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Real News ⚡
Real Impact

Upward, onward, forward, together: Lynnwood Link light rail is now open



King County Executive and Chair of Sound Transit Dow Constantine (left holding scissors) with Senator Maria Cantwell (center holding scissors) and Snohomish County Executive and Vice Chair of Sound Transit (right holding scissors) cutting the ribbon at the Lynnwood Link Transit Center opening ceremony on August 30, 2024 Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

By KIENAN BRISCOE & MARIO LOTMORE

LYNNWOOD—"Don't you just love it when a plan actually comes together?" United States Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) rhetorically stated with enthusiasm for the opening of the Lynnwood Link extension. "This has been a long time coming but it has so worth the wait!"

Hundreds gathered at the Lynnwood Transit Center on

Friday morning to celebrate the official opening of the \$3.1 billion Lynnwood Link extension connecting both King and Snohomish counties with reliable, cost-efficient public transit. The 8.5-mile extension adds two stations in Shoreline, a station in Mountlake Terrace, and a station in the Lynnwood City Center—just a part of Sound Transit's expansion that will eventually connect South Snohomish County to the city of Everett.

"The opening of Lynnwood Link is the biggest thing to happen in Snohomish County since the first 747 rolled out of the Boeing plant in 1967," said Washington State Senator and Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee Marko Liias. "Light rail will enhance mobility, reduce congestion on critical corridors, and empower all of us to make new and different transportation choices. We have been waiting for this day for decades, I am thrilled

it's finally here." Senator Murray shared how for almost two decades she fought in Washington D.C. to secure the funding to bring commuter rail to Washington state. She acknowledged her fellow colleagues, United States Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Representative Rick Larsen (WA-02), for working with her "every step of the way."

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Everett Silvertips names new Head Coach and GM



Mike Fraser (right) and Steve Hamilton (left). Image compiled by the Lynnwood Times courtesy of Calgary Hitmen and Caroline Anne.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

EVERETT—The Western Hockey League's (WHL) Everett Silvertips announced new Head Coach, Steve Hamilton, who will begin this upcoming season. Mike Fraser, promoted, will now assume his new role as General Manager for the team.

Dennis Williams, the head coach and general manager last year, left the organization to coach at Bowling Green University, resulting in the recent changes to the organization's structure.

Fraser, Hamilton, and the Everett Silvertips will begin their quest for a U.S. Division Championship and World Hockey League playoff berth when the season starts this fall. Everett Silvertips opens its season on September 21 against the Vancouver Giants at Downtown Everett's Angel of the Winds Arena.

MIKE FRASER, GENERAL MANAGER

Fraser has been with the Everett organization since 2018 as the head scout. He

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Lynnwood Times Online Poll

Now that Sound Transit's Lynnwood Link connecting Snohomish and King counties is operational, how often do you plan to use light rail?

Daily - 16%

Weekends - 16%

Game Days only - 0%

Airport only - 8%

Game Days and Airport - 40%

Other - 20%

Total Poll Votes: 200

This poll is unscientific and was taken by readers on lynnwoodtimes.com from Aug 30 to Sept 3.

Snohomish County Health Dept working through food permit backlog, facing staffing shortage

By KIENAN BRISCOE

SNOHOMISH COUNTY—At the beginning of the year the Snohomish County Health Department experienced a 100% turnover in its food permit application review team leading to an unprecedented backlog of nearly 100 new businesses awaiting approval before they could open. Through a strategic plan, and reallocating resources, the Department has brought that number down to 36 but it still says staffing shortages need to be addressed to maintain its current response time.

There were over 300 employees when Dennis Worsham, Snohomish County Health Department Director, left the Snohomish Health District to pursue a position with King County in 2005 before returning to Snohomish in 2023. Right before the pandemic hit in 2020, the Snohomish Health District laid off 106 employees—two-thirds of its workforce at the time—the largest turnover rate Worsham has witnessed in his 30-year tenure working in public health. What the pandemic taught the public health sector, however, is the need for its services and the need for a restructured model.

There are 35 local health jurisdictions in the state of Washington and Snohomish County ranks last in investments per capita. The Snohomish County Health Department remains one of the lowest funded local health jurisdictions in the state of Washington, when taking into consideration the county's roughly 867,000 and growing population.

“Part of the challenges we had was trying to rebuild, and I think this is one of the opportunities coming in as an independent district into the department, is trying to figure out how to right the resources that we need to do,” said Worsham.

Approximately 85% of The Health Department's funding comes from grants—not a stable revenue source—so the big push is figuring out a system of core funding from state and local governments, Worsham added. The fees charged by the agency does cover some of its services, but the Department has made the decision to be a full fee recovery program, meaning it does not require fees to fully cover some services related to environmental health.

No local funding, other than a one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, have supported the Department's Environmental Health program.

State's third largest county and has over 3,500 permitted food establishments. On average, the Health Department sees around 47 food permit applications a month that are currently reviewed by only two staff members and a supervisor. At the beginning of the year, both of those two staff members left their roles, one through a promotion and the other leaving the agency all together.

