobility Management
Funding Opportunity Due Date: Sep 17, 2024 3:01 PM
Program Area: Consolidated Grant Program
Status: Editing
Stage: Final Application

Initial Submit Date:
Initially Submitted By:
Last Submit Date:
Last Submitted By:

Contact Information

Primary Contact Information

Name: Ms. Staci Allegra Sahoo
Salutation First Name Middle Name Last Name

Title: Director, Mobility Management

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Belleve Washington 98007-5245
City State/Province Postal Code/Zip

Phone*: (425) 943-6769 Ext.
Phone
#####

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Organization Information

Legal Name*: Hopelink

DBA Name*: Hopelink

Organization Type*: Non Profit

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): CPGMVDJWLLY3

Organization Website: (Please enter http://... for this field)

Physical Address*: 14812 Main St # 5245

Belleve Washington 98007-5245
City State/Province Postal Code/Zip

Mailing Address*: P.O. Box 3577

Redmond Washington 98073-3577
City State/Province Postal Code/Zip

Remit to Address*:

P.O. Box 3577

Redmond Washington 98073-3577
City State/Province Postal Code/Zip

Phone*:

(425) 943-6769 Ext.
###-###-####

Fax:

###-###-####

Fiscal Year End

June

Last day of*:

Indirect Cost Rate:

0.00%

IDR Expiration Date:

Organization Contact Information

Organization Contact Information

Organization Director

Name*:

Meghan Altimore
First Name Last Name

Interim CEO meghana@hopelink.org
Title Email Address

Applicant Contact

Name*:

Staci Sahoo
First Name Last Name

Director, Mobility Management ssahoo@hopelink.org
Title Email Address

Project Contact

Name:

Staci Sahoo
First Name Last Name

Director, Mobility Management ssahoo@hopelink.org
Title Email Address

Summary of Project Information

Summary of Project Information

Capital equipment includes items that have a useful life of more than one year, exceed your organization's capital cost threshold or \$5,000, and are subject to depreciation and inventory records.

Examples for mobility management include information kiosks and technology.

Does your mobility management project include the purchase of capital equipment*: No

Checking yes to federal funds means that your organization is willing and able to comply with the associated federal requirements such as federal drug and alcohol testing procedures, Title VI activities, and disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE). For an example of last biennium's federal requirements see the [Consolidated Grant Guidebook](#).

Willing to Accept FTA funds for the biennium*: Yes

Select all of the Congressional District(s), Legislative District(s) and County(ies) the project will serve (include entire project area).
[Congressional & Legislative District map](#)

Congressional District(s)*: 1,7,8,9

Legislative District(s)*: 01,05,11,12,30,31,32,33,34,36,37,41,43,45,46,47,48

County(ies)*: King

Scope of Work

Scope of Work

Select the [Regional Transportation Planning Organization / Metropolitan Planning Organization \(RTPO/MPO\)](#) that will be ranking this project from the drop-down menu.

RTPO/MPO*: Puget Sound Regional Council

Project Description

Provide a brief, high-level description of what your project proposes to do (address who, what, when, and where).

This may be used to describe your project to the Legislature.

Proposed scope/description of the work*:

Community Transportation Navigators is an existing program to provide transportation education using a peer-to-peer model through culturally appropriate engagement to hard-to-reach communities. The program leverages paid Navigators with lived experience to increase confidence and allow target populations to move freely around Central Puget Sound.

Project Need

Why is this project needed, and how does this proposal address the need?

Include a description of the transportation problem that matches the need expressed in the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP), how the problem was identified, and how the proposed project will address the problem.

Need*:

The Community Transportation Navigators (CTN) program serves to increase access to transportation for hard-to-reach communities. The CTN program began as an inclusive planning process through the King County Mobility Coalition to address a top regional mobility need of "more information about available services," specifically the High Prioritized Strategy 3.1 in the PSRC Coordinated Mobility Plan. Seniors and people with disabilities with intersectional identities, such as limited English, refugee status, and limited income, struggled to receive transportation education and were not utilizing services they qualified for, such as reduced fare or specialized transportation. Hopelink and King County Metro addressed this concern by developing a program centered on inclusive planning and community engagement. The program uses a peer-to-peer approach to provide trusted transportation information and outreach education to hard-to-reach communities. Chosen Transportation Navigators will have the skills to offer unique support to meet the needs of the communities and clients they represent.

Partnering with transit agencies, community-based organizations, and mobility managers, CTNs collaborate to deliver transit education and training as the transit system expands and changes. With Navigators' close relationships with the community, this model is well-equipped to improve our target population's access so everyone can travel safely, freely, and confidently throughout the region.

Area Served

Is this project primarily serving a rural area?* No
Any service that supports public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000.

Is this project primarily serving the Seattle, Tacoma, Everett urbanized area?: Yes

Special Needs Transportation

To be eligible for funding for special needs transportation, applicants must address how their project advances the efficiency in, accessibility to, or coordination of transportation services provided to persons with special transportation needs, defined in [RCW 81.66.010\(3\)](#)

Advance efficiencies in, accessibility to, or coordination of special needs transportation*: Yes

Describe how your project advances these areas, and how you are going about developing these advancements. Additionally, identify the special needs population(s) to be served by this project.

Special Needs Transportation:

In addition to teaching hard-to-reach special needs populations how to navigate transit, Navigators will tailor specialized transportation recommendations and referrals based on a client's eligibility and needs. Navigators work closely with older adults and people with disabilities to assist with their application process and account setup for specialized transportation services such as reduced fare cards, paratransit, and Medicaid transportation, among others. Populations benefiting from this project include seniors, people with disabilities, low-income populations, and more. Specialized transportation providers will benefit from this by increasing their ridership and fulfilling their mission to serve vulnerable populations. Since launching in 2022, the program has demonstrated success in serving diverse community members. Examples of this work in

FY23 include:

- (1) Represented specialized transportation services at large community gatherings that serve immigrant populations, including the Jose Rizal Park Picnic and the Big Day of Play, a celebration of the city's diversity, encouraging communities to have fun and build relationships.
- (2) Provided one-on-one assistance to clients to navigate the specialized transportation application process and followed up throughout the approval review process.
- (3) Hopelink staff coordinated and organized 20 training sessions as part of the Navigator's education curriculum, inviting representatives from different specialized transportation service providers to discuss their services.
- (4) Partnered with regional efforts to promote transportation resources, including the ORCA Youth card and "SKC Trips", the transportation demand management program in greater Tukwila.

CTN is rooted in Hopelink's longstanding Mobility Management in King County program, complementing our transportation education with in-language and culturally responsive programming to serve our diverse region in ways our existing program has been unable to fulfill.

Project Staff

Provide the names and experience of the key staff who will be working on this project, including their experience managing projects similar to the proposed project.

Project Staff:

Hopelink has operated transportation programs based on a diverse funding stream, including federal, state, and local grants, for over 15 years. Hopelink's Vice President of Transportation, Susan Carter, and Director of Mobility Management, Staci Sahoo, will provide the project with consistent guidance and support in grant management and serve as project advisors. Staci has over ten years of experience managing FTA funds such as Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 special needs grants and funding from other federal, state, and local sources. She will ensure the project complies with state and federal requirements, review and approve grant expenses, manage subcontracts, monitor performance measures and outcomes, and gather grant reports. Throughout this project, Staci will also provide oversight and guidance to the Senior Manager, Sara Sisco, and the Program Manager, Sandy Phan. Sara has five years of experience with FTA grants, including tracking grant expenses, performance measures, and program outcomes. Sandy has experience with project management, supervising and training, and building relationships with key partners and Navigators.

Relationship to Other Projects

Relationship to Other Projects

Is this project dependent on any other projects submitted by your organization?* No

Did you, or will you, apply for this project in another grant program this biennium?* No

Have you applied for the same project in a prior biennium and did not receive funding?* No

Are you applying for other projects within this funding opportunity?* No

Planning and Coordination-

Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan	Element	Page number(s) or TBD	How is the need in the CPT-HSTP met by this project?
Puget Sound Regional Council	Strategies and activities identified to address gaps	41	"More information about available services" is a top mobility need, and the Plan specifically calls out limited English proficiency (LEP) populations. Our project focuses on connecting LEP populations to available transportation services. A secondary need is supporting "affordable transportation services" by working with eligible community members to sign them up for reduced fare programs.

Project Coordination

Describe coordination efforts. Include details such as:

- o Inclusion in regional plans.
- o What prioritized strategies are being addressed?

- Who was involved in defining the problem?
- Other alternatives that were/are being considered for solving the problem.
- Demonstrations of local/regional coordination for implementing the proposed project.

Coordination Efforts*:

This program stems from the King County Mobility Coalition's (KCMC) inclusive planning grant, which involved hundreds of older adults and people with disabilities to create solutions for finding and securing transportation in our region (see the supplemental information attachment for the full report). The program interacts with other existing transportation programs, particularly the strong partnership with King County Metro, as well as with regional services such as Sound Transit, Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation, and other specialized services.

The program addresses high mobility needs in the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Coordinated Mobility Plan, adopted in 2022. The CTN program is listed in the South King County Mobility Coalition's FY25 Work Plan as a priority to continue coordination efforts to support regional access transportation, especially for unincorporated neighborhoods.

This project supports the following PSRC regional goals and strategies to meet identified Mobility Needs: (Strategy 3.1) "Conduct and tailor mobility management programs, such as travel training, mobility coalition, and information referral and assistance, to meet the needs of potential riders, including people with limited English proficiency (LEP)" and (Strategy 5.2) "Simplify processes to apply for and renew reduced fare options like ORCA LIFT, ORCA Youth, the Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP), and subsidized annual passes."

The CTN program also addresses (Strategy 3.2) "Coordinate to develop a comprehensive trip planning tool, like a One-Call/One-Click platform, to help riders with special transportation needs navigate and use available services, keeping in mind language, cultural, technological, and accessibility needs." With relationships in the community, the CTNs can serve as ambassadors for the new trip planning tool and motivate members to use it to access specialized and flexible transportation services.

By checking this box, you acknowledge that you coordinated or will coordinate this project with the planning organization(s) within the region(s) this project serves.*: Yes

How does your project connect to, coordinate with, leverage, or enhance other modes of transportation in your service area (i.e., aviation, intercity bus or rail, park and rides, bicycle/pedestrian)?

Include in your response how the multimodal partnerships for this project will improve or enhance access to social services.

What efficiencies will be gained within the service area as a result of this project?

Multimodal Partnerships*:

The Community Transportation Navigators program coordinates with many local modes of transportation such as paratransit, on-demand transit, fixed transit, volunteer driver programs, and micromobility options. Navigators work with the community to remove technological, cultural, or financial barriers so they may access multimodal transportation. For example, Navigators help seniors with limited English or those experiencing a disability to sign up for specialized transportation services and reduced fare programs to increase their independence and access essential services. Many first-mile/last-mile solutions are app-based, and Navigators can support digital literacy to ensure community members can best navigate services like bike- and scooter-share or microtransit.

To further support the trip planning experience for riders with disabilities, the Navigator program recently collaborated with the University of Washington's Taskar Center for Accessible Technology's Pedestrian mapping project to collect data and feedback on nearby transit infrastructure. In addition, Navigators may offer to travel with older adults, those experiencing disabilities, or newly arrived immigrants, to reduce their initial transportation anxieties. This customized coordination and support will diversify the ridership of existing and new public transportation services, reducing the historical equity gap for underserved communities.

Does this project have a planning or operating service area that crosses RTPO planning boundaries? *: No

Budget

Duration of Project

Planning projects can only choose *Two Years*.

