

NKCMC Meeting Recap – October 22, 2026

At a glance

- **Sound Behavioral Health** introduced its Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team (MRRCT), a behavioral health alternative to police response that serves North and East King County outside Seattle.
- **Fond Care Transportation** shared its wheelchair-accessible, culturally responsive ride service, including free rides for DDA-eligible clients through June 2027.
- **Work plan:** a first/last mile panel event is in planning, and the Take Transit With Me video series has two pilot videos.
- **Next meeting:** December 17, 2026 (moved up a week because of Christmas Eve).

Presentation 1: Sound Behavioral Health – Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team

Presenter: Maxine Anderson (she/they), North Region MRRCT Manager

MRRCT sends trained crisis teams in person to people having a behavioral health crisis, as a less restrictive alternative to law enforcement. Sound has provided outpatient mental health care in King County since 1966.

About the program

- **Regions:** In 2024, King County expanded mobile crisis from one Seattle-based team to three regional teams. Sound covers the Northeast region (all of North King County outside Seattle), responding from Bellevue and Lake City Way. DESC covers Central; another Sound team covers South.
- **Teams:** Each team has at least two people, mixing mental health professionals, case managers and peer support specialists with lived experience. Staff are trained in de-escalation, suicide prevention, cultural humility, and trauma-informed care.
- **Staffing:** Currently up to 4 teams on day shift, 5 on swing shift and 3 overnight, depending on staffing.

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- **Response time:** Teams leave within about 15 minutes of dispatch. Maxine said arrival is now typically under 30 minutes (the slides list 30–60 minutes).
- **Vans:** Unmarked gray vans set up as climate-controlled private offices with internet. Staff wear dark blue MRRCT jackets. Pets are welcome.
- **Not ADA accessible:** The vans have a high step. For wheelchairs and walkers, MRRCT uses MedStar and is working on a Yellow Cab contract.
- **Not a transportation service:** Rides are offered only when they are part of the crisis of response.

How to request a team

- **Public:** Call **988**. Crisis Connections screens the call and resolves it by phone if possible, or dispatches MRRCT.
- **Service providers: 206-436-2967.** Contact Maxine to confirm whether your program qualifies for this line.
- Teams can only be dispatched by Crisis Connections, not called directly.
- Share everything you know about the scene. Downplaying risk puts both the team and the person at risk.
- If a weapon is actively in use, law enforcement clears the scene first. Survival tools on a person are not a concern.

Common calls: suicidal ideation or self-harm; severe anxiety, depression or psychosis; family or relationship conflict; people who are unsheltered. Shelter beds are very limited. Teams often take people to Connections Kirkland or the Crisis Solution Center in Seattle.

Follow-up: MRRCT does not provide case management. An eight-week follow-up period is coming, and new post-crisis teams are being designed for people discharged from crisis centers.

Q&A highlights

- **Is there an intake form?** (Heather Clark) No. Crisis Connections asks screening questions by phone: who the person is, what is happening, any weapons, signs of contagious illness, and whether the person is safe to wait.
- **Who handles rides home from crisis centers?** (Heather Clark) The crisis care center is responsible for discharge planning, including transportation. Maxine offered to connect Heather with Connections Kirkland's community accounts manager.

- **Can transit staff call for someone near train tracks?** (Emilie Pelfrene) For an immediate danger, call 911. If transit security is keeping the person safe, MRRCT can respond.
- **What about confidentiality?** (Mandy Wes) Calling is a clinical judgment, ideally with the person's consent. If you would otherwise call the police, MRRCT is a less restrictive option.
- **What if someone has a severe panic attack on a bus?** (Mandy Wes) Ask the person, using nods or gestures if needed, whether they want help called. Ari McKenna raised this as an open question for the coalition: how transit operators are trained, and how to get crisis help to riders in motion.

Presentation 2: Fond Care Transportation

Presenter: Jacques Murinda (he), Director, Fond Care Transportation

Fond Care is a small, community-focused company offering wheelchair-accessible rides with drivers who share their riders' languages and cultures. Jacques founded it in 2023 after seeing, as an immigrant from the Democratic Republic of Congo, that the barrier is often bigger than the ride itself: knowing how to book, coordinate and get information in a familiar language.

Who they serve

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), BIPOC communities, immigrants and refugees, seniors, people with physical disabilities, and low-income individuals. Service area is King and Snohomish counties.

Trip types: medical, dental, therapy and dialysis appointments; community and recreational activities; pharmacy, grocery and essential trips; door-to-door support where appropriate.

Services

Service	Who it's for	Cost to rider
Free community and recreational rides (DSHS Dan Thompson grant, "Uplift WA")	DDA-eligible clients; they do not need to be receiving DDA services	Free, through June 2027

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Private-pay rides, wheelchair-accessible or not	Anyone	Base fare (higher for wheelchair rides) plus \$4 per mile; some trips at a flat hourly rate
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Rides with a CNA-certified caregiver	Riders who need a caregiver to stay with them	Hourly
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- **On-demand:** Riders can often get a ride within 30 minutes to an hour, without booking far ahead.
- **Pricing:** Currently promotional; Jacques said it is well below Uber. Fares are shared before the trip.
- **Capacity:** 4 paid part-time drivers and 2 new accessible vans. Open to volunteer drivers in the future.
- **Standards:** ADA and FTA drug and alcohol compliant; drivers complete defensive driving, HIPAA and first aid/CPR training. State licensed and certified through OMWBE.
- **Language access:** Information in 4–5 languages, a WhatsApp community group with hundreds of members, and a new online platform launching next month.
- **Accountability:** Every ride and unduplicated DDA-eligible client is tracked monthly and reported to DSHS.
- **Partnership:** Fond Care has applied to become a Hopelink partner, which could open Medicaid reimbursement. They are awaiting a response.

Q&A highlights

- **How do riders access the free grant rides?** (Dean Sydnor) Call Fond Care; staff explain the options and confirm eligibility.
- **Are drivers paid?** (Lyn McCarthy) Yes, part-time paid drivers.
- **Does a wheelchair ride cost more?** (Randall Hoxie) Only the base fare differs. The per-mile rate is the same.
- **What would North Bend to Monroe cost?** (Nicole Ross) No figure was given. Nicole will follow up with Jacques directly.
- **How big is the operation?** (Cliff Perry, via chat) 4 drivers and 2 vans, with plans to grow.

NKCMC FY27 work plan updates

Improving Access in North King County panel. The planned speaker series is now a single panel event on first/last mile barriers to transit access. Planned subtopics: funding, micromobility, alternative transportation, and pedestrian and transit infrastructure. Ysabel is lining up speakers and welcomes suggestions.

Take Transit With Me video series. Short educational videos showing how to get from A to B by transit. Two pilots are filmed:

- **Seattle to Bothell:** uses a route that has since been discontinued, so it won't be shared.
- **Seattle to Duval:** made with Nicole Ross for Week Without Driving. The trip took about 3.5 hours using Link, Metro and Snoqualmie Valley Transportation, showing how hard some trips are by transit.

Ysabel hopes to make future videos with North King County cities and community organizations, especially to help riders with the August service changes.

Possible partnership: Emilie Pelfrene shared that Sound Transit and Pierce Transit are working on travel training now that Route 574 ends at Federal Way Station instead of the airport. This affects riders with luggage, disabilities or mobility devices. Sound Transit is interested in partnering on this video series.

How you can help

- Suggest speakers or topics for the first/last mile panel: email Ysabel at yyu@hopelink.org.
- Suggest trips for the Take Transit With Me series, especially routes affected by the August service changes.
- Service providers: contact Maxine Anderson (Sound Behavioral Health) to check whether your program can use the MRRCT provider line Maxine.Anderson@Sound.Health
- For Fond Care pricing or referrals, contact Jacques Murinda directly Email: contact@fondcaretransportation.com

Presenter slides will be sent with the follow-up email.

Next meeting and contacts

The next meeting is on Dec 17, 2026, 10:30 am–12:00 pm on Zoom. It moves up from the usual fourth Thursday because of Christmas Eve.

- **Ysabel Yu**, North King County Mobility Coordinator: yyu@hopelink.org · 425-516-5418
- **Heather Clark**, Program Manager of Coalitions: hclark@hopelink.org · 425-625-6784