



Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District
Peter Browning, Second District
Lisa Janicki, Third District

June 24, 2024

Mr. Roger Millar
Secretary of Transportation
Washington State Department of Transportation
310 Maple Park Ave SE
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Skagit Transit WSDOT Regional Mobility Grant Application

Secretary Millar,

We write to support Skagit Transit's request for \$188,000 in Washington State Department of Transportation Regional Mobility grant funds. These funds will allow Skagit Transit to purchase the necessary equipment to transition to the ORCA fare system. The ORCA card is utilized by other Puget Sound partners and will streamline transportation for riders traveling across the region.

The Skagit Transit route networks serve the four major population centers in Skagit County: Mount Vernon, Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, and Anacortes. Skagit Transit also offers direct, expedient commuter transit services to Bellingham, Everett, and between March Point Park & Ride and Skagit Station multimodal transit hub. Commuter bus operations are coordinated with neighboring transits and intercity bus and rail services providing public transportation connections within the northwestern region of Washington State.

We are proud of the work done by Skagit Transit to connect residents with work and recreational opportunities in the region. Skagit County has a large rural population on the eastside and Anacortes sits over twenty miles west from the other three major cities. Skagit Transit ensures routes are available to provide transportation at an affordable rate from all corners of the community and has provided free service during times of emergency to allow for any resident to transit to providers and shelters. Community partners such as Skagit Transit are vital to the livability of a rural county, and transitioning the agency to the ORCA fare system would provide a more efficient system for our community, particularly our riders in the region utilizing multiple Puget Sound transportation systems.

We are in full support of Skagit Transit's application for WSDOT Regional Mobility grant funding. The ORCA fare system offers an exciting opportunity for our community to improve our regional transit system, grow overall ridership, reduce the need for individual car usage on our roads, and ensure more accessible transit for the community. We are thankful to Skagit Transit for spearheading this effort.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**


Peter Browning, Chair


Lisa Janicki, Commissioner


Ron Wesen, Commissioner