

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Resolution authorizing execution of the ORCA card agreement with King County for the purchase of ORCA cards for City of Bellevue employees for 2019, in an amount not to exceed \$358,820.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This agreement allows City employees to use a single card known as “ORCA” to access comprehensive transportation services provided by six agencies, including King County Metro, Sound Transit, Pierce Transit, Community Transit, Everett Transit, and Kitsap Transit. The City’s Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program relies on ORCA cards to support and incentivize employees to commute by sustainable commute modes, particularly by transit and vanpool, where we receive the largest benefit toward reaching our CTR and emission reduction goals.

RECOMMENDATION

Move to adopt Resolution No. 9505.

If approved, effective date: 12/10/2018

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In February 2007, the City Council passed Resolution No. 7517, adopting a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Providing ORCA cards as part of our CTR program supports more use of transit and other alternative modes by employees and thus helps the City achieve its emission reduction goal.

As the administrator for CTR for all Bellevue employers, the City promotes the ORCA card program as an effective CTR tool. When the ORCA card is included in an employer’s CTR program, it is associated with an increase in sustainable commuting among its employees.

Since the launch of the ORCA card program in 2010, the City has provided this valuable transportation option to employees. ORCA provides employees access to comprehensive transportation benefits that combine transit, vanpool, rail, streetcar, water taxi and emergency taxi ride features all in one program.

In 2018, 60 percent of employees at City Hall (excluding commissioned police personnel) and 44 percent of employees at the Bellevue Service Center used transit, vanpools, and other sustainable commute modes supported by the ORCA card program. Providing the ORCA card as one of our CTR program elements reduces demand on our limited parking supply and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impacts

State Law and Bellevue City Code

Washington State's Commute Trip Reduction Efficiency Act (amending the Washington Clean Air Act, Ch. 70.94 RCW) requires local governments that meet certain congestion-related criteria to adopt CTR plans and ordinances for major employers (over 100 employees) in the affected urban growth area. Pursuant to this Act, Bellevue amended its code to adopt a CTR plan (Ch. 14.40 BCC) that requires affected employers to make a good faith effort to develop and implement a CTR program that will encourage employees to reduce vehicle miles traveled per employee and drive alone commute trips.

Comprehensive Plan

Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan, Policy TR-12 states: "Ensure that the City as an employer sets a positive example by maintaining a strong transportation demand management program for its employees." By providing ORCA cards, the City provides employees an alternative to drive-alone commuting and sets a positive example to other Bellevue employers.

Fiscal Impacts

This Agreement obligates the City to pay King County \$358,820 for the purchase of the annual 2019 ORCA cards for City employees. This expenditure was planned and budgeted in the recently adopted 2019-2020 operating budget.

At an annual cost of \$449 per employee, the City receives a considerable discount in the bulk purchase of cards through this program. The retail price for an annual transit-only pass ranges from \$1,188 to \$2,484 depending on the agency and number of zones the employee travels through. At these rates, if the City bought transit-only passes for 800 employees for example, the cost to the City for an annual retail pass would range from \$950,400 to \$1,987,200.

At \$358,820 the ORCA card purchase agreement continues to be a more cost-effective alternative for the City. For comparison purposes, the 2018 ORCA card purchase was \$346,052. The 4 percent increase in 2019 is attributed to an increase in transit ridership among our employees.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt the Resolution authorizing execution of the ORCA card agreement with King County for the purchase of ORCA cards for City of Bellevue employees for 2019, in an amount not to exceed \$358,820.
2. Do not adopt the Resolution and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

Proposed Resolution No. 9505

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

Proposed Purchase Agreement for ORCA Business Cards and ORCA Business Passport Products between King County and the City of Bellevue