



PRESS RELEASE



For Immediate Release
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Mason Transit Authority Opens Nation's First Transit-Community Center

Shelton, WA – On April 1, 2015, approximately 400 people attended Mason Transit Authority's (MTA) Rededication Ceremony to celebrate the grand opening of their Transit-Community Center (T-CC). The event included speeches of support from political leaders, cheering community members, patriotic and bus-themed songs sung by Mason County youth and community choirs, flag ceremonies led by the Shelton High School ROTC and members of the National Guard, as well as tours of the facility. The event celebrated innovation, transit-oriented development, local history and community.



MTA Transit-Community Center 4/1/15, pictured left.



Youth choirs and event attendees, pictured right.

Located at 601 West Franklin Street, the T-CC will serve as MTA's transit center and a community center where tenants will provide a variety of human and social services. Additionally, the facility has event space, meeting rooms, and street-front retail spaces for small business enterprises. The community will have direct access via public transit to activities at the community center including a computer lab, commercial teaching kitchen, indoor sports, youth and senior programs, community information, social services for low-income families, as well as public and private events.

A portion of the T-CC was originally an Armory; MTA purchased the surplus building in 2006. Then, in 2008, they conducted a feasibility study, did outreach and sought community input. From there the vision of transforming the 1950's-era Washington National Guard Armory building into a regional multi-modal, inter-generational, transit-

community resource center was created. In 2012, they began construction. The Armory was remodeled and a second building was added. The second building achieved a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver Certification.

When the Armory was built in 1955, former Washington State Governor Arthur Langlie dedicated the Armory to citizens. In honor of the history and tradition, as well as in support of the project, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee attended and spoke at the ceremony, rededicating it back to citizens. In his speech Governor Inslee said, "... it's very exciting to think I get to stand where Governor Langlie stood to honor this as a National Guard effort as now an effort to guard our neighborhoods, our communities, and our families; to provide them a full basket of services and ways they can connect."



Washington State Governor Jay Inslee shakes hands with youth at MTA's Transit-Community Center Rededication Ceremony on 4/1/15 in Shelton, WA, pictured above.

United States Senator Patty Murray wrote in a letter supporting the project, "The Transit-Community Center is the first of its kind in the country and will serve as a model for future partnerships elsewhere in our great state and nation."

"For residents who rely on transit, the Mason Transit-Community Center will be an essential connection to all that the community has to offer..." said Acting Federal Transit Administrator Therese McMillan of the U.S. Department of Transportation. "We are proud to continue to support economic development and activity in rural communities like Mason County to help make them even better places to live, work, and learn."

According to MTA General Manager Brad Patterson, the total project cost was \$9.9 million. Federal grants provided 48% of the funding, 10% came through state funding, 42% was provided by MTA local funds, and no new debt was accrued. The tenant lease revenue from public human service agencies, small business enterprises, and event rentals at the facility will be used to cover operating and maintenance expenses.

During the ceremony Rick Krochalis, Region 10 Administrator from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), spoke about FTA's mobility mission and being proud of their investment in the project.

United States Senator Maria Cantwell stated, “Washington State provides a home to many innovators, and this project proves that point. Converting the obsolete National Guard Armory into a community fixture that will facilitate multi-modal transportation and connect people with social service providers demonstrates vision, compassion, and smart planning.”



MTA Transit-Community Center 4/1/15, Pictured above

At the ceremony, United States Congressman Derek Kilmer gave a speech and said “this project happened because people thought outside the box, it happened because people took an acceptable level of risk to do something different, to combine transit service and human service into this great community. There’s an adage that it’s okay to go out on a limb sometimes because that’s where the fruit is. This *is* a fruit bearing project. You’ll see it bear fruit in the community partnerships... You will see it as it serves as a cornerstone for economic development and revitalization... You’ll see it in the way people are supportive and in the way people will be served by this project.”

Space is still available for tenant leases or event rentals. Please contact Kathy Geist, Transit-Community Center Manager, with inquiries about renting or to set-up tours at 360-432-5754 or kgeist@masontransit.org

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