Duration of Project*: Two Years

Expenses

Expenses	If Other, Please List	** July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024 (Actual)	** July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 (Budgeted)	July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025 (Total of Actual and Budgeted)	July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027 (Projected)	Variance Between Biennia	** July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2029 (Projected)	Variance Between Biennia

Contracted Services - Transportation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$174,720.00	0.00%	\$0.00	-100.00%
Labor & Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$224,743.43	0.00%	\$0.00	-100.00%
Overhead	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$41,893.54	0.00%	\$0.00	-100.00%
Project Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$16,360.00	0.00%	\$0.00	-100.00%
Rent & Utilities (if not included in overhead, above)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,112.00	0.00%	\$0.00	-100.00%
	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$460,828.97		\$0.00	

Sources of Match

Match Source	If Other, Please List	** July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024 (Actual)	** July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 (Budgeted)	July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025 (Total of Actual and Budgeted)	July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027 (Projected)	** July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2029 (Projected)
		Local: Other		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$95,000.00	\$0.00

Fares and Ride Donations

	** July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024 (Actual)	** July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 (Budgeted)	July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025, (Total of Actual and Budgeted)	July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027 (Projected)	** July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2029 (Projected)
Fares and ride donations	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Summary for July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027

25-27 Requested Amount: \$365,828.97
 25-27 Match Amount: \$95,000.00

Summary for July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2029

27-29 Requested Amount: \$0.00
 27-29 Match Amount: \$0.00

Variations

Variance between 2023-2025 and 2025-2027: 0.00%
 Variance between 2025-2027 and 2027-2029: -100.00%

Variations:

Other Sources

Other Sources*:

This project leverages over 20% cash support from local sources, exceeding federal and state match requirements. The following organizations committed funds for this project:

- Hopelink: \$70,000
- King County Metro: \$25,000

Over the years, King County Metro has been a robust funding and advisory partner. King County Metro is highly invested in the program's success and attends weekly meetings with the internal Hopelink team to ensure the program has adequate resources to support Navigators and community

members with transportation resources. In partnership with King County Metro, Metro invited the Navigators to participate in mobility boards to represent groups of people historically left out of decision-making conversations related to transit, including the King County Metro Mobility Hub Board and South Link Connections Board. Along with King County Metro's match of \$25,000, Hopelink will also leverage other funds from Metro within existing agreements to supplement the CTN work and operations, including Health Through Housing, which funds cohorts serving individuals who were previously unhoused.

Budget development methodology

Budget development methodology *:

Projected amounts maintain services provided under the Community Transportation Navigators project.

A. Budget Development-Expenses:

1. Direct Operating Expense - Labor & Benefits: developed using current labor and benefit costs based on the percentage of time each staff person is expected to expend, assuming an annual wage increase of 3%. Labor includes 1.0 FTE for a Program Manager as well as 0.125 FTE of Mobility Department leadership support.
2. Direct Operating Expense - Project Supplies: includes direct program costs (outreach supplies, mileage reimbursement, computer/technology, meeting expenses, translated materials, printing, etc.) based on anticipated costs incurred in support of project deliverables. Distribution incentives such as \$15 ORCA cards (300 total) are also calculated.
3. Contracted Services - Transportation: includes pay for independent contractors under the title of Community Transportation Navigators. Hours and pay rate will be evaluated, but existing costs assume \$65 all-inclusive hourly rate for three navigators contracted up to 32 hours a month for 20 months (November 2025 - June 2027), then three additional navigators contracted up to 32 hours a month for 8 months (November 2026 - June 2027).
4. Overhead Costs: developed using current labor and benefit costs for Management and General (administrative) staff; and other indirect costs (e.g., Building Maintenance, Janitorial, Insurance, IT) in compliance with Hopelink's indirect cost plan.
5. Rent and Utilities: based on current expenses.

B. Budget Development-Sources of Match: Local: Other. For a list of match commitments, see Other Sources.

DBE Goals

DBE Goals	Percentage	Efforts	No DBE
Yes	1.00%	Hopelink's fiscal policy states, "Positive efforts shall be made by Hopelink to utilize small business, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises, whenever possible." This project's expenses will primarily be spent on labor, benefits, and independent contractor expenses. Our department strives for at least a 1% DBE goal and will identify vendors that can provide program supplies or fulfill closed captioning or ASL interpretation requests. Recently, this program has spent approximately \$7,000 per year with DBE vendors, including purchasing branded materials for outreach, uniforms for Navigators, and miscellaneous items to support outreach efforts. In the past, we've used DBE vendors to supply our outreach kits, printing services, and contractors for video production.	

Summary

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027

Total Project :	\$460,828.97
Fares and Donations :	\$0.00
Requested Amount	\$365,828.97

This is the amount of grant funds your organization is requesting from July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027

July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2029

Total Project :	\$0.00
Fares and Donations :	\$0.00
Requested Amount	\$0.00

This is the amount of grant funds your organization is requesting from July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2029

4-Year Total Requested Amount:	\$365,828.97
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Indirect Costs

Indirect Costs

To charge indirect costs to a grant/project, your organization must have an approved indirect cost rate or cost allocation plan. Indirect costs must be included in the application budget.

If you plan to charge indirect costs, you must upload documentation of an approved indirect cost rate or cost allocation plan in the *Attachments* section.

Are you charging indirect costs to this grant/project? *: Yes

Measurable Outcomes

Measurable Outcomes

For mobility management, summarize the intended outputs of this project in both quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (narrative) formats.

There may be some projects where traditional performance measures (e.g., revenue vehicle hours/miles, passenger trips) do not apply.

In those cases, quantitative objectives can be used instead by submitting the following information: number of trainings or outreach, or number of passengers served, or other measurable outcomes produced by this project.

Identify data sources and monitoring processes.

Ensure there is a quantitative output, as this will be the baseline measurement for the following biennium's application. Qualitative measures are optional.

Intended Outputs*:

The project's outputs include increasing transportation knowledge, confidence in getting around, and higher usage rates of public transit and specialized transportation by hard-to-reach populations in King County. This program should see increased outputs and outcomes by providing a customer-first, culturally inclusive lens when sharing the full range of transportation resources. With guidance from our local MPO and stakeholders, as well as King County Metro's contracted evaluation consultant, this project's intended outputs as quantifiable performance measures, include the following:

1. Number of clients receiving trip planning services or transportation resources during community outreach. Target 2,000 clients.
2. Number of referrals made for specialized transportation or eligibility-restricted services (e.g., reduced fare, paratransit). Target: 400 referrals
3. Number of trainings provided to persons or organizations representing PSRC's Equity Focus Areas (EFAs): 80 trainings
4. Number of unduplicated organizations reflected in the program's partnership network. Target: 20
5. Number of ORCA cards distributed at outreach as incentives for providing transportation feedback. Target: 500 cards.
6. Annual satisfaction from Navigators to evaluate training program and management. Target: at least 80% satisfaction.

We will monitor the data Navigators report regularly to ensure we meet our performance measures. Navigators provide this data in multiple sources, including documented work logs, tracking sheets for client interactions and ORCA card distribution, and a monthly qualitative report. Navigators track and report their client interactions at every outreach event, classifying what topics are discussed and any significant concerns or questions. The data is reviewed by Hopelink staff to ensure the team is on track to meet the program's performance metrics. King County Metro's contracted evaluators are also reviewing these data collection tools to provide data collection recommendations and suggestions.

How will your organization measure whether the project is successful?

Describe the steps you will take to improve performance if your project does not meet the identified performance targets.

Project Success Measurement*:

Hopelink, in partnership with King County Metro, developed a theory of change framework for the CTN program's operation and outreach (see supplemental information attachment). In the first two years of the program's piloting stage, the program initiated over 10,000 client interactions, connecting them to transportation options they otherwise might not have known about without interacting with a Navigator.

As part of the project's success measure, the program aims to survey Navigators' satisfaction and transportation knowledge after they have served for one year. Our goal is to reach a satisfaction level of at least 80% among all Navigators. Based on Navigators' responses, we will adjust training and outreach strategies to better prepare Navigators to meet the community's needs.

Internal and external evaluators will develop specific indicators and tools that provide ongoing data for adjusting processes to improve outcomes.

The core process milestones and tools will likely include the following:

1. Refined navigator model description for each group served
2. Community Transportation education curriculum, background information, and support schedule for Navigators
3. Clear management process that provides Navigators with the feedback and support needed to be successful
4. Data collection tools for encounters between clients and Navigators.

Hopelink has refined many of these tools and processes for its existing Navigator programs.

Core outcomes that Hopelink will likely measure include the following:

1. Increased knowledge among clients of public transportation options (including specialized transit options and programs for specific client needs).
2. Increased knowledge among transportation agencies to help their clients find support (via Navigators, websites, handouts, or program contacts).
3. Levels of satisfaction (among clients and partner program staff) with support provided by the Navigators.

With these outcomes, we expect hard-to-reach communities will use public transit and specialized transportation at higher rates than before the program intervention. The peer-to-peer model is a well-researched, established program intervention for reaching target populations, and we're leveraging the years of success with this model, such as the Promotores Network, in the transportation field. We will remain connected with the local mobility coalitions and partner organizations to ensure their satisfaction in solving the mobility awareness gap.

Milestones

Milestones

Activities	Date (mm/yy)
Project Start	07/25
Project Complete	06/27

Supplemental Information

Supplemental Information

Supplemental Information:

This navigator model is a strategy used to address service access barriers by helping distinct communities navigate these systems through individualized support. The navigator model leverages individuals within communities to provide unique support to meet the needs of the communities they represent. By building relationships, community Navigators guide individuals and families to access services and assistance through a combination of referrals and interpersonal support. Their unique value lies in their deep understanding of the communities they serve and their ability to convey information in culturally relevant ways, distinguishing them from traditional outreach methods.

Community members seek support from a Community Transportation Navigator because of shared lived experiences, established trust, and language support. This allows them to speak openly to a CTN about their transit challenges. Navigators can then help them with reduced fare enrollment, multimodal transportation awareness, trip planning, and serving as advocates to convey the community's concerns to transit agencies and leadership.

An example of this personalized support from a Navigator allowed an immigrant senior with carpal tunnel syndrome to feel supported and empowered to apply for King County Metro's Access program. The Navigator guided the client to the online application, walked her through the eligibility requirements and multi-step approval process, and supported with a follow-up check to ensure the client's application was submitted successfully. After the application was reviewed, the client was invited to an in-person medical evaluation to complete the application process. A few weeks later, the client was approved for the specialized transportation service and was eager to start using the new mode of transportation, allowing her to travel to essential appointments, cultural gathering spaces, and access to food. Once the client was approved for paratransit service, the Navigator helped the client learn how to reserve rides with Access and how to pay for the service. The Navigator also explained the jurisdictions and destinations that Access could complete.

The navigator model demonstrates its value by providing personalized problem-solving and information sharing that is highly adaptive to the unique needs of a particular community. By offering this personalized service, the model helps service providers reach communities in more profound ways and, in turn, facilitates more equitable access. The peer-to-peer approach is best positioned to assist groups of people with unique needs -- such as older adults, refugees, immigrants, people with disabilities, people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and vulnerable medical patients. Navigators, as members of the communities they represent, intuitively understand their communities' challenges and can, therefore, advise on what intervention can best mitigate these barriers.

In summary, the program provides:

1. Education, access to navigation tools
2. Program Enrollment, support in enrolling in reduced fare options & eligibility-restricted programs
3. Training Sessions, creating trust and relationship building with other community avenues
4. Incentive Distribution and opportunities for continual engagement.

Community partners submitted 14 letters of support and 1 match letter, and we received six testimonials from existing CTNs, totaling 21 support letters.

Vulnerable Populations in Overburdened Communities & Tribes

Vulnerable Populations in Overburdened Communities

Identify the type of direct and meaningful benefits to vulnerable populations your project provides using the descriptions above, if any. Explain how your project provides these benefits. Your response may include suggestions about how WSDOT should evaluate project(s) against Climate Commitment Act requirements in the future.

Vulnerable Populations in Overburdened Communities*:

The current transportation landscape is burdensome to specialized transportation users, many of whom come from vulnerable populations, including older adults, people with limited English proficiency, and people with disabilities, each of whom has unique access and functional needs. To complete their essential travel, these communities must become experts in all available transportation options, eligibility criteria, service areas and hours, contact methods, and enrollments. The challenges only increase when the community is further burdened by language and digital literacy barriers, intersecting identities, and a long history of under-investment and representation.

According to State definitions, King County residents are "overburdened" compared to statewide rates. Census tracts in southwestern King County face the highest risk of overburden, mainly centering on South Seattle, Renton, and Kent areas. Vulnerable populations are found throughout King County: populations living in poverty, POC communities, and people facing environmental exposure residing in western King County.

The Community Transportation Navigators program seeks to reduce and remove existing barriers through collaborative solutions designed with the end user in mind. The Navigators likely represent vulnerable populations themselves and support their peers with transportation resources and services. While this program serves all of King County, the current Navigators have historically served south King County, which falls within overburdened communities according to the Environmental Health Disparities map.

If these populations were engaged by you or your representatives in developing or maintaining the project, describe the outreach efforts and results.

Inclusive planning:

In 2018, the King County Mobility Coalition was awarded an inclusive planning grant by the Community Transportation Association of America to explore how people with disabilities, caregivers, and older adults find and secure transportation in our region. Engagement with vulnerable populations, including PSRC's Equity Focus Areas, was central to this work. Hundreds of participants shared their needs, including summits, in-language listening sessions, and a survey translated into six languages. One workgroup focused on outreach; this is where the idea for a CTN program formed (see supplemental attachment). Focus groups from south Seattle comprised Somali and Filipino community members, which led to the first pilot with a Filipino cohort.

Since 2022, the CTN Program has recruited 12 Navigators who represent vulnerable populations to ensure their community is served effectively. These navigators have continued to shape program design as we've moved from pilot to full implementation.

Tribal Support

Is this project directly operated by a tribe?* No

Is your project serving and is it supported by a tribal nation in Washington? : No

Attachments

Tribal support correspondence/resolution:

Attachments

Attachments

Named Attachment	Required	Description	File Name	Type	Size	Upload Date
Required for all projects						
Copy of organization's most recent audit report	✓	Hopelink's 2023 Audit Report	Hopelink_MM_CTN_Audit.pdf	pdf	293 KB	09/16/2024 06:01 PM
Population density map	✓	King County Population Density Map	Hopelink_MM_CTN_PopDensityMap.pdf	pdf	217 KB	09/16/2024 06:01 PM
Service area map	✓	CTN Service Area Map	Hopelink_MM_CTN_ServiceAreaMap.pdf	pdf	532 KB	09/16/2024 06:02 PM

Required for new non-profit applicants only

501(c) IRS Letter of Determination (required for new non-profit applicants)

WA Utilities & Transportation Commission (UTC)

Certification (required for new non-profit applicants who are direct service providers)

Conditionally required

Indirect costs documentation (required if you are charging indirect costs to the project) Hopelink's Cost Allocation Policy [Hopelink_MM_CTN_CostAllocationPolicy.pdf](#) pdf 125 KB 09/16/2024 06:01 PM

In-kind match valuation proposal (required for operating & mobility management projects that are proposing to use in-kind as matching funds)

Procurement policy (required for new applicants or current grantees without a current policy on file with WSDOT)

Optional attachments

Letters committing matching funds Match Letters [Hopelink_MM_CTN_MatchLetters.pdf](#) pdf 441 KB 09/16/2024 06:02 PM

Letter of concurrence (for projects that operate in multiple planning regions)

Letters of support (combine into one file attachment) 20 Letters of Support [Hopelink_MM_CTN_LettersOfSupport.pdf](#) pdf 2 MB 09/16/2024 06:03 PM

Supplemental information CTN Theory of Change and Inclusive Planning Report [Hopelink_MM_CTN_SupplementalInformation.pdf](#) pdf 785 KB 09/16/2024 06:03 PM

Optional construction attachments

NEPA/SEPA assessment, if available

Supplemental construction project information (building or site designs, site plans, location exhibits, etc.), if available

Certification

Certification

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that the information in this application packet is true and accurate and that this organization has the necessary fiscal, data collection, and managerial capabilities to implement and manage the project associated with this application:

Certification*: Yes
Application Authority*: Meghan Altimore
First Name Last Name
Title*: Interim CEO
Date*: 09/16/2024



September 12, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

I, William Nichols, would like to share my testimony serving as a Community Transportation Navigator and the profound impact this program has had on me. The goal of this program is to serve hard-to-reach communities across King County, such as older adults, people with disabilities, people facing housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families, and others, to increase their access to transportation options.

This project is important to me because it gives me an opportunity to shed light on specific transit situations as a daily commuter and as a Community Transportation Navigator assisting others with their transit needs while being able to voice their concerns. I firmly believe that my job position has significance, carries a purpose, and gives credence to public transportation.

Fulfilling the needs of many, from transportation resources to one of the many modes of travel to financially ensuring them that they are using the most beneficial form of fare payment, and all the while, educating them on the use of mobility resources; supporting all in accessing, improving, and their continuing use of public transportation. Truly, working together with the community in initiating the changes needed in future transportation.

I enjoy serving as a Community Transportation Navigator because it invigorates me in knowing that my knowledge or advice has made a difference with an HTH-housed commuter, or with the infrastructure of future transportation.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at (316) 993-4883.

Sincerely,

William Nichols

Community Transportation Navigator



09/09/2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

Hello, my name is Cedric Lilly, and I would like to share my testimony serving as a Community Transportation Navigator and the impact this program has had on me. The goal of this program is to serve hard to reach communities across King County such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options.

This project is important to me because when I first moved to Seattle I was homeless and the bus was the only way that I had to get around town. The bus has help me in every way possible it has helped me go to my doctor's appointments, job interviews, and it has help me show my niece the beautiful city that I call home.

I enjoy serving as a Community Transportation Navigator because I can get the people who need the Metro the most a safe ride to their destination. I also get to see the joy on people face when I can get them a pass for the Metro, it gives me a sense of purpose.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at (206)825-3210.

Sincerely,
Cedric Lilly
Community Transportation Navigator



CISC

BRIDGING CULTURES
COMMUNITIES & GENERATIONS

611 S Lane St
Seattle WA 98104

T 206.624.5633
F 206.624.5634
cisc-seattle.org

August 26, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

CISC would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports CISC's mission to create opportunities for immigrants and their family members to succeed while honoring their heritage. We strongly believe in ensuring older adults have equitable access to programs and services that support their health and well-being.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206-957-8543.

Sincerely,

Michael Itti
Executive Director

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink

August 28, 2024



Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

The City of Kirkland would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families, and others with mobility barriers, increase access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide improved access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was created using an inclusive planning process with community engagement to collect expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, and researchers. Based on this process, Navigators will have lived experience, diverse cultural backgrounds, and the skills to provide individualized support to meet the needs of different community members.

This project aligns well with the City of Kirkland's proposed 2044 Comprehensive Plan. More specifically Policy LU-8.4 which prioritizes services and access to opportunity for people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities to ensure all people can attain the resources and opportunities to improve quality of life and address past inequities and Human Services Goal HS-6, which encourages human services organizations make their services physically accessible to all through addressing barriers, including but not limited to cultural, language, communication, and location.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me using the information below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jen Boone".

Jen Boone
Human Services Manager
City of Kirkland
jboone@kirklandwa.gov
(425) 587-3325

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



Redmond
WASHINGTON

Connected Community
Enhanced Livability
Environmental Sustainability

September 10, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

The City of Redmond would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports the City of Redmond's mission to prioritize equity, inclusion, and sustainability. Transportation-related costs are the second highest household expense in the Redmond area. Access to safe transportation choices are vital to the City of Redmond's goals of a sustainable and livable city. Some areas of focus in the City's transportation programs for the next coming years include expanded education to better engage traditionally underserved communities, supporting enrollment efforts for all the ORCA products available, and supporting 2 Line growth and expansion.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 425-556-2107.

Sincerely,

Carol V. Helland
Director, Planning and Community Development

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink

City Hall

PO Box 97010
15670 NE 85th Street
Redmond, WA
98073-9710



August 28, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue NE
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

On behalf of the City of Tukwila, I am writing to express our support for Hopelink's application to the 2025-27 Washington State Department of Transportation Consolidated Grant Program for Community Transportation Navigators.

The Community Transportation Navigators program serves hard-to-reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others faced with mobility challenges. The program is rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent. Over the years, the City of Tukwila has partnered with the program and helped many community members secure transportation resources. Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County.

This project supports the City of Tukwila's values to eliminate systemic barriers and provide fair access to programs. Hopelink's Community Transportation Navigators are essential in helping us support the local refugee and immigrant communities by providing trainings and public transit orientations so that they are confident in navigating the transportation system and getting to where they need to go.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas McLeod".

Thomas McLeod
Mayor

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



September 3, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

Commute Seattle would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

Commute Seattle is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and this project supports Commute Seattle's mission in making it easier for people across Seattle and the Puget Sound region to access their destinations without needing to drive alone by connecting people to transportation options and resources, like ORCA cards.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at (206) 613-3131.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Z. Infante". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Zarina Infante
Program Director

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



August 27, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

My name is Stanley Tsao, Community Liaison Program Advisor with Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. We are pleased to submit this letter of support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities, including older adults, people with disabilities, individuals experiencing housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others, to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong track record implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and improve access to transportation for individuals with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others facing mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program is founded on an inclusive planning process, incorporating expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement specialists. The Navigators have lived experience, cultural backgrounds and the skills necessary to offer nuanced support that addresses the needs of the communities they represent.

This project aligns with the Community Liaisons Program's mission to ensure that programs and services are tailored with meaningful community and stakeholder engagement and are responsive to the diverse and unique needs of community; centering Seattle's Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), as well as immigrants, refugees and non-English speakers.

In our frequent collaborations with Hopelink through a partnership with Seattle Department of Transportation, we have observed firsthand how Hopelink's Navigators prioritize service experience with diverse participants and are able to cultivate caring and responsive services with community. For instance, during a recent senior field trip with Vietnamese-speaking seniors, Hopelink provided discounted ORCA passes and showed participants, in their native language, how to use the passes for various public transportation options, including buses and the West Seattle Water Taxi. This not only demonstrated how access to public transportation can increase participants' mobility but also can enhance their quality of life.

Thank you for considering our support letter regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206-233-0070 or Stanley.Tsao@seattle.gov.

Sincerely,



Program Advisor, Community Liaisons Program
City of Seattle, Department of Neighborhoods

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



“We speak your language; your voice will be heard” – Alan Lai

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

King County Public Health would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro’s partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports King County’s mission and has been crucial in addressing transportation challenges for underserved communities, helping bridge gaps in access to essential services tied to the social determinants of health, such as healthcare, employment, and education. Community navigators, often members of the communities they serve, act as cultural brokers, building trust and facilitating communication between King County Metro and populations like immigrants, refugees, and low-income residents. By providing culturally and linguistically tailored support, they help residents better understand and access public transit options. This partnership also empowers these communities to voice their unique transportation needs, leading to more inclusive and responsive transit solutions that directly address barriers related to language, technology, and socioeconomic disparities.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink’s application. If you have any questions, please contact me at (206)477-0298.