What's more, the agency shared, was that reviewing food permit applications is a lengthy and complex process, and fulfilling vacancies require a time to bring the new hires up to speed.

In that food permit review process, the Department adheres to the state Board of Health-adopted food code and different establishments have different qualifications based on whether the foods served is considered high or low risk. A coffee shop, for example, is considered an establishment of low risk; whereas a restaurant that serves meat, cheese, and eggs would be considered high risk requiring proof of refrigeration, temperature checks, and so on.

“It's not like we look at a plan and say it's approved or not approved, it's literally walking through a checklist that they have to provide all of the information based on the risk of the food that their serving, in the criteria of each of those areas...For a county this size you've gotta have more than two people who are doing that work. For one, if you lose one you lose 50 percent of your capacity. In our case we lost two, we lost 100 percent of our capacity,” said Worsham.

The role of these workers does not end with approving food permits. After a restaurant opens, inspectors continue to visit their operations to ensure they are doing whatever they need to do to remain within safety food codes. The team conducts approximately 550 restaurant inspections in a single year.

The Department advertises a twelve-week turnaround for processing food permit applications, however there is no maximum timeframe processing requirement. When the Department lost their two staff members, this timeline jumped to 20 weeks.

The Department began to implement a variety of mitigation strategies to reduce the timeframe to process food permits with a turnaround goal of 4-6 weeks by the end of September. As of August, the Department is below the initial 12-week timeline, averaging about 10 and a half weeks.

Snohomish County is Washington The Department now has 36 pend-

ing permit applications in queue as of Thursday, August 29 with 98 in active review.

When the Health Department announced that it would be making that shift from independent District to county-owned Department back in May of 2022, it cited the ability to leverage the county's resources as a driving factor. While the Department has received county backing to combat the opioid epidemic, Worsham informed the Lynnwood Times it has not received any additional funding for its food permitting services.

Though its food permit department is fee-based, it still could benefit from an

additional county-funded FTE positions of which Worsham plans to address the Snohomish County Council on promptly before County Executive Dave Somers presents his proposed budget in September.

If the Department were able to maintain its two food permit review positions and add a third positions from its plan review, so that losing one staff member would not result in losing 50% of capacity, it believes staffing would be more than efficient to decrease food permit processing down to a four-week turnaround.

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Sound Transit Fall 2024 Service Changes

Changes to Sound Transit services started with the opening of the Link 1 Line extension to Lynnwood on August 30, followed by changes to ST Express service operated by Pierce Transit on September 1. Changes to ST Express routes operated by Community Transit, and the Link 2 Line will take effect on September 14, and Sounder N Line, on September 16.

Changes effective August 30

Link 1 Line revenue service began between Lynnwood City Center and Angle Lake stations. Trains arrive every eight minutes during peak hours, and serve four new stations at:

- Lynnwood City Center
- Mountlake Terrace
- Shoreline North/185th
- Shoreline South/148th

Changes effective September 1

ST Express route operated by Pierce Transit is affected:

- 590 – schedule adjusted to address on-board crowding, and one early morning trip added at 10th and Commerce.

Changes effective September 14

Link 2 Line – schedule adjustments to accommodate pre-revenue activities and simulated service between Downtown Redmond and Redmond Technology stations.

The following ST Express routes operated by Community Transit will be affected:

- 510 – aligning the schedule to align with Sounder N trips by offsetting departure times at Everett Station in the morning and at 4th Avenue South and Jackson Street in the afternoon.
- 512 – route will connect to the 1 Line at Lynnwood instead of Northgate.
- 513 – route will connect to the 1 Line at Lynnwood instead of Northgate.
- 515 – new temporary route connecting Lynnwood and Seattle.
- 554 – route will use Eastgate P&R Bay 1 instead of East P&R Freeway Station
- 556 – route will use Eastgate P&R Bay 1 instead of East P&R Freeway Station

Changes effective September 16

- Sounder N Line – additional trips to provide more service options between Snohomish County and Seattle, and schedule changes to reflect current demand.

Other ST Express routes may have minor adjustments. Please see the full list of affected routes on our website: [Changes that affect my ride | Service changes | Sound Transit](#)

For trip planning assistance or other questions, contact Passenger Care at 888-889-6368, TTY Relay 711, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

A language line is available to provide interpretation assistance for passengers who speak languages other than English at 800-823-9230, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sound Transit remains committed to working closely with its partners to continue serving the public. Efforts will continue to prioritize serving riders who depend on Sound Transit's services, including seniors, people with disabilities, Title VI protected populations (race, color, national origin), low-income and limited-English-proficiency populations.

Riders can sign up to receive automatic email service alerts for Link light rail, ST Express, Tacoma Link, Sounder Seattle-Everett and Sounder Seattle-Tacoma/Lakewood. Rider Alerts provide information about schedule changes and help riders plan trips around inclement weather. Just go to soundtransit.org/Subscribe-to-alerts.

