



Whatcom Transportation Authority

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AGENDA
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022, 8:00 A.M.**

In-Person Location:
4011 Bakerview Spur, Bellingham, WA
For virtual access instructions, visit:
<http://www.ridewta.com/meeting>

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AGENDA ITEM C.1 - Public Hearing on the 2023 Draft Budget



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) Board of Directors will hold a Public Hearing to receive public comments on WTA's draft 2023 Budget during their regular meeting on November 17, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. at WTA's Administrative Base at 4011 Bakerview Spur, Bellingham, WA 98226. You may also attend remotely via Zoom. Access instructions will be posted at <http://www.ridewta.com/meeting> the day before the meeting.

The draft budget is available for public review online at www.ridewta.com. Citizens unable to attend the Public Hearing can comment by 3:00 p.m., Nov. 16th using one of the following methods.

Phone: 360-676-7433

E-mail: customerservice@ridewta.com

Mail: Shonda Shipman
Finance Director
WTA
4011 Bakerview Spur
Bellingham, WA 98226

AGENDA ITEM C.2 – Public Hearing on Route 75 Proposed Service Changes



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing will be held by the Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) Board of Directors during their regular meeting on November 17, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. at WTA's Administrative Base at 4011 Bakerview Spur, Bellingham, WA 98226. You may also attend remotely via Zoom. Access instructions will be posted at <http://www.ridewta.com/meeting> the day before the meeting. The purpose of the hearing is to receive comments on the proposed service changes on Route 75.

For details of the proposed service changes, see the following page of this document, visit www.ridewta.com, or see the Rider Alerts on the Route 75 buses.

If you are not able to attend the Public Hearing and have questions or would like to comment, contact Tim Wilder, Planning Director at (360) 788-9311, or call the comment line at (360) 715-4500 or send written comment to:

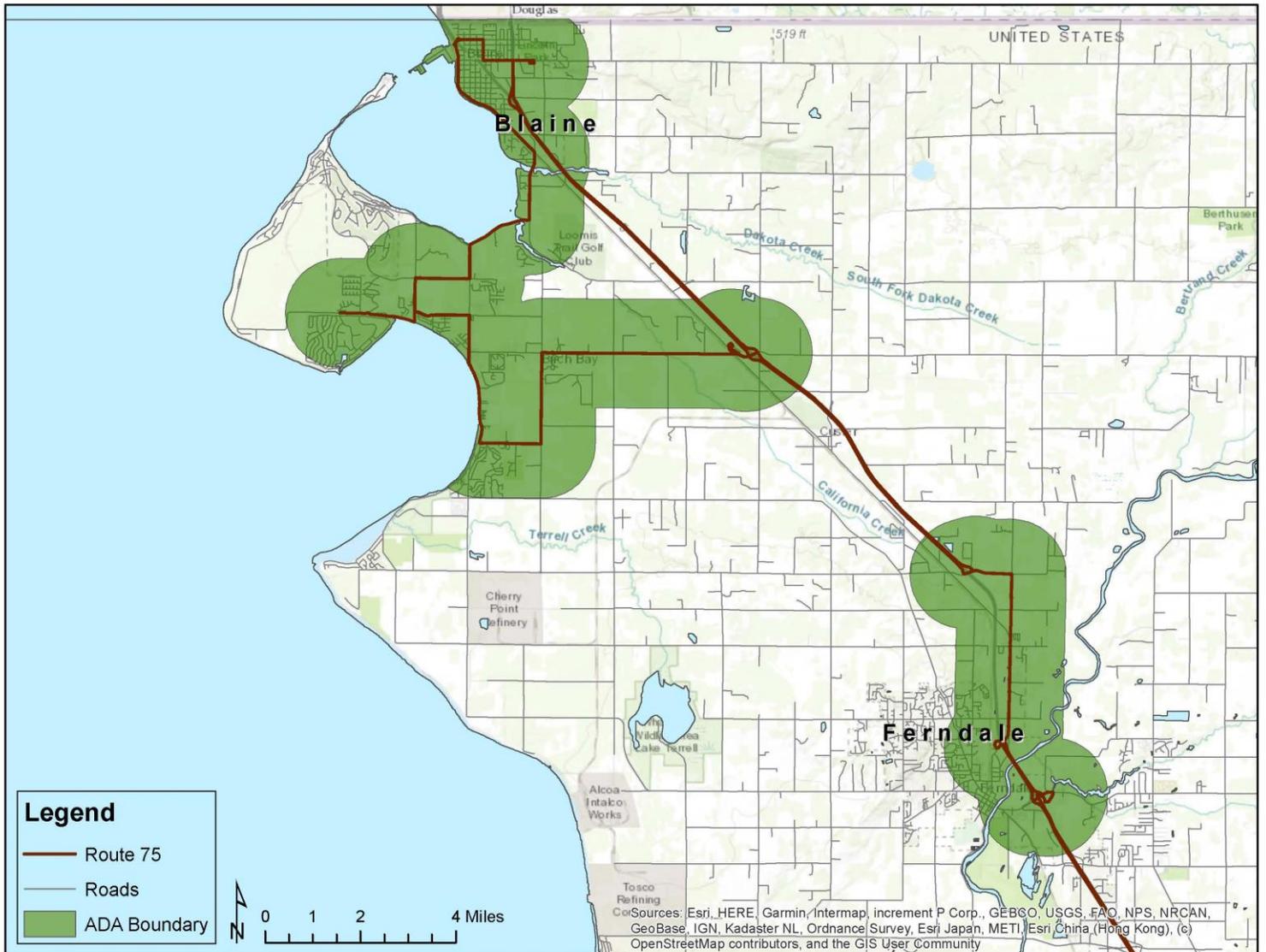
Tim Wilder
Planning Director
4011 Bakerview Spur
Bellingham, WA 98226
Email: timw@ridewta.com or customerservice@ridewta.com

Comments must be received by 3:00 p.m. on November 16th.

Route 75 Proposed Service Changes

WTA is seeking feedback on the following proposed changes to Route 75 Birch Bay/Blaine:

- Remove Flex Service
- Add Paratransit Service
- Extend routing to Birch Bay Village and C Street in Blaine



PUBLIC COMMENT
Regarding Proposed Route 75 Changes
Received as of 11/10/22

10/13/22 - Brad, Leanne, & Josh Keel, 8145 Cowichan Road, Blaine, WA 98230, 360.739.5282

I am writing on behalf of myself and my disabled son Josh Keel. We are very much in support of the changes to Route 75 Birch Bay/Blaine. We are especially excited about the possibility of expanding the Paratransit service to include Birch Bay Village.

Josh rides the flex service and Paratransit mainly to his two jobs. He works a total of 6 hours a week between his two jobs, but is gone 28 hours due to the bus routes/wait times. One job is in Lynden and the other is in Bellingham. He has to leave the lower gate of Birch Bay Village at 8:03 am and returns home at 2:30 from his job in Lynden. He works only 1 hour, but due to having to flex/paratransit twice and then return to the downtown station from Lynden to get the bus back to BBV, he is gone 5-1/2 hours either riding or waiting for transit. To get to his job in Bellingham, he leave at 9:52 am to work from 1-3 pm then back to BBV at 5:30. He is again gone for hours extra due to the bus routes/service. Getting the Paratransit services out here will help to eliminate some of the extra wait/travel time for him. Josh has neurological issues/seizure disorder. This extra wait/travel is very exhausting for him. This has been difficult especially since WTA stopped the service from Blaine to Lynden. We also had to work with WTA to get the drivers to go through Birch Point Loop to pick Josh up at the lower gate of BBV. They wanted Josh to get picked up at the upper Gate across the street. For Josh's safety, we couldn't allow that, as there is no cross walk of any kind and cars are going 40 plus mph. I had to convince them that this was better for them as well, it is a easier turn around and is in fact how the Blaine school bus picks up the children in the Village.

The other issue is safety for Josh. We have had to get "creative" with his schedule to eliminate Josh waiting at the unstaffed Ferndale station (winter it is dark), for safety reasons. Josh waits at the McDonalds in Ferndale for Paratransit for safety, he purchases food or a drink, just so he can wait inside and feel safe. We also are concerned for his safety at the downtown station. When the restrooms are shut down due to drug problems, this is of great concern to Josh and us as his parent/guardians. Josh sometimes has to wait an hour or longer at the downtown station. There isn't bus service to his job at Fitness Evolution on Iowa Street, so he has to wait for Paratransit at the downtown station.

We again would like to lend our support in the proposed Route changes to Bus 75 and the possibility of Paratransit service in our area.

Josh and I plan to attend the open house on October 19th. We also posted the notice on "next door" our neighborhood social media.

10/18/22 - Kirk Fengel, kpfengel@gmail.com

Greetings, hope you are having a good day. I would love to have the #75 route permanently swing by Birch Bay Village. My mother and invalid brother live there, and as I use public transport where my ebike won't get me, being able to ride the bus all the way to the village would help close that last gap in transport. I hope it happens, but thanks for great service regardless.

10/18/22 – Andrew Gamble, oscar1987@yahoo.com

We are depend on public access to transport in Blaine and Birch Bay. Please keep Route 75 intact.

10/18/22 – Erin Carampot, erincarampot@hotmail.com

I'm writing to express my concern regarding the proposed changes to my bus route. I'm a daily user of the Flex service in the morning (the route doesn't sync up with the end of my workday for a return). Flex service is great: it saves me part of my bike ride to work by picking me up at home. I can't get all the way to work because my job is outside of the service area, but it gets me 2/3s of the way there.

On the bus, I stay dry, warm, and safe. Without Flex service, I will have to leave my house earlier, in the dark, to ride to the nearest bus stop which is a mile from my house up Blaine Rd. Blaine Rd has no shoulders and is dangerous to ride and walk on, especially on dark, wet mornings. I will have to stand in the rain and cold waiting for the bus (there is no shelter).

Aside from personal effects, I don't agree with the reasoning to remove Flex service in favor of Paratransit service. Flex service is better environmentally and economically. Though I have been advised that I may qualify for Paratransit service based on the safety issues with my route, I can't bring myself to use WTA resources in this manner. It isn't environmentally or financially responsible.

Other riders and operators that I've spoken with don't find Birch Bay Village busy enough to extend the regular route at this time. The riders I know that live out there say they are well-served with Flex. Extending the route to Birch Bay Village every run is not warranted and isn't a great use of labor or gas. There are too few riders out there. It's a waste of time and gas and makes the run longer than necessary. Flex service mitigates the negative impact of runs to Birch Bay Village and safety issues for the entire public.

Thank you for your consideration

10/19/22 - Ivy Jill McCullough - Facebook

Please consider keeping the flex stop

10/22/22 – Martha Simonsen, Comment Tracker

Left a message, no comment provided, Assuming it is regarding Route 75 Changes as she is a FLEX rider

10/27/22 – Carrie Myers, carriem@ridewta.com

Please consider keeping the 75 a flex route. There are a lot of folks in that remote area that depend on it. If you don't keep the flex, please consider having an **on-demand bus stop** (like we used to have for the 12 Sudden Valley flex route) for the employer complex on Sweet Road for Totally Chocolate, Nature's Path, and Somi Foods, etc. We have folks depending on us to get to work and cannot walk there when it is freezing out. There are also employers, I believe, on Odell. Thank you.

11/03/22 – Dolores Purnell, 360.201.1961

Rider lives in Latitude 49 Resort Park that houses a lot of seniors who could really use access to Paratransit Service. She would like to see us offer Paratransit Service in this area to get her and her husband back and forth to medical appointments, because they aren't comfortable riding the big bus.

11/3/2022 – Roxanna Sittner, 360.920.1126

Rider lives in Blaine and has a son who is disabled, and really needs paratransit service from their home. She wanted to put in a suggestion to expand our service to the Blaine area, so she doesn't have to worry about her son taking fixed route on his own.

11/10/2022 – Aaron Dickson, Cascade Connections, 360.647.9087, adickson@ccsite.org

I work at Cascade Connections vocational services. The parents of one of the people we support let me know that she spoke with you about paratransit in Birch Bay and that WTA is potentially looking at expanding this service.

I just wanted to put in a good word for this. We have several folks who live in that area who are very impacted by their lack of access to timely transportation. This would greatly help folks with disabilities in Birch Bay to live full lives and work just like the rest of us do.

Thank you for your work on this!

Public Meetings in Blaine & Birch Bay

- Two likes for Paratransit and Reroute onto C Street
- Request for a bus stop at Birch Point Loop on the South Side of Birch Point Rd
- Would like signage at Ferndale Station for which stop is for each route
- Request a bus stop at the new Birch Bay Library
- Happy about the fixed route & paratransit to Birch Bay Village

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairperson and Members of the Board of Directors

FROM: Shonda L. Shipman, Finance Director
Les Reardanz, General Manager

DATE: November 17, 2022

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution for Approval of the 2023 WTA Budget

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Directors approves WTA Budget Resolution #339-22 approving the proposed 2023 budget.

BACKGROUND

We believe a budget is a strategic implementation tool that shows our stakeholders how we align our resources with our mission and priorities.

Throughout our budget, the numbers you see tie directly back to the value we provide to our riders and community stakeholders, through the transportation services we provide.

The 2023 WTA budget was developed as part of a larger, phased strategic framework in which WTA lays the foundation for future projects such as an improved Bellingham Station, updated operations and maintenance facilities, and innovative uses for our park and Ride facilities.

This will lead the way for future phases during which we will advance or complete these important strategic projects.

FISCAL IMPACT

WTA is budgeting for a net loss of \$7,107,032 for 2023.



RESOLUTION NO. 339-22

THIS WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (WTA) RESOLUTION ADOPTS THE 2023 BUDGET INCLUDING THE OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS, CASH RESERVES, AND FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT SCHEDULE.

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing was held to consider the 2023 budget for the Whatcom Transportation Authority on November 17, 2022; and

WHEREAS, following the Hearing, Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) Board of Directors approved and authorized adjustments and changes judged necessary and appropriate.

The Board of Directors Resolves:

SECTION 1. The 2023 budget for Whatcom Transportation Authority as summarized in Exhibit A attached hereto is approved and adopted.

SECTION 2. This resolution shall be in force and take effect on January 1, 2023.

PASSED, by the Whatcom Transportation Authority Board of Directors in Open Public Meeting on November 17, 2022.

**WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**Michael Lilliquist
Chairperson**

ATTEST:

**Vicki G. Esser
Clerk of the Board**

**Whatcom Transportation Authority
Budget Resolution: Exhibit A
Summary of Proposed Budget
For the Fiscal & Calendar Year 2023**

Following is the summary of the 2023 Proposed Budget for approval by the Whatcom Transportation Authority Board of Directors.

Operating Expenses	\$45,551,906
Capital Expense (net)	\$ 8,063,612
Reserves:	\$39,300,000

AGENDA ITEM E.2

**WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
October 20, 2022**

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Michael Lilliquist called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.
In-person location: WTA, 4011 Bakerview Spur, Bellingham, WA.
Remote attendance via Zoom.

B. ROLL CALL

Board Members Present	Board Members Absent
Eric Davidson – Blaine City Council	Dan Darwin – Non-Voting Labor Rep.
Todd Donovan – County Council	
Seth Fleetwood–Mayor of Bellingham	
Ali Hawkinson – Ferndale City Council	
Hollie Huthman – Bellingham City Council	
Scott Korthuis – Mayor of Lynden	
Jennifer Lautenbach – Everson City Council	
Michael Lilliquist – Bellingham City Council	
Saptal Sidhu, County Executive	

Staff Present		Others Present
L. Reardanz	E. Knudson	None
V. Esser	J. Fairbanks	
J. Benson	S. Davis	
A. Bowler	T. Coleman	
V. Bronsema	J. Bender	
E. Frazier	J. Malley	
J. Nylander	G. Carrillo	
S. Shipman	G. Beaumont	
T. Wilder	M. Waltari	
A. Stiles	M. Anderson	
A. Curry	A. Holden	
B. Johnson	C. Myers	
M. Zlotek		

After the roll call, Chairman Lilliquist, who was feeling ill, turned the Chairman duties of the meeting over to Vice-Chairman Korthuis, but continued to listen in as a participant.

C. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

C.1 20-Year Service Award – Laurie P.

Shonda Shipman, Finance Director, recognized Laurie P. for 20 years of service at WTA as a Payroll Specialist.

C.2 25-Year Service Award – Lisa B.

Shelly Davis, Paratransit Manager, gave a recognition presentation congratulating Lisa B. for 25 years of service as Customer Service Representative.

D. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

E. CLOSED SESSION

E.1 Collective Bargaining Update (Closed Session - RCW 42.30.140(4)(b))

Vice-Chairman Korthuis announced a Closed Session for a collective bargaining update based on RCW 42.30.140(4)(b). It was stated that the expected duration is 10 minutes with no action expected afterward.

The meeting was recessed by Vice-Chairman Korthuis into the Closed Session at 8:10 a.m. and he reconvened the meeting into Open Session at 8:20 a.m.

F. BOARD ACTION

F.1 Consideration of Approval of Order for Eight Gillig Electric Buses

This item was removed from the agenda and deferred until a November meeting because staff are still working with the manufacturer to finalize numbers.

F.2 Review of 2023 Draft Budget and Setting a Public

Recommendation: That the Board of Directors set a Public Hearing for Thursday, November 17th at the regular Board meeting to receive public comment on the 2023 budget.

Shonda Shipman, Finance Director, gave a presentation on the draft 2023 budget and answered Board member questions. She stated the next steps would be the Public Hearing on November 17th and staff would ask the Board to consider approval of the 2023 budget at the December 8th meeting.

MOTION BY HAWKINSON, SECONDED BY DONOVAN THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER

17TH AT THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING TO RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE 2023 BUDGET.

The motion passed by unanimous consent.

G. BOARD ACTION – CONSENT AGENDA

G.1 Consideration of Approval of Minutes – September 15, 2022 Board Meeting

MOTION BY HAWKINSON, SECONDED BY DONOVAN THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 15, 2022 BOARD MEETING.

The motion passed by unanimous consent.

H. REPORTS TO BOARD

H.1 Mission Statement Update

Bullet Three: Providing leadership in creating innovative transportation solutions

Josh Nylander, IT Director, highlighted WTA's efforts to improve wayfinding at WTA's stations and bus stops. He stated that we are looking at working with a vendor who has an app to aid those with visual impairments and another app for those who want to use their phone in a similar way, but do not need the aids for visual impairments. He said we are working through the procurement of this. Mr. Nylander reported that Western Washington University is also rolling out something similar to this product so there will be some good integration there.

H.2 General Manager's Report

General Manager Les Reardanz reported that:

Work in Washington D.C.

Mr. Reardanz and Maureen McCarthy, Community and Government Relations Director, travelled to Washington D.C. and met with staff members of the Congressional delegation. They also met with some agencies including the U.S. Department of Transportation Build America Bureau. They discussed some of WTA's projects and potential funding opportunities.

Big Items Coming Before the Board through the End of the Year

- 2023 Budget
- Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan
- Electric Bus Order

In conjunction with some other transit agencies in the region, WTA is supporting a Regional Transit Study along the I-5 corridor. We are applying for a State DOT Consolidated grant. Skagit Transit is taking the lead on that, but it is a joint effort.

In answer to Board member questions, Tim Wilder stated the study will go down I-5 as far as the Lynnwood / Everett area and also includes Island County.

I. OTHER BUSINESS

None

J. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

K. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned by Vice-Chairman Korthuis at 9:00 a.m.

**WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**Michael Lilliquist
Chairman**

**Vicki G. Esser
Clerk of the Board**