Sincerely,

Justin Jeffrey (he/him/his)

Community Engagement and Partnerships

Office of Equity and Community Partnerships

| e jujeffrey@kingcounty.gov

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



Sept 1, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

I, Lester Alano, would like to share my testimony serving as a Community Transportation Navigator and the impact this program has had on me. The goal of this program is to serve hard to reach communities across King County such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options.

This project is important to me because I've been able to help individuals that were previously unhoused and have no knowledge of all the transportation available to get to work, visit family and friends and make appointments.

I enjoy serving as a Community Transportation Navigator because I wanted to help individual in need of transportation resources and to make a difference in the communities I serve.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at (253) 778-1724.

Sincerely,
Lester Alano

Lester Alano
Hopelink Health Through Housing – Community Transportation Navigator

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



Supporting health & human services in North King County

Board Members

Heidi Shepherd
President
Community Advocate

Jenne Alderks
Vice President
Community Advocate

Kelly Brown
Secretary
North Helpline

Denise Bugallo
Treasurer
King County Library System

Brook Buettner
Vice President
Regional Crisis Response Agency (RCR)

Emily Carey
Hopelink Shoreline

Amanda Dodd
Bothell City Council

Tamara Piwen
Center for Human Services

Eben Pobee
Charmd LLC

John Ramsdell
Shoreline City Council

Semra Riddle
Lake Forest Park City Council

Valerie Sasson
Kenmore City Council

Ed Sterner
Sterner Law Offices

September 5, 2024

Mr. Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

The North Urban Human Services Alliance (NUHSA), would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of those faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports NUHSA's goal to build cooperation, coordination and collaboration among providers, funders and the community to enhance resources and the ability to respond to need in the community. In a recent human services needs assessment, transportation was listed as one of the major obstacles in North King County to our community members accessing needed services. This program, and the additional funding available through this grant, would help expand transportation options for vulnerable community members and help fill a gap in North King County. Older adults, and especially those from immigrant communities, have significant and growing needs for community support and services. NUHSA recognized this by making the needs of older adults a strategic priority in 2024, and we believe that the Community Transportation Navigators program helps support this priority. Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 425-241-6449 or at staff@nuhsa.org.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sarah Arndt

Senior Manager, NUHSA

For IRS purposes, NUHSA is a 501 c3 nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Pierce County Human Services

August 26, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

Pierce County Human Services would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports Pierce County Human Services, Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition mission to;

1. Connect the System- Collaborates with PCCTC Special Needs transportation partners to develop agreements to establish a simple process for users that makes getting rides in Pierce County easier;
2. Close Transportation Gaps- Creates one or more new transportation options, expand current transportation options, or build awareness of existing transportation options; and
3. Close Awareness Gaps- Increase awareness and utilization of existing transportation options

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 253-281-9490.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daeveene J. May".

Daeveene May
Pierce County Humans Services, Mobility Manager

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



200 Broadway, Suite 202 ■ Seattle, Washington 98122 ■ www.projectaccessnw.org
Tel: 206.788.4204 ■ Fax: 206.382.3507 / 800.579.1494 ■ info@projectaccessnw.org

August 23, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

Project Access Northwest would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports Project Access Northwest's mission to improve community health by connecting those most vulnerable to vital health care services. In our service to almost 70,000 people since our founding in 2006, we continue to hear that one of the greatest barriers preventing access to services that meet social drivers of health, is the access to reliable, safe and affordable transportation. For these people, Hopelink offers peace of mind, relief, and a safety net that they otherwise would not have.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206-496-1590.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Renville". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Renville
President and CEO

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



August 27, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8890 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dr. Mr. Crump,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Community Transportation Navigator program, which serves essential functions in our community through its partnership with Hopelink and King County Metro. This program plays a vital role in facilitating access to transportation for hard-to-reach populations, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, those experiencing housing instability, immigrants and refugees, and low-income families.

Access to reliable transportation is a critical component of personal and community well-being. It affects individuals' abilities to reach essential services such as healthcare, education, employment, and social connections. The Community Transportation Navigator program addresses these challenges head-on by providing resources, support, and tailored transportation options that empower individuals and families to navigate their mobility needs effectively.

I commend the collaborative approach taken by the program, which combines the resources and expertise of Community Transportation Navigator, Hopelink, and King County Metro to create a responsive and effective transportation solution. By focusing on the specific needs of marginalized populations, the program enhances overall community well-being and empowers individuals to lead more fulfilling lives.

Your commitment to inclusivity and equity in transportation access is commendable, especially in a region as diverse as Puget Sound. It is through initiatives like yours that we can help uplift communities and create a more equitable transportation landscape for all residents. Therefore, Road to Independence wholeheartedly encourages continued support and collaboration within our community to ensure the sustainability and growth of the Community Transportation Navigator program.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Mann

Jacqueline Mann
Director of Transportation
Puget Sound ESD



September 1, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

I, Rocel Mendoza, would like to share my testimony serving as a Community Transportation Navigator and the impact this program has had on me. The goal of this program is to serve hard to reach communities across King County such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options.

This project is important to me because of so many important reasons. One is that a CTN serves as the bridge between the people the immigrant and the policy makers around transportation needs. As we listen to their experiences, good or bad when riding public transit, the CTN brings those voice back to the leadership. Therefore, their voices heard. Through community outreach the CTN engages with the community and thus feel empower when their voices heard, and suggestions implemented. Bringing the materials closer and meeting them where they are is powerful strategy to be able to educate and enroll them to many transportation services from Orca Card application to trip planning, scheduling a ride and many other ways of utilizing public transportation. When the community are well informed and updated with transportation services, they feel more confident being out there and stay mobile riding transit.

In 2022, when I just started as a CTN, I met a Filipino immigrant, daughter has physical challenges. They had been buying ORCA Card for her and mom for the last 20 years or so they can ride public transit. They were not aware the type of Orca Card they are eligible. I supported them to apply for Subsidized Annual Pass and Metro Access. They are so thankful their Metro Access application approved and subsidized annual pass. They said they are not informed about this program which now helping their daughter and family stay mobile enormously.

From this experience, same the mom referred also her friend whose son also has medical difficulties. Like Jessie, Michael also got his subsidized annual pass and Metro Access. They are out and about in the community doing schooling, training and volunteering work despite of their physical challenges. Mom said, "thanks for getting them Metro Access approved and annual pass".

A senior citizen, using a cane to walk, had been walking about 2 blocks from her house to catch the bus, that's the nearest bus stop from her house around Mt Baker area called me to assist with her ride. I provided her the Metro Access information and from there she got the form filled up by her doctor. Soon she had her Metro Access ride bringing her to senior center and church or visiting her family in West Seattle area. She was so thankful she is not walking far anymore to get her bus ride. Like other families in the community specially the seniors at IDIC and FCS I supported, I tried to stay connected with them via e-mail or text message. Simple gestures of kindness like listening to their stories from back home and their experiences navigating life here in the US, their eyes brighten up relating their stories. There is a feeling of stronger connection and trust when they hear someone as an ambassador (about public transit) who can speak their language, share familiar ways of cooking food, dances and music and culture in general. I am lucky to be one of them (CTN-Pinoy). Duplicating this CTN Cohort work to other culture (Arabic Speaking, Asian and etc immigrants) will bring bigger success in encouraging the community to be mobile through public transit.

I enjoy serving as a Community Transportation Navigator because I love being with the people, meeting different people from different background, sharing my culture and learning from others. As a CTN, one needs to enjoy being out there. The success of being a CTN is to be out in the community, to meet where they are, to listen to their concerns and hopes (about transit) and be the voice for them. When they see their suggestions/complains/ideas became part of the "change" then the community specially the under-represented feel important and empowered. They will trust and feel safer to ride public transit more and continue to be mobile. They feel proud of themselves that their voices heard. I enjoy being the "messenger" of those voices" (as a CTN) which I believed has a big impact in building a stronger, well connected, healthy community.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206.349.4174.

Sincerely,

Rocel Mendoza

Community Transportation Navigator-Filipino Cohort



August 26, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

I, Roxanne Vasquez, would like to share my testimony serving as a Community Transportation Navigator and the impact this program has had on me. The goal of this program is to serve hard to reach communities across King County such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options.

This project is important to me because it gives me the opportunity to participate and give-back to the community. Through the CTN outreaches, the growing transportation needs of the community are heard but, at the same time, the options available to address them are also shared. For me, this is a kind of public service that continuously empowers and enables the community. Therefore, the presence of the project in the community signifies our transportation sector's commitment and passion to help people move around and fulfill their daily purposes.

I enjoy serving as a Community Transportation Navigator because the role is a source of joy and pride. I was once an immigrant, myself, and it is heart-warming to note that, in my outreaches, I encounter families who were once like me. I am deeply honored to be part of their journey, too, knowing "transportation knowledge" would be an important factor for their success. In addition, the experience also provides me personal growth every day. Not only do my CTN trainings broaden my knowledge but they also make me more empathic to the needs of my community. It gives me that sense of relevance and responsibility.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206-960-5976

Sincerely,



Roxanne Vasquez
Community Transportation Navigator

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



August 29, 2024
Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

Sound Generations would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports Sound Generations' mission to partner with older adults to provide accessible services so they can age their way. Hyde Shuttle and Volunteer Transportation Services benefit greatly as a partner of Community Transportation Navigators.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206-268-6786.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phirun Lach".

Phirun Lach
Director of Transportation

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



September 2, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

I, Vicky Navarro, would like to share my testimony serving as a Community Transportation Navigator and the profound impact this program has had on me. The goal of this program is to serve hard-to-reach communities across King County, such as older adults, people with disabilities, people facing housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families, and others, to increase their access to transportation options.

This project is important to me because it directly aligns with my commitment to advocating for equitable transportation access in underserved communities. By providing reliable transportation options, we can help bridge the gap in access to essential services, such as healthcare, education, and employment. For instance, in my work, I've seen firsthand how a lack of transportation can prevent someone from attending crucial medical appointments or securing a job. Addressing these transportation barriers will significantly improve the quality of life for many in our community.

I enjoy serving as a Community Transportation Navigator because it allows me to connect with individuals on a personal level, understanding their unique challenges and helping them find practical solutions. This role not only enables me to make a tangible difference in people's lives but also fuels my passion for community service and advocacy.

Thank you for considering my comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience at (206) 601-0093.

We Rise Together,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicky Navarro".

Vicky Navarro

Hopelink Community Transportation Navigator

Filipino Cohort



August 29, 2024

Geoff Crump
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Mr. Crump,

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports SDOT's mission to deliver a transportation system that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities. SDOT has partnered with Hopelink to provide outreach to SDOT's priority populations, specifically aging adults, since 2019, and we deeply value this relationship. Hopelink's ability to thoughtfully engage community and meet folks where they are is a critical service that is unfortunately rare and unique in the transportation world. The Community Transportation Navigators fills a much-needed gap in equitable community engagement to give these communities the knowledge to confidently ride and engage in our transportation system. Continuation of this program will ultimately support SDOT's work and goals and continue to strengthen our partnership with Hopelink.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206.305.0573

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LLS'.

Laura Lee Sturm
Transportation Access Program Manager



Seattle
Department of
Transportation

Seattle Department of Transportation

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink

September 15, 2024

Meghan Altimore
Hopelink
14812 Main St.
Bellevue, WA 98007

Dear Meghan,

The Indian American Community Services (IACS) would like to submit a Letter of Support for Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. The program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region.

Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide special needs transportation in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of King County residents, including seniors, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators Program is rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports IACS's mission to develop transport solutions for our Eastside Senior Community in collaborations with Hopelink and King County and other organizations with the same objective for their clients. We have worked diligently with EERC, EATS and Sound Generations since 2018 to develop transportation solutions. The majority of our seniors find it very difficult to get to our senior centers, meal sites and activities because of lack of transportation services. As director of IACS Senior Program, I have worked since 2010 to find ways to transport our seniors, including volunteer drivers, renting service, and providing taxi vouchers/coupons. We are a strong advocate of mobility for older adults and understand their challenges.

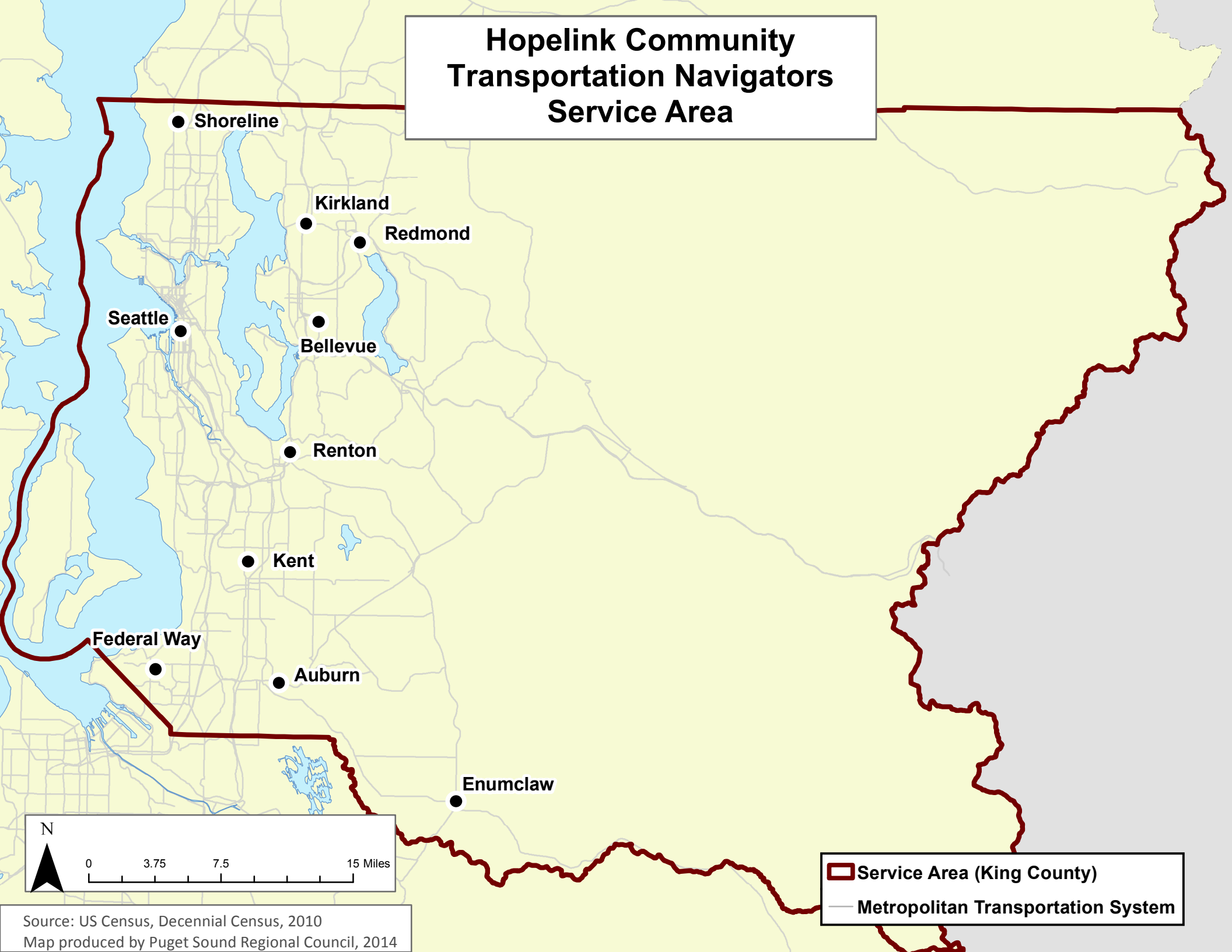
Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink and King County Metro's partnership program. If you have any questions, please contact me at 206-854-0070.

Sincerely,

Pran Wahi
Director IACS Senior Program

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sara Sisco

Hopelink Community Transportation Navigators Service Area



● Shoreline

● Kirkland

● Redmond

● Seattle

● Bellevue

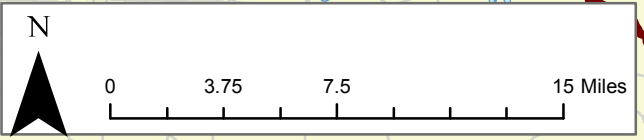
● Renton

● Kent

● Federal Way

● Auburn

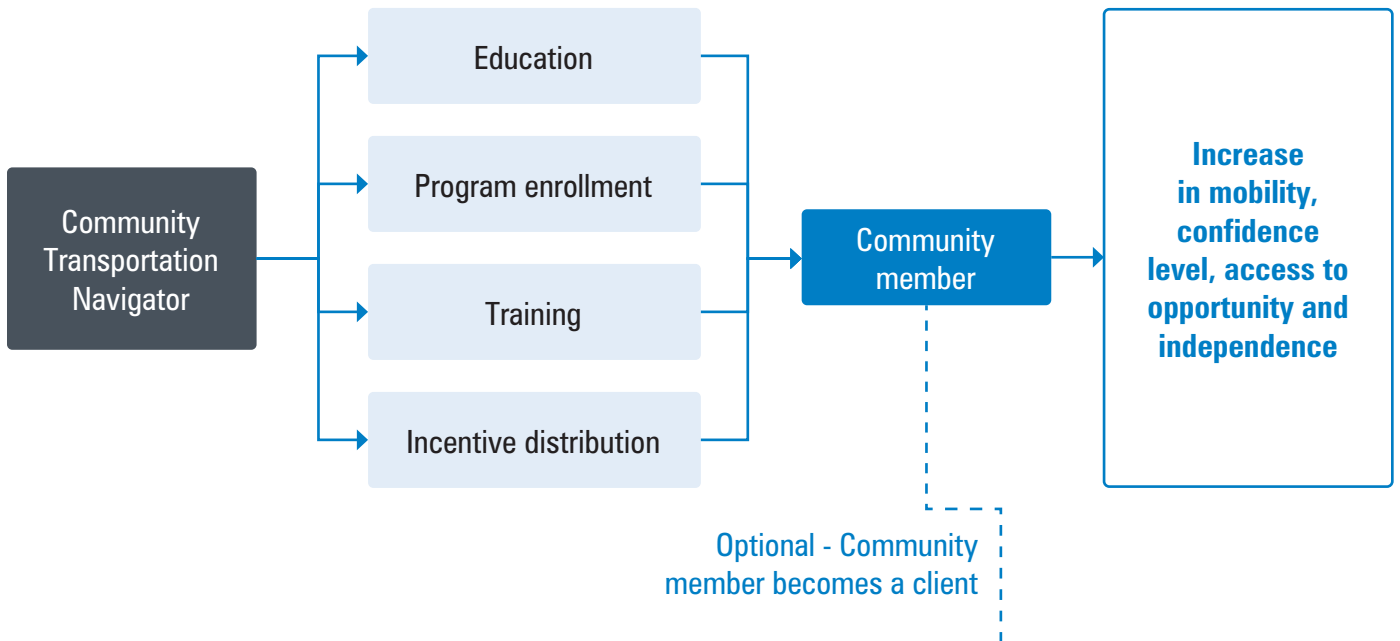
● Enumclaw



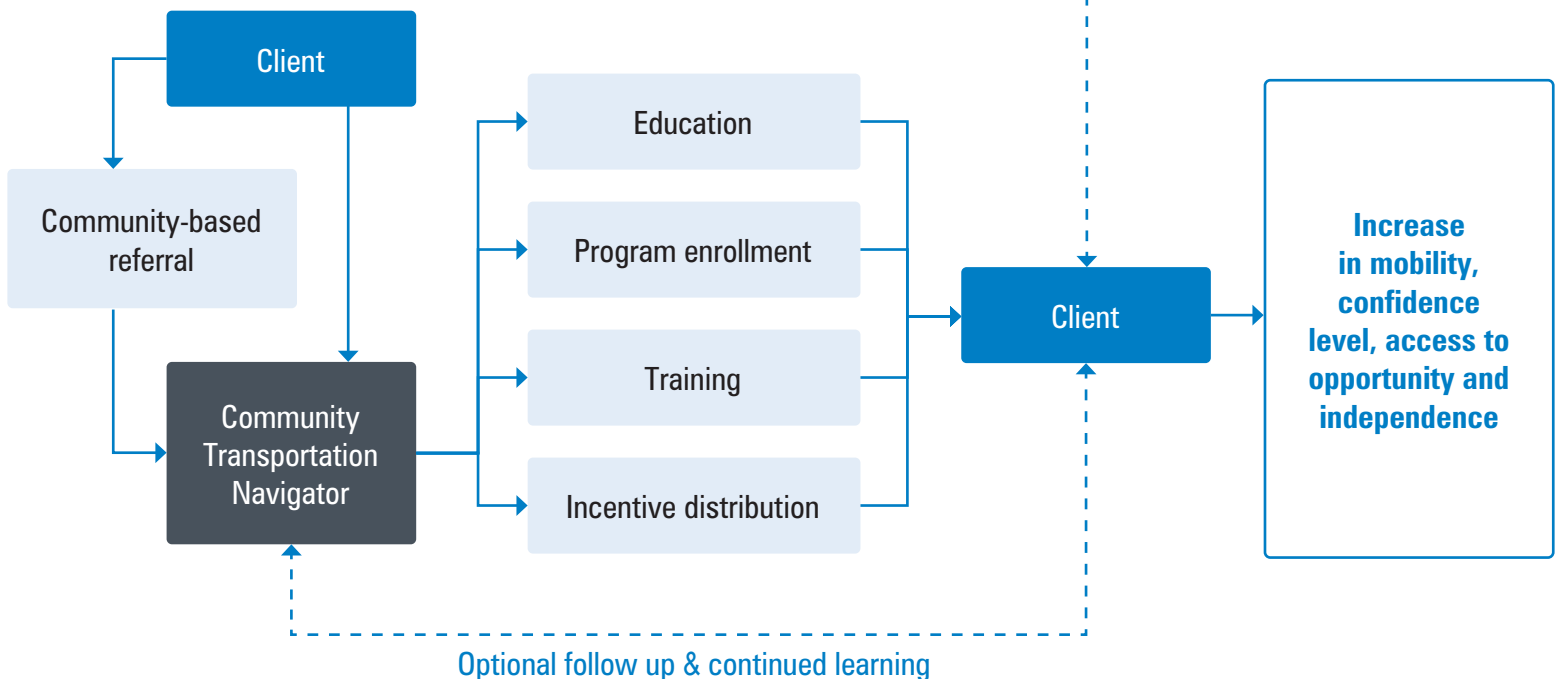
Source: US Census, Decennial Census, 2010
Map produced by Puget Sound Regional Council, 2014

Community Transportation Navigator Flow Charts

Passive Interaction Process



Active Enrollment Interaction Process



Mobility for All:

Qualitative Interview Findings to Inform the
Community Transportation Navigator Program
November 2019



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Research was conducted by The Vida Agency in October and November of 2019. Research team included Tamara Power-Drutis, Alex Shaffer, Patty Carrion, María Fernanda Cobaleda-Yglesias, Ryann Anderson, Badr Alghanmi, and Isabella Nielson.

INTRODUCTION

Community Transportation Navigators (“CTN”) is a project of the King County Mobility Coalition’s Inclusive Planning grant. In Fall of 2019, The Vida Agency conducted a series of interviews on behalf of Hopelink to inform outreach for the CTN program, in which members of the community are to be trained on alternative modes of transportation and then in turn train other members of their community that may be looking for transportation information. The peer-to-peer outreach model aims to reach more residents in the region who need information on transportation that suits their unique needs. This is part of a larger Inclusive Planning effort to enhance user voice in the decision-making process and utilize community-identified solutions to strengthen mobility accessibility.

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Interview subjects represented a range of stakeholders involved in similar peer-to-peer modeled programs and community members (“end-users”) who might utilize the CTN program, including:

- Transportation Resource Center, Harborview
- Old Friends Club
- Promotores, Department of Public Health
- Indian Association for Western Washington
- Alliance of People with DisAbilities
- Valley Medical Center
- Support Groups, Dementia Caregivers, Alzheimer's Association of Washington State
- Volunteer Rider Program, Sound Generations
- Cultural Navigator Program, CISC
- Southwest Youth and Families
- South Park Senior Center
- United Blind of Seattle
- Hopelink Travel Ambassador Program
- Washington Council of the Blind
- National Federation of the Blind

While 11 interview subjects were identified by Hopelink as “stakeholders” and four (4) were identified as “end-users,” several stakeholder interview subjects also recognized themselves as part of the community they serve, or as potential end-users.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Stakeholder interview subjects were asked about what populations their organization serves, and end-user interview subjects were asked about the communities they are actively involved in. Subjects shared about barriers their community or population served face in accessing transportation information.

Several interview subjects encouraged Hopelink to cater services to the unique needs of each community or disability, rather than trying to build a service that supports “everyone.” Subjects identified the following needs and communities that would benefit from Community Transportation Navigator outreach:

- Blind or Low-Vision
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Alzheimer’s/Dementia patient
- Caregiver
- Dependent
- People with mobility challenges, or those with wheelchairs
- ESL, Immigrants or Refugees
- Residents who are Undocumented
- Seniors
- Rurally-located
- Low-Income
- People with Disabilities
- People experiencing homelessness

SHORT AND LONG-TERM DISABILITIES

Many subjects noted that they believed Access program, and other volunteer peer-to-peer services, only help people with disabilities get to medical appointments. Access does in fact provide transportation regardless of destination, but this was a common misunderstanding of interview subjects. Subjects particularly noted that community events, grocery stores, and meetings are destinations that individuals need help figuring out how to get to. One subject mentioned that it’s not always about getting to a destination, sometimes it’s easier to get things delivered to the individual instead (example of grocery delivery).

Multiple subjects noted that a lack of transportation or knowledge of options to get to non-medical appointments adds to the isolation and loneliness experienced by people with disabilities. One stakeholder shared that their medical center has had people making appointments to see a nurse or doctor not always because there is a medical need, but because they want human contact, and the doctor is the only place transit mobility or Access would help them get to. In addition to people with disabilities, this same sentiment of isolation caused by

lack of transit options or knowledge of how to access transit was shared in relation to seniors, immigrants, refugees, and ESL speakers, particularly those living in rural areas.

People with disabilities living in rural areas face additional and sometimes prohibitive transportation challenges than their peers in urban environments. One end-user, who noted that they struggle firsthand with this challenge, isn't able to navigate the system easily at present. They moved into their current house to be near a bus line, however that route has since been changed. Now they sometimes have to wait up to an hour at the bus stop, and can't reach the hubs or the transit center on their own. They rely on rides from their partner or neighbors to get to a transit hub in order to get anywhere else.

One subject noted the use of FindARide.org as helpful for them in finding transit options.

One interview subject noted that for both people with disabilities and immigrants who speak English as a second language, Navigators should be comfortable taking as much time as is needed to connect with the person they are serving at their own pace. They shared that in both cases it can be a challenge to access resources from a Navigator if that Navigator talks quickly, expects you to talk quickly, or is impatient with the speed you require support at. Navigators should be good listeners, who are able to read body language to pick up on how the end-user wants to be interacted with, and be able to integrate how someone without sight, hearing, or mobility would navigate directions.

Transit and Information Challenges

- Programs offer transit to medical appointments, but not to other necessary destinations, and often with long wait times and cancelations.
- Difficulty in finding transit options for child dependents.
- A bus line changing routes can be a prohibitive barrier.
- Temporary disabilities or recovery from surgery can create a short-term need for information, for someone who usually drives a car but can no longer get around that way.
- Rurally-based people with disabilities face prohibitive barriers to accessing transit in general, and are more challenging to serve for the same reason.

"We bought our home here based on transportation transit service, and then the transit service went away for many years. So, we're stuck with that."

"It's not financially feasible for a lot of folks to get their kids transported...they don't have stability and aren't eligible for Access."

"I think an issue for a lot of people in my neighborhood is of course they would take transit more if they can get to the transit centers and hubs...but they are like, 'yeah well we can't get to the park and ride.'"

VISION IMPAIREMENT OR BLINDNESS

According to one stakeholder, Washington State has one of the largest deaf and blind communities in the country. Four interview subjects work or volunteer with blind or low-vision individuals. They noted key differences in the needs in their community, depending on whether a person was born blind or has lost their vision in adulthood. For those losing their vision in adulthood, there is a unique challenge of having navigated their whole life with eyesight and likely with a car, and then needing to learn an entirely different way of getting around, often as they are aging (see below section on "Seniors").

Advancements in technology, such as smart phones and apps that can be navigated with through voice rather than reading and touch, have made an enormous and positive impact on the lives and mobility of many of those with vision impairment or blindness. One end-user shared that they use a number of apps for transit information, including One Bus Away, Transit, and Lyft. Others mentioned Access and Uber. **Making transit information more accessible to this community should leverage technology- and voice-enabled tools and help train users in how to navigate transit through them.**

Resources provided to this community should include oral, voice enabled, or Braille communications that don't require reading by eyesight. However, while someone born blind might have learned to read Braille in school, someone becoming blind as they age will be challenged with learning a new language through touch. Voice-enabled resources are able to serve both groups.

Discovery, sign up, or login in steps required to access services – such as call centers, online forms, or information available on a website -- should minimize steps for users. Subjects suggested one phone number or a very brief (single page) online form.

Trustworthiness, credibility, friendliness, and patience were noted as essential traits for serving this community. If a Navigator is helping a person download and navigate an app on that person's phone, it should be in a way that ensures trust, and is in a safe setting. Multiple subjects noted that Navigators should have pre-existing credibility in this community.

One subject discussed "Structured Discovery," noting that it's one thing to train someone to ride one bus, but another to train them to understand traffic patterns, or to use dogs and canes for navigation. Training someone with vision impairment about transit information goes beyond transit into mobility access.

Transit and Information Challenges

- Needs are not consistent across whole community, varies depending on when the individual lost vision, whether they are low-vision or blind, whether they are experienced at navigating a cell phone via voice, whether they are able to read Braille, and many other factors.
- Using King County Metro Access can be challenging because of all the steps involved. Difficult to navigate via voice.
- Allowing someone to help you navigate transit options on their phone requires a significant amount of trust on their part, necessitating credibility and security in interactions with future Navigators.

"The blind and low vision population is probably the biggest population of people who I think can benefit from a Navigator."

"It's really hard here for guys like me, because you have to you to plan so far ahead..."

"I have an app called One Bus Away, it's an app for everybody, I think developed by UW students. That one is a really good voice over app, so I can use that to see if I can ride a bus or not."

ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA

The Alzheimer's and Dementia community is considered by several interview subjects to be very isolated from support and requiring a lot of attention.

Depending on the extent of memory loss, individuals are unlikely to navigate transit routes alone. Most have caregivers, some require 24/7 care. Training provided to them through a Navigator may not include helping them learn transit routes or information, as information is unlikely to be retained. Navigators that are able to ride alongside individuals or groups, that are trained to assist people with memory loss or their caretakers, was considered a helpful possibility.

Steps required to access Navigator support should be minimal and simple, and easily accessible for caregivers who are most likely to utilize the support.

Multiple subjects noted the need for Navigators to be consistent – either consistent as individuals, or through a consistent organization that caretakers can coordinate or talk with. Training for Navigators should include how best to support people with memory loss.

Transit and Information Challenges

- Lack of viable transportation options that can be utilized. Buses and car-shares don't work for this population, as they can forget where they are or where they are going.
- Outside of major metro area, individuals and their caretakers are more isolated, have less support or resources for transit.
- Many of the organizations and services that provide support for disabilities do not consider Dementia and Alzheimer's eligible.
- Need transportation options for more than just reaching medical appointments.
- Access noted as unreliable.
- Individuals with memory loss may not retain information from a Navigator.
- Unlikely to travel alone via transit.
- Individuals may experience anxiety or confusion while on their way to a destination, creating a situation that a driver may not be trained to support.

"The regular bus lines don't work. Because you have to be able to navigate things. A really good example is somebody that is living out in Sammamish Issaquah area, and they have younger onset Alzheimer's, which means that their spouse is still working, but they are still quite able physically, and they are not so far in the disease and they want to be social, they want to be able to go do things, but there is no way for them to leave home safely without their spouse. So, here's this person that's in their early 60s, and they are isolated at home while their spouse is working, and declining in a hurry because of that."

"Even if they are financially ok, dementia is so expensive, that every one of them is still afraid of being destitute by the end of that journey."

"I think it really needs to clear...for those who are living with Dementia or caring for someone with dementia...that this kind of transportation is really for them, and it's going to be safe, and it's going to be hand to hand."

"Access is the only solution for people in a lot of places."

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Multiple subjects noted the importance of resources being made available in multiple languages, however one subject noted that just providing written resources does not help those who aren't able to read in their native language. Navigators serving E.S.L. communities should be fluent in the language spoken.

Transit and Information Challenges

- Particularly in immigrant and refugee communities, lack of trust is a barrier to many end-users utilizing transit.
- Some Spanish-speaking end-users aren't aware of what ORCA cards are or how they work.
- Many resources are not available in their native language, and support is often provided in English.
- Not all service providers are patient, and many provide information too quickly for the end-user to understand fully what is being said.

"There's a language barrier. I know you guys are really good, but making sure there's more people that speak the language."

"Most of our client's access bus services, but even then, they may not be aware beyond their one sort of primary bus line that they use to get from wherever their living to work...but otherwise I think the rest of the system is very closed off to them."

"If they are given a phone number to call to get a ride, but the person they call is not culturally appropriate or can't respond or don't understand them, that could be a challenge."

"Clients are unaware of the ORCA card and how it works, or they've never even heard of it."

UNDOCUMENTED

Several stakeholders highlighted the need of making the Navigator program accessible to residents who are undocumented.

One end-user shared that in the current political climate, people who don't have immigration status in her community don't want to give out a lot of information about themselves. They recommend reducing paperwork or personal information required to access support or information from a Navigator.

"Because of that fear, that prevents them from seeking to look for help."

SENIORS

Most interview subjects highlighted transit information needs within the senior community, often overlapping with another end-user group such as low-income, rural, immigrant, or people with memory loss or disabilities. Lack of reliable transportation options for seniors is considered a critical challenge in serving this population.

Subjects suggested going to seniors to provide information and training, rather than expecting them to travel to a location for an event.

Transit and Information Challenges

- Aren't always able to navigate bus transfers.
- Aren't always able to walk up a hill to a bus stop or pickup location.
- Assistance may be needed in getting from their home to a car, or from a drop-off to their ultimate destination.
- Limited transit options have created a sense of isolation, loneliness. Particularly acute in rural communities.
- Access is not always on time for pickups, or has cancelations.
- Phone call wait times to receive assistance can take too long.

