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**[www.opalpdx.org](http://www.opalpdx.org)**



**OPAL**

ORGANIZING PEOPLE / ACTIVATING LEADERS



## OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon

*OPAL builds power for Environmental Justice and Civil Rights in our communities. We organize low-income communities and people of color to achieve a safe and healthy environment where we live, work, learn, play and pray. We strive to create opportunities for meaningful participation in decision making.*



# Organizing People Activating Leaders

- We believe that equitable access to public transportation is a civil right.
- We believe that public transportation as a common
- We believe this is an opportunity to be bold in our leadership by centering transit dependant, low income, communities of color and youth experiences and needs.

# YOUTHPASS

Acknowledgement and Thank you!

- Community organizations led by people of color
- Ally organizations
- Schools Districts, Agencies, Elected Officials
- Thousands of youth and supporters who took action over the years

# YouthPass History

- In 1997 Sisters in Action for Power began a campaign to address transit justice for youth in Portland.
- YouthPass was created in 2008 funded by the State through the Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC)
- In 2011, after BETC funds were exhausted a partnership was facilitated with TriMet, the City of Portland, and the Portland Public School District
- Several organizations, including Multnomah Youth Commission and OPAL carried this work forward
- Youth Environmental Justice Alliance launched the YouthPass to the Future Campaign in 2015
- FY2017-2018 resources provided by the City of Portland for YouthPass were expanded to East Portland School Districts (Parkrose and David Douglas)

# Current Youth Fare Program

2.5 hour pass: \$1.25  
Day pass: \$2.50

- Portland Public Schools
  - Free Student Transit Pass Program
  - Offered to all students
- Parkrose High School & David Douglas High School
  - Free Student Transit Pass Program
  - Offered to *some* students based on application



# Current Youth Fare Program (cont.)

- Current estimated cost of YouthPass: \$3 million
  - based on 2011 report conducted by EcoNorthwest
  - analyzed based solely on Youth transit pass usage at Portland Public Schools
- \$967,000 in grant funding was provided by the City of Portland to subsidize the cost of youth transit passes for students within the Portland Public School District.
  - in FY 2017-2018 this funding was divided between Parkrose School District, David Douglas School District and Parkrose School District.
- Approximately 14,000 youth in Portland Public, 400 youth in Parkrose, and 1,000 youth in David Douglas have access to the YouthPass program

# Opportunity for a Bolder Vision

- Transit access for youth across the TriMet service district that increases accessibility to education, access to job opportunities, and lifelong positive experiences with public transportation.
- A transit system that serves the needs of those who are the most dependent on the system.
- Investment in programs that address decreasing ridership.



# Considerations

- Are funding decisions being made that **centers the experiences and needs** of transit dependent individuals, youth, low income and communities of color?
- Do funding decisions **increase** TriMet ridership?
- Are recommendations coming directly from transit dependent communities?
- Is an equity and environmental justice analysis applied to decision-making **before** they are made?

# Resources

## History

- <http://news.streetroots.org/2011/06/23/trimet-youth-pass-creating-our-transit-riders-future>
- <https://www.opalpdx.org/2017/05/youthpass-victory-this-is-huge/>

## Other youth transportation access programs

- <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/seattle-plan-for-free-transit-for-students-among-most-generous-in-nation-mayor-says/>
- <https://www.sfmta.com/fares/free-muni-youth>