

Skagit Project Homeless Connect, 9/11/14

Total number of participants who commented on the public transportation system: **52**

Comments:

Male, homeless

Skagit Transit used to be free, but they started charging. Some people don't have a dollar or even fifty cents to ride. Why can't they add it (the fare) to property taxes? Do you know how many people in Skagit own homes and pay property taxes?

Female, disabled

I use Paratransit, and I like it. I'm having heart issues, so I'll need it even more in the future. I can't stand for an hour waiting for the bus when I have heart issues.

I try calling the Mobile Food Express, which was turned over from Community Action to the Food Bank in Mount Vernon. Since then, nobody calls back! They need to notify the public if the service has ended. I call for a meal, and they don't show up until two days later—and then the meal is small.

Male, homeless

More service is needed in Skagit County.

Female, senior, homeless, disabled

Route 300 to Sedro-Woolley needs to run more often—every half hour instead of every hour. We appreciate free transit on Skagit Project Homeless Connect days!

Male and female, both disabled

My wife is disabled and gets a free bus pass, and I get a monthly pass for \$12.50. It's how she gets around to her medical appointments. We're happy with the service and the cost, and the drivers are very friendly.

Male, homeless, disabled

(When asked if he uses public transportation) I live in my van, so it's easier for me to get around that way. But sometimes I don't have gas money.

Female, Hispanic, ESL

I walk. The bus doesn't go where I need to go, and it's too far away.

Female, homeless

I've got a car, and the (Skagit) bus is too expensive.

Female, homeless

I would use it (the bus) more if it was cheaper.

Female, disabled, senior

I don't trust the driver safety. I rode a bus and the driver ran a red light.

Female, disabled, senior

I use SKAT and County Commuter—I'm very happy with the service.

Couple, homeless

The bus system is perfect! But they changed routes from March's Point. That makes me sad.

Female, homeless, disabled

I use Dial-A-Ride, but the wait times are a bit long, especially after a doctor's appointment when you're not feeling good. Waiting 1-1 ½ hours is aggravating after my mental health appointment.

Female, disabled

I drive—I don't walk well, and it's easier to drive. I have appointments in Island County and have to deal with County Commuter. Doesn't Dial-A-Ride take me from the county line to my doctor in Anacortes? Why isn't Island Transit here (at the event)?

Male and female

We need more stops further East on College Way—there are bus stops, but no bus comes! If a bus came further out on College Way, I would go to work on the bus every day. And they're always late.

Female

Expand the hours, especially on the weekends! It's hard to keep a job. I have to come in to work too early, and then I need the bus until 9 or 10pm. Otherwise I have to take the Greyhound and that's expensive. My only other choice is the train, and that's too expensive.

Female, senior, disabled

We need more cross-county transit—life goes on beyond Skagit County! If you want good quality medical care, you have to go outside of Skagit County because the good doctors in Skagit County aren't taking any more patients.

Female, senior, disabled

If I don't have money for a cab after I go to Urgent Care, I end up having to stay in the Emergency Room overnight until the first bus runs in the morning.

Female, disabled

I'm scared of the bus. I have mental illness, and my provider is in Bellingham. I would have to wait for hours. We need more Medicare providers.

Female, addiction recovery advocate

All bus drivers should carry [Narcan](#). My son was an addict, he was stranded, and what did he do all night? He rode the bus. If someone overdoses on a bus they only have a few minutes.

Female

The drivers aren't safe. Once on College Way, I was forced into oncoming traffic by a Skagit Transit bus that was merging into my lane. His blinker was on, but I was in the middle of the bus with my car and I had nowhere to go. I know he saw me, and he knows I saw him. He merged anyway.

Male and Female, married

The bus needs to run more often. We're a 1-car family. There are too few runs to Anacortes. I wish Skagit Transit was free like Island Transit. I lived near Concrete, and the bus runs were so early and so late in the day that my husband couldn't get a job for many months.

Male, homeless

We need more service to Bellingham, especially on Sunday. I have kids in Bellingham, but I can't see them as much as I want.

Female, homeless living in shelter

I'm a single mom and I have four kids—the bus doesn't work for me. (Was also grateful that Island Transit was free.)

Male, homeless

I use Skagit Transit. It meets all my needs.

Two males, homeless

We get ONE bus to Marblemount! Do you know why? It's because they can't make money on it. There used to be more service, but at the council meeting they took the daily bus away. Nobody on the council even uses the bus. Do you think any of us were there? No. Marblemount lacks representation. The transit services should be run by Commissioners only, because the Mayors will favor their city. Island Transit is free. Someone in Marblemount who wants to shop in Burlington only gets ½ hour before the bus leaves again. There is a "west" and "east" Skagit County, and the east has no representation.

Female, disabled, senior

Uses Dial-A-Ride; working on getting the "return time" down because it's not always easy to identify the return time.

Male and female, both disabled seniors

I use the SKAT bus but I want to use Dial-A-Ride and the questions about qualifying are too confusing. My husband will go through cancer treatment soon so we'll need to sign up for Dial-A-Ride.

Staff member at Community Action Agency

My clients often don't know how to ride the bus or they don't understand the system. Why don't we have T.V. commercials? Everyone watches T.V. The main reason clients miss their appointments, including medical and opportunities to get free food and services, is lack of transportation.

Replies translated from Spanish (4):

- I use the bus because it's cheap.
- I use the bus because sometimes I don't have anyone to take me to where I need to go. I wish it passed by more often—every 30 minutes
- I use the bus; the drivers drive well. We need more frequent routes; around 15 minutes apart.
- I use the bus sometimes. Sometimes I don't have a car and transportation is very important. The bus system needs more routes. The times that I've used the bus everything has gone well.

-Notes by Liz Theaker, SCOG intern