"Our patients don't necessarily want to go up to Seattle. And it's also not as a place where they may not be, or they don't feel safe in Seattle. They're trying to get out of...whatever lifestyle they may have engaged in Seattle."

"Some people who have Access probably have a better chance of doing it [going to community centers and meetings], but then they complain because a lot of times these things are not on time, those kind of issues."

INPUT ON COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

APPRECIATION AND DEMAND FOR THE PROGRAM

Both end-users and stakeholders were appreciative of the program's creation, and indicated a desire to be kept in the loop as it is fleshed out. The concept of a peer-to-peer model resonated with subjects, several of which expressed an interest in becoming Navigators, and several others expressed willingness to help get the word out when the program goes live.

"We would kill for the opportunity to have Navigators."

"I am 110% that this would be successful in our community."

OUTREACH APPROACH

Interview subjects provided several different visions for how the Community Transportation Navigator program would provide transit information outreach.

Simplify the Steps

Multiple subjects noted the need for process to be simple, and urged the CTN program to reduce the number of hoops that end-users jump through in order to access support.

“Simplifying is the best thing. If it’s hard to do it once or twice, then they will never call a third time.”

Call Center

Three subjects pictured the Navigator program as a call center that community members can call into, emphasizing the need for Navigators to be able to quickly access different platforms or tools to help the individual get where they’re trying to go. If structured this way, one subject suggested that Navigators might be located in a call center, or might be able to call into the job from their home, remotely.

Ride-Along

One end-user remembered that Hopelink did a shared bus experience/transit workshop, and suggested this as a possible activity for Navigators, to conduct ride-along transit outings in a similar way. Small group or one-on-one transit was also suggested.

Events

Many subjects mentioned events and trainings as a way that Navigators might provide assistance. This included:

- Trainings for how to download and use apps for mobility on a phone.
- Navigating transit with vision impairment.
- Training for transit drivers on how to support riders with Alzheimer’s or dementia.
- Youth and school-based trainings.
- Senior community center trainings.
- Community-based, local and convenient to the group being served.

Getting seniors or people with disabilities to events was noted as central to reducing isolation and depression, however transit to and from these events is a challenge. One subject suggested having Navigators identify community events coming up, and offer resources on how to get to them, or pair up to do a group ride with end-users to get to the event.

One end-user shared that Hopelink is not necessarily reaching the senior community with events like farmers markets, but that Hopelink should come into their Center to engage with residents.

TRUST

All interview subjects noted the importance of trust. This was expressed for trust between Hopelink and the Navigators, and between Navigators and end-users.

One subject noted that potential partners for the CTN program might not have had a good interaction or experience with organizations like Hopelink in the past. Conducting interviews like these was noted as a way that Hopelink is building a positive foundation for trust in the CTN program.

Trust between Navigators and the community they serve was highlighted by every interview subject as critical to the success of CTN. They recommend hiring Navigators who are already part of the community they would be serving, and who are uniquely qualified based on their understanding in that community to serve them in the way that addresses their unique needs.

How communities define or experience trust, researchers came to understand, varies depending on the needs and concerns of the specific community or group. While two subjects noted the importance of screening and background checks (for Navigators working with seniors, people with disabilities, people who are blind or low vision), several others noted the need to *not* conduct background checks or extensive paperwork due to fears of being deported (for Navigators working with residents who are undocumented). This difference in definition of “trust” holds implications for applications, screening process, contract development, and compensation for Navigators.

LONGEVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF PROGRAM

One subject noted that it is important that the Navigator program be structured in a way that it can sustain for the long-term. They raised concerns that reliance on grants may not be enough to keep it going. Longevity, both of the individuals who serve as Navigators, and in the program itself, was noted as a priority by several interview subjects.

"We really need to work on cost analysis. We need to start a Quicken numbers to see if we can sustain it forever...they're not going to get grants forever."

MARKETING

Almost all stakeholders rely on word of mouth and referral for marketing their peer-to-peer model, with limited direct marketing. Other methods mentioned include:

- Mass mailings
- Next Door
- List Servs
- TV
- Radio
- Podcasts
- Social Media / Facebook
- Fliering
- Referral / Word of mouth

Several subjects suggested that CTN reach out to organizations or community-based groups, alliances, and federations to let them know about the new program.

One subject suggested creating Navigator t-shirts or hats that help community members recognize that they are there to assist.

"I do periodically run into people who just don't know that they are eligible for Hopelink but don't know about it."

OUTREACH MATERIALS & RESOURCES

Subjects highlighted the importance of providing resources in the format or delivery method that each specific end-user prefers. Simplicity was highlighted by most interview subjects. Different needs require different types of communication, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Recommended resources included:

- Print products. Though some end-users have cell phones, it's not consistent and they won't always have a device to look information up on. Particularly acute for people experiencing homelessness.
- Fliers: For partners to distribute to their community, raising awareness of the CTN.
- Bus stops: Provide visual information at bus stops, for Navigators to reference when talking with end-users.
- In-language resources: Have translations available. Ideally, Navigators that are bi-lingual.
- Email: Be prepared to email an end-user the information they need.
- Apps: Have a list of relevant and/or recommended apps that are useful to different user groups. Including voice-enabled apps.
- Resources for Caregivers of people with Alzheimer's and dementia.
- Fact sheets that catch people's eyes.

"Simplifying is the best thing. If it's hard to do it once or twice, then they will never call a third time."

"The hardest part about getting people information, is getting them to the meetings."

RECRUITMENT AND COMPENSATION OF COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION NAVIGATORS

Desired Qualities

Interview subjects shared the following traits and qualities that would make an effective Community Transportation Navigator:

- Trustworthy
- Good communicators, interpersonal skills
- Strong listening skills, able to listen for how an end-user is comfortable interacting and what they want to learn.
- Patient
- Multi-Lingual
- Organized
- Friendly
- Warm
- Diverse, representing a range of backgrounds
- Listening, integrate how people are comfortable with learning
- Experienced in community outreach
- Genuinely interested in helping others
- Walks the walk, takes transit and knows the systems, curious about figuring things out
- "ORCA people"
- Engaged
- Curious to figure out solutions
- Comfortable asking people about how they prefer to receive information about transportation, whether it's email, written, oral.

"First of all, [Navigators must be] friendly to any different kind of disability and immigrants. Immigrants don't always speak quite good English, you have to be patient. Some disabilities have a speech disability, they don't speak clearly or fast enough. You really have to be nice and calm and patient and listen to them in the detail of what they want."

“I think someone who is engaged. Someone who knows a lot of people. Someone who is articulate enough to get a community engaged.”

Screening and Background Checks

Multiple subjects recommended not doing background checks for Navigators in order to ensure the trust and safety of any Navigators who are undocumented, particularly in the current political climate. Another noted that background checks are important for the safety of end-users (such as those who are visually impaired or have memory loss).

Subjects were supportive of a selection process that ensures that Navigators have the skills necessary to support the specific community they intend to serve.

Individuals with Existing Ties to the Community They Serve

All subjects noted that Navigators should be recruited from the community they are intended to serve. Navigators should be trusted, known entities.

- Several subjects suggested seniors active within a senior center as examples of possible Navigators. One subject believed that seniors would appreciate the opportunity to earn some pay, and that they have the skills and knowledge to be navigators. One end-user, who is involved in a senior center, expressed interest in becoming a Navigator himself.
- One stakeholder suggested the Navigator role as an opportunity to not just provide a volunteer experience, but to benefit the community by providing jobs. They recommended recruiting Promotores to serve as dual Community Transportation Navigators, since they are already deeply involved in their community, and are trusted resources for their peers.
- Several interview subjects noted that while caregivers would make great Navigators because they have knowledge and experience in their community, it was noted that they are overburdened and stretched thin. One subject was concerned about adding any extra work onto caregivers.

“How about one innovative program that says ‘we are going to pay Promotres?’”

“What we found to be true is that the best way to do outreach to clients is by haring from within the communities, so most of the work we do is done by people from those communities. So, a lot of our family advocacies, all of our home visiting, some of our behavioral health services and education programs are provided by community members themselves.”

Individuals within Organizations with Existing Ties to the Community They Serve

Multiple subjects suggested that Hopelink should identify individuals within organizations that have existing ties to their community in order to integrate the Navigator duties into their position. Examples of this included the program coordinators at senior community centers, employees within local businesses, or nonprofits with existing call centers that could add the Navigator capacity to their existing infrastructure.

Coordinator of CTN Program

One stakeholder recommended that whoever is responsible for managing and/or coordinating the CTN program should have thick skin, that it will likely feel discouraging sometimes if they don't feel they're getting buy in.

Another noted that the program manager of their volunteer transportation service (in which volunteers drive their own personal vehicles to get folks to and from medical appointments) serves as a volunteer recruiter; attending events and meetings, connecting with hospitals and senior centers, and helping to get the word out.

Training

Many subjects offered suggestions about training components for recruited Navigators. Recommendations included:

Audience Needs

- Anti-Bias training.
- How to support undocumented residents.
- How to support individuals who have had surgery recently, or have specific disabilities or conditions.
- How to help individuals with dementia or Alzheimer's when experiencing anxiety or confusion.
- Equip people to ask about how the client prefers to receive the information.
- Cultural knowledge about the community they'll be serving.

Transit Knowledge

- Transit lines and routes that begin in Seattle but end outside of King County.

Logistics

- Host the training in the community where the support will be provided.
- Clear, hands on, and supportive so people feel comfortable and good about what they're being asked to do.

- If Navigators are recruited from severe mobility clients, someone restricted to their home, important to bring training to them, into their home. Webinar options, on-site training.

"Make the training very clear, hands on, and supportive so people feel comfortable and good at what their being asked to do."

Compensation for Community Transportation Navigators

All but one interview subject noted the importance of compensation for Navigators, regardless of their legal status.

Multiple shared that it was important for Navigators to be consistent, and serving in the role for a longer-term period, or to be a group dedicated to serving the role in a specific community in an ongoing capacity. Providing an hourly rate or stipend was recommended to ensure follow through of Navigators, which was noted as harder to achieve with unpaid volunteers.

All but two interview subjects suggested compensating Navigators at between \$15-25 an hour.

- One subject suggested matching what individuals are paid in their current jobs.
- One subject argued for around \$25/hour, based on wanting the program to hire individuals who know what they're doing.
- One subject suggested paying Navigators as consultants, at \$100-200 for a few hours work, or \$75-100 for 90 minutes.
- One subject suggested having Navigators serve in a volunteer, unpaid capacity.
- For training events, one subject recommended paying Navigators \$60 + transit costs.
- One subject suggested offering two rates, one for individuals who serve remotely as a call center, and another for those who commute around to provide the resources.

Particularly if recruiting Navigators from undocumented communities, interview subjects repeatedly noted the need to have trust and paperwork align. Contracts should be reviewed one-on-one between Hopelink and a new Navigator, with the individual included in the discussion of how and when they are paid. While it may be difficult to structure compensation in a way that removes all difficulties for undocumented Navigators, subjects suggested discussing with each Navigator about how they would like to be compensated, and to be transparent about it.

With the Promotores program, a stakeholder noted that because not all Promotores are paid, and there is no transparency or trust around how payment is made, it has created tension both between Promotores and the program, and between peers. They suggest learning from this and ensuring that all Navigators are invited to one-on-one discussions to discuss how they would like to be compensated.

Non-financial compensation suggestions were noted by several subjects, including:

- Gift cards – though one subject noted that people would rather be paid directly than receive gift cards that are only usable at one location. If gift cards are purchased, another subject recommended getting them for somewhere practical like Fred Meyer, where Navigators can use them on essentials.
- Recognition – such as a Navigator of the month, highlighted for their peers and community, and noting how many people they supported or served that month.
- ORCA Cards.

“I think a reasonable hourly amount would be fine. I don’t know, \$20 an hour or something like that. That would probably be adequate. Or at least maybe matching what they are making at their current jobs.”

“You can give me 100 bucks and that's great but having that recognition from my community like a bulletin for volunteer of the year. Its meaningful to be celebrated among your peers.”

“It’s meaningful to be celebrated among your peers.”

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

INTERVIEW SUBJECT CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT

All interview subjects indicated an interest in being engaged further in the development of the CTN program. An addendum has been provided to this report with follow up contact information.

The Vida Agency recommends re-engaging interview subjects with a summary of the interview findings or the full findings report, and a draft of how the program will operate for them to give additional feedback on. This second engagement would continue to strengthen relationships and trust, enable subjects to validate that their input was heard, address any input they feel wasn’t captured accurately, and ensure that their concerns are addressed in the CTN approach.



Cost Allocation Policy

Purpose: Document Hopelink’s method for allocating direct and indirect costs to departments, programs, grants, and activities.

Applies to: All Hopelink expenses.

Policy: Hopelink uses the Direct allocation method. When allocating costs to programs and grants which receive federal funds, allowable costs are determined based on the principles established in the Uniform Guidance, 2CFR 200, and are allocated without regard to ability or willingness to pay by the funding source.

Direct Method: The Direct method is used on all costs that can be readily identified to a specific area, person, or department. If direct costs can be identified with more than one program, they are prorated individually as direct costs based on the percentage of actual usage by each program. Examples of direct method allocations based on expense type:

- Supplies – calculated based on percentage of actual usage by program or department.
- Rent, insurance, building maintenance, and utilities – percentage of occupied square footage.
- Auto Insurance – percentage of program vehicles based on total vehicles in Agency fleet.
- Telephone and Internet – percentage of total Full Time Equivalent (FTEs).
- Software Maintenance and User Fees – based on the percentage of the total number of users in the program.

For General and Administrative, Development, Communications, and Volunteer Services, costs are allocated as follows:

- **General and Administrative Costs:** General and Administrative includes Human Resources (HR), Executive, Finance, IT, Organizational Excellence (OE), and Facilities Administration. Costs associated with these departments such as salaries, benefits, training, supplies, travel, and facility expenses are collected within each of these departments. Allowable costs within these departments are allocated to all Community Service, Development, and Transportation departments.

- Allowable IT costs are allocated based upon the percentage of their total Byte Hours compared to the total Monthly Byte hours used by those departments.
- Allowable Facility costs are allocated based upon the percentage of their closed facility work orders compared to the total monthly closed facility work orders per month (including work orders associated with the Adelle Maxwell property).
- Allowable Executive, Finance, HR and OE Administrative costs are allocated each month based upon the percentage of FTEs for each department that month.
- **Development Costs:** Development costs (accumulated in Departments 140, 142, 144, and 146) include salaries, benefits, training, supplies, travel, facility expenses, and general fundraising. Allowable Development costs are allocated only to Community Service departments with the exception of the LIHEAP and PSE programs. The allowable Development costs are allocated to the Community Service departments based upon the percentage of each individual Department's Year-to-Date Net Loss divided by the sum of all Community Service Departmental Year-to-Date Net Losses.
- **Communications:** Costs associated with Communications include salaries, benefits, training, supplies, travel, facility expenses, and the Agency general Communications expenses. Allowable Communication department costs are allocated to Development, Community Services, and Mobility Management based upon the percentage of the Department's Designated Revenue year-to-date divided by the sum of all Development, Community Service, and Mobility Management Designated Revenue year-to-date.
- **Volunteer Services:** Costs associated with Volunteer Services include salaries, benefits, training, supplies, travel, and facility expenses. Allowable Volunteer Service department costs are allocated to Community Services and Transportation based upon the percentage of monthly volunteers for that department or program divided by the total volunteers for Community Services and Transportation for that month.

This policy was reviewed by the COO, CFO, and Controller on June 2, 2021.

Last Revised: 6/2/21

Author: Michele Anzlovar

Approved by: Amanda Reinhard

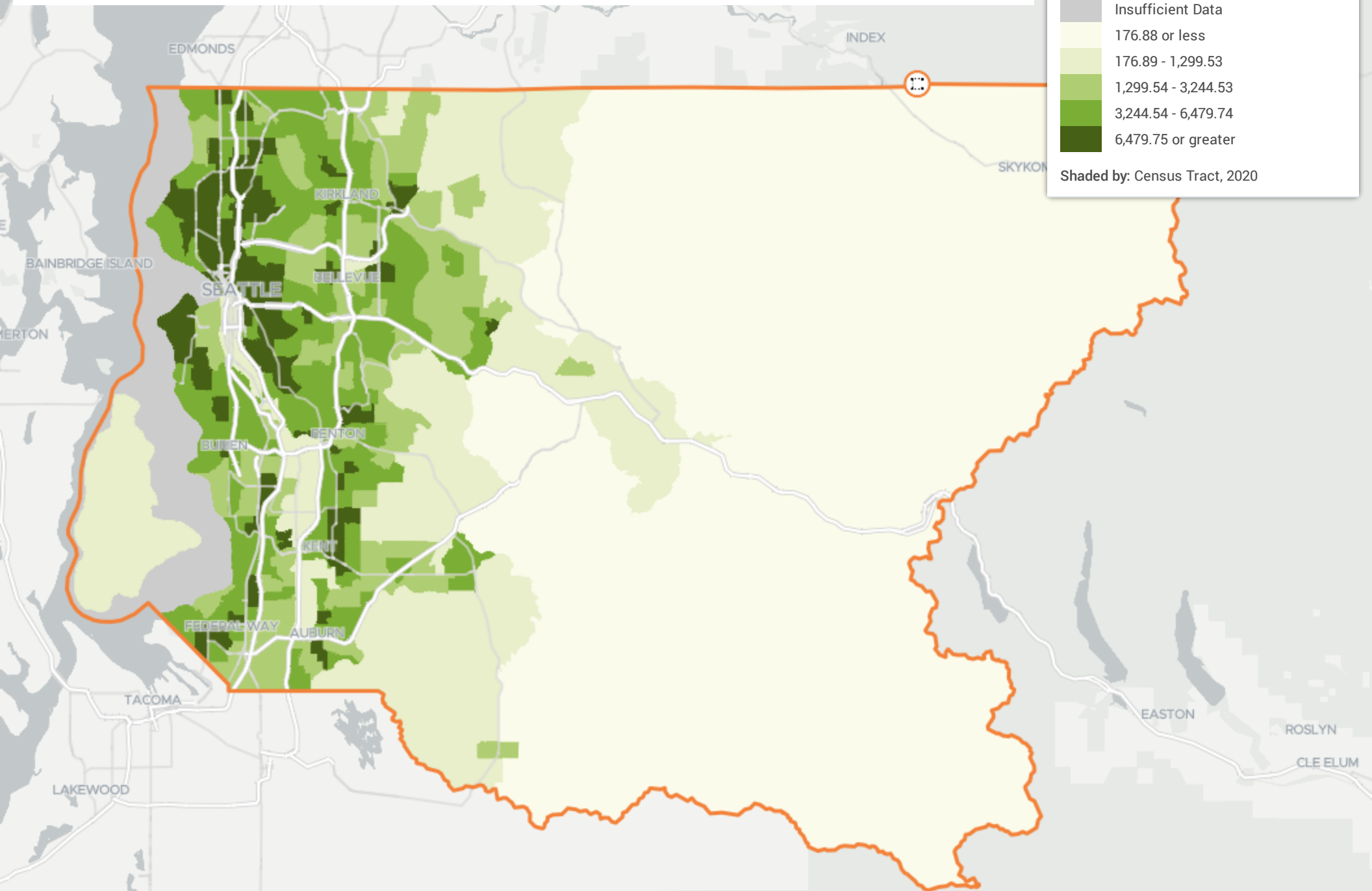
King County Population Density in 2020

Number of people per square mile in 2020. The population density was determined by taking the count of people and dividing it by the square mileage of the area.

Population Density
Source: Census
Year: 2020

Insufficient Data
176.88 or less
176.89 - 1,299.53
1,299.54 - 3,244.53
3,244.54 - 6,479.74
6,479.75 or greater

Shaded by: Census Tract, 2020





8990 154th Ave. NE
Redmond, WA 98052

August 29, 2024

WSDOT
310 Maple Park Ave SE
Olympia, WA 98501-2348

Dear Grant Reviewers,

Hopelink is committing \$70,000 for the two-year grant period from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027 as matching funds for the Community Transportation Navigators grant application.

The Hopelink Mobility Management team empowers people to change their lives by facilitating access to the community. Our programs are tailored to meet the needs of King County residents, including seniors, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. Among these are Hopelink's existing mobility outreach and education programs and staffing for the King County Mobility Coalition and subregional coalitions, which provide critical services and facilitate coordination in this time of increasing need. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have lived experience, cultural background and the skills to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

This project supports Hopelink's mission to promote self-sufficiency for all members of our community. Since 1971, Hopelink has served homeless and low-income families, individuals, children, seniors and people with disabilities. Today, Hopelink provides a full array of critical social services through more than 35 different programs. Our services include food, shelter, housing for homeless families, homelessness prevention, family development, adult literacy, and employment services. Hopelink's specialized transportation services, including Mobility Management, are a critical component of support for our clients. Personal mobility allows the most impacted members of our community to receive the medical care and other services they need to thrive.

Thank you for considering our comments regarding this grant application. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Staci Sahoo at 425-943-6769.

Sincerely,

Meghan Altimore
COO

Signed by:

291D60ED172B414...

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink



Moving forward together

Metro Transit Department
Mobility Division
Market Innovation Section
Market & Business Development
201 S. Jackson Street
KSC-TR-0411
Seattle, WA 98104-3856

September 6, 2024

Meghan Altimore
Hopelink
8990 154th Avenue Northeast
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Ms. Altimore,

King County Metro supports Hopelink and the continuation and expansion of the King County Metro and Hopelink partnership program, Community Transportation Navigators. This critical and effective program serves hard to reach communities such as older adults, people with disabilities, people with housing instability, immigrants and refugees, low-income families and others to increase their access to transportation options across the Puget Sound region. Hopelink has a strong history of implementing and sustaining programs designed to provide and/or improve access to transportation for people with special needs in King County. Their programs are tailored to meet the needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and others faced with mobility challenges. The Community Transportation Navigators program was rooted in an inclusive planning process with expertise and experience from human service providers, transportation providers, researchers, and community engagement. Navigators will have the lived experience, cultural background and skills needed to provide nuanced support to meet the needs of the communities they represent.

The Community Transportation Navigator's program advances King County Metro's mission to serve where needs are greatest across King County. This program will build community capacity to work in partnership with Hopelink and Metro to identify, remove and/or reduce barriers to transportation, mobility and, as a result, opportunity for the most vulnerable and transit-dependent communities in our region, advancing Metro's agency values of equity, sustainability and safety.

King County Metro commits to providing a minimum of \$25,000 during the two-year grant period from July 1st, 2025, to June 30th, 2027, as matching funds for Hopelink's grant application. The matching funding are contingent adoption of King County's 2026-2027 biennium budget scheduled for adoption in November of 2025. We look forward to the continued partnership between King County Metro and Hopelink in the future and wish you well with your application. Thank you for considering our comments regarding Hopelink's application. Should you have any questions, please contact Kristine Edens at kredens@kingcounty.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Chris O'Claire
5639CF2A18F148D...

Christina O'Claire
Mobility Division Director.

CC: Staci Sahoo, Hopelink
Sandy Phan, Hopelink