

Washington Governor mandates indoor masking for all

All individuals over age 5 have been asked to [mask up](#) indoors again as of August 23, 2021.

Although some of us were able to spend some time unmasked this summer, all individuals are now being asked to wear masks regardless of vaccination status because of a [surge](#) in cases due to the Delta variant.



Federal mask mandate for public transit extended to January 18, 2022.

The mask mandate that has been in effect since the beginning of the year for buses, ferries, trains, and planes has now been [extended](#).

Free transportation to vaccines available

If you are not yet fully vaccinated or need your [booster shot](#), [Everett Transit](#) is providing free rides to vaccine appointments.



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Fall in love with your commute

Read on for information you'll want to know as an Employee Transportation Coordinator or commuting employee – even if you're telecommuting.

In this issue, we look at what improvements an upcoming update to the ORCA card system will bring. We also explore ways cities may tackle [heatwaves](#) in the future as their frequency increases with climate change. We will review what service is being added with Everett Transit's [service change](#) on October 24. With the weather cooling down to more comfortable temperatures, consider trying out our featured commute mode: walking.

As fall approaches, much uncertainty remains about the future. The arrival of the Delta variant of COVID-19 has upended plans in countless ways. For many Everett employees, this may mean that an expected return to the office was further delayed or that your company has returned to teleworking. Fortunately, despite the Delta variant, vaccines still greatly reduce the risk of [hospitalization](#). If you need someone to talk to about the stress of the COVID-19 situation, try out [WA Listens](#) - a free service provided by the Department of Health.



If there is anything you would like to see in the next edition of this newsletter, please share your thoughts by emailing akoerber@everettwa.gov or by calling 425.257.7728 with any suggestions.

Stay safe!



EVERETT TRANSIT

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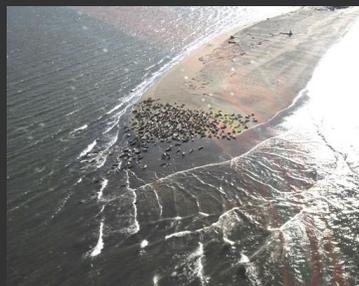
Everett Transit adds service with Oct. 24 service change

Thanks to COVID-19 recovery funds, Everett Transit will be able to restore much of the service that was suspended during the pandemic.

Waterfront residents will be happy to see the restoration of the route 6 seven days a week. Weekend service for the route 2 will also be restored.

Route 4 will be modified to cut out a low ridership portion of Harrison street so that it can provide service to Riverside Business Park in the Delta neighborhood.

Riders can also expect increased frequency on routes 4, 6, 7 and 29. Visit our [website](#) to read more specific details on the service change.



Sound Transit realignment prevents delays to Everett Link

The pandemic caused Sound Transit to have a \$12 billion budget shortfall for future projects. Luckily, with some [careful planning](#), Sound Transit was able to keep its most highly anticipated projects mostly on schedule. The Everett Link is set to open only one year later than originally scheduled in 2037. However, parking for the Everett Link will be delayed until 2046.



Next generation ORCA cards coming soon

The updated cards and brand-new app will have added features that resolve many of the pitfalls of the current ORCA system.

If you've ever used the ORCA card system to take transit, you may have noticed a few design flaws.

In the current ORCA card system, loading money online takes up to 48 hours to appear on the card. Additionally, if you lose your card, it can take up to six days for the money to transfer to the replacement card. With the next generation of ORCA, these problems will disappear.

The new account-based system will allow money to be loaded online instantly.

One of the biggest complaints of the current ORCA system is the substantial delay when money is loaded to the card online or over the phone. With immediate online loading, you can say goodbye to the nightmare of forgetting to load your card ahead of time.

Beginning in 2022, current ORCA cards will begin to be replaced by the next generation cards.

The replacement process will slowly phase in the new cards

which are expected to launch by Summer 2022. Customers will be able to continue to use their old cards and will be eligible for a free upgrade. Fortunately, old cards will also be compatible with the new ORCA website and smartphone app.

The new [MyOrca](#) website will be more user friendly.

The website will be compatible with mobile users, allowing access on the go. In addition, there will finally be a smartphone app that will allow you to load your card quickly and conveniently.

Virtual cards will add additional convenience.

Beginning in late 2022, the app will also allow you to pay with virtual cards. Using your smartphone's NFC reader, the virtual card will eliminate the need to carry a physical card. You will be able to simply hold your smartphone near the ORCA reader like you do with the card.

Retail locations will double.

In addition to instant online loading, customers will be able

to load their cards at over twice as many retail locations. Additional ticket vending machines will also be added at transit locations. Currently, the only retail locations to load the ORCA card in-person in Snohomish County are at Safeways, QFCs and transit hubs.

Single trip and monthly pass prices will remain the same.

Despite all of these wonderful new features, they will **not** cause a fare increase. Customers will also continue to enjoy the convenience of the free two-hour transfer associated with using ORCA.

Reduced Fare cards will also be updated.

Users of youth cards, ORCA LIFT cards and Regional Reduced Fare Permits will enjoy the same new benefits of the new system. It will also be easier to apply online for these types of cards.

For more information about next generation ORCA, subscribe to [updates](#) or email nextgenORCA@soundtransit.org.

Can our cities take the heat?



This summer, we experienced [record-breaking](#) temperatures and continuing wildfires.

As the effects of climate change begin to become more prominent in our day-to-day lives, what proposals are being considered?

If you live in a city, warmer weather can be compounded by the effect of [heat islands](#) which are largely caused by lack of tree cover and an abundance of surfaces that retain heat such as concrete. [Solutions](#) include changing roofing materials and colors, adding water features into urban designs, and increasing [tree canopy](#) cover.

More creative measures are also being taken into consideration, such as creating a [lid](#) over I-5. Lidding I-5 would reduce the heat island effect and have the added benefit of creating additional real estate.

Other than solutions that will improve our comfort, the most important solutions are ones that will reduce emissions. One way to do this is by finding ways to make active forms of transport more accessible. The concept of a [15-minute city](#) has grown in popularity in recent years, and may be feasible for our cities in the future. 15-minute cities focus on making highly walkable cities where all

necessities are reachable by a 15-minute walk or bicycle ride.

Walking and bicycling produce the lowest emissions, but for farther destinations, taking transit is the next best thing. As more and more transit agencies switch over to [electric buses](#), the emissions savings become even more substantial.

It is also important to support our community goals to decrease emissions. Many cities including Seattle have promised to get to [zero emissions](#) by 2040 or earlier, and we should all do everything we can to make sure they get there.

Disappearing birds

How will your neighborhood change if action isn't taken to mitigate climate change? Check out [which birds](#) could disappear from your neighborhood under different warming scenarios.



Transit saves 63 million metric tons of greenhouse gases

In a recently released [report](#), it was determined that transit saved 63 million metric tons of CO2 emissions in 2018. Riding transit remains a critical component of battling climate change.



UN releases climate report

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has released the first part of its [Sixth Assessment Report](#) on climate change. The report, which was written by 234 scientists, warns that warming of 1.5 °C is [imminent](#) even if greenhouse gas emissions were to drop to net zero. Although combatting climate change may seem futile, it's crucial that we take steps to ensure further warming does not occur.

Featured commute mode: **Walking**

“Walk it off!”

With comfortable fall weather, now is the perfect time to incorporate walking into your commute.

What if I don't live near my workplace?

One of the most common reasons for why commuters don't walk to work is because they live [too far](#) from their workplace. Choosing walking as your regular commute may not be very reasonable if you live more than two or three miles from your workplace. However, there are still ways to mix commute modes to include walking. Try:

- Walking to the nearest bus stop
- Leaving the car at the office and walking to your favorite lunch spot
- Walking to or from work in one direction only
- Getting off the bus a stop early

The benefits of walking

It's clear that regular exercise including walking leads to better health in a [myriad of ways](#). Walking is also the healthiest option for the environment considering it produces virtually zero emissions. It is also the cheapest way to get to work, costing practically nothing besides the price of a larger lunch from the extra calories burned.

What can I do to improve my safety while walking?

To stay safe during your walk, the most important thing to do is to stay alert for [hazards](#). Distracted walking can be [dangerous](#), so remember to keep your eyes off your phone and your ears open. Make sure you are wearing the [correct gear](#) and walking with [good form](#). If you must walk before the sun is out, carry a flashlight and consider walking with a buddy.



Need anything?

If you need trip-planning or transit assistance, do not hesitate to call Everett Transit Customer Service by phone at 425.257.7777 or by email at ETmail@everettwa.gov.

If you need assistance as an ETC, please reach out to either of us directly:

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Upcoming events

- **WSRO 2021 Conference – Sept. 20-21**

The [Washington State Ridesharing Organization](#) will be hosting its annual conference virtually. Geared towards Employee Transportation Coordinators and Transportation Demand Management professionals, this conference covers the latest news in transit and ridesharing.

- **WSDOT Active Transportation Plan Online Open House – until Oct. 29**

WSDOT is seeking [public comment](#) on the second part of Washington’s Active Transportation Plan. The plan focuses on ensuring active modes of transportation such as biking or walking are safe and accessible.

If you have a commute-related event (virtual or otherwise) open to the public that you’d like to see on this list, please [send us your event](#). The next newsletter will be published in mid-December.

Commuter resources

[Everett Transit’s CTR Website](#)

Find past newsletters, trainings, RCWs and more!

[Trip Planner](#)

Use this to find out which bus to take to your destination.

[Rideshare Online](#)

Use this to find someone to start a carpool or vanpool with.



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