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Coming Soon: More Frequent Bus Service & Seamless Light Rail Connections

BY COMMUNITY TRANSIT

Public Transit in our region is about to get an upgrade — and it’s not just the Link light rail expansion transforming local travel. Community Transit launches a major network expansion on Sept. 14. Residents in Lynnwood and Snohomish County will have more transit options serving their local neighborhoods and connecting them to the region.

The new network prioritizes more trips throughout Snohomish County, shorter waits between bus services, and seamless connections to light rail stations. It will bring 32% more service than the 2023 network with six times as many trips connecting riders to light rail. Service hours will also increase, providing more flexible travel seven days a week.

Changes to the network include adding on to Community Transit’s most in-demand service, Swift bus rapid transit. Swift Blue Line will extend to the Shoreline North/185th light rail station. This expansion follows the launch of the new Swift Orange Line in March of this year.

Six new 900-series express routes will be added, ferrying riders to and from stations in Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace, and Shoreline during peak travel times. Light rail offers more predictable travel times, even during rush hour, bypassing street traffic and reducing congestion. Link 1 Line begins serving riders on Aug. 30 at four new stations, and trains run around every 8 minutes during peak travel times.

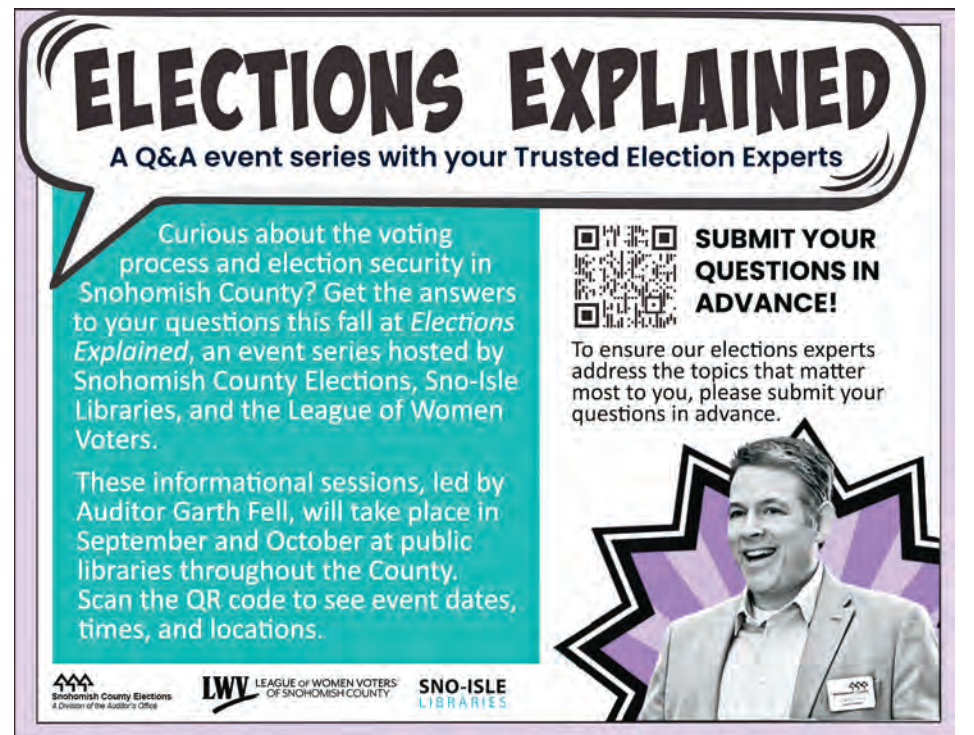
“With this network change, we are re-focusing our resources locally,” says Melissa Cauley, Community Transit’s chief planning and development officer. “By eliminating commuter bus routes to Seattle and Northgate, we can provide more local bus service that quickly connects people to light rail for their regional travel. People traveling in Snohomish County will enjoy more frequent bus service every day of the week.”

Tracking your bus fare is getting easier, too. On Sept. 1, a flat fare of \$2.50 for adults and \$1.25 for discounted fares will be implemented for all Community Transit buses. Riders using ORCA cards also benefit from two-

hour fare transfers, including transfers to light rail, making travel between bus and light rail seamless. Youth 18 and younger ride free.

Community Transit encourages people to explore the new network and learn

how these changes may bring more transit to your community. If you’re wondering how your favorite routes will change, Community Transit’s on-line trip-planning tools allows riders to preview their new route options.



ELECTIONS EXPLAINED
A Q&A event series with your Trusted Election Experts

Curious about the voting process and election security in Snohomish County? Get the answers to your questions this fall at *Elections Explained*, an event series hosted by Snohomish County Elections, Sno-Isle Libraries, and the League of Women Voters.

These informational sessions, led by Auditor Garth Fell, will take place in September and October at public libraries throughout the County. Scan the QR code to see event dates, times, and locations.

SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE!

To ensure our elections experts address the topics that matter most to you, please submit your questions in advance.

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More Transit to Move You

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community transit

Lynnwood PD holds Shop with a Cop back-to-school event

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD—The Lynnwood Police Department held its first ever Shop with a Cop back to school event at Alderwood Mall on Tuesday, September 3, where students had the opportunity to shop alongside community Police Officers for much needed supