

**PRESS RELEASE**


**For Immediate Release
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**HELP MTA MAP OUT FUTURE BUS SERVICE**

Mason County, WA – Mason Transit Authority is taking a fresh look at their bus routes and services to ensure safe, reliable, effective and efficient transportation choices to meet community needs are being provided, and they need your input!

MTA is hosting two in-person open houses in May and an online survey to request feedback on their current bus service to help them improve. The open houses are May 8 at the Transit-Community Center located at 601 W Franklin Street in Shelton and May 9 at the North Mason Timberland Library located at 23081 NE State Route 3 in Belfair. Both open houses will be from 5:30pm – 7:30pm. The online survey can be found at www.surveymonkey.com/r/MasonTransit.

This is part of a comprehensive services analysis to review their current bus service and recommend how they can improve service into the future. MTA has hired Nelson/Nygaard to conduct the analysis which will take approximately one-year to complete. Nelson/Nygaard is a transportation planning firm based in San Francisco with a local office in Seattle. Their goal is to help systems, like Mason Transit Authority, define an approach to transportation planning that focuses on mobility, accessibility and sustainability for all.

The comprehensive analysis will look at community input, data on current ridership patterns and projected population changes in Mason County. The purpose of the analysis is have a better understanding how Mason Transit buses currently connect riders to neighborhoods, business centers, social and community services, and other transit systems. The analysis will be used to make recommendations for future routes and services to increase the efficiency of the transit system.

After these open houses, Nelson/Nygaard will prepare some draft recommendations to share with the public later this year and there will be another opportunity to provide input regarding the recommendations.

Since 1992, MTA has made it their mission to provide transportation choices that connect people, jobs, and community, increasing the quality of life in Mason County. Today, MTA operates a system of buses that serve the county and connect with six area transit systems. As the community changes, it is essential that MTA plans ahead together to ensure the bus network is as efficient as possible and continues to meet local needs. “It is time for Mason Transit to look into its service that has organically grown for 25-years to better understand what the needs of the community are today. We not only want to be efficient but we want to be effective as well,” states Danette Brannin, MTA General Manager. “Hiring Nelson/Nygaard to help staff through a service review process is an investment into the future and into the community of Mason County. We are excited to see the recommendations and how that will impact and improve our future service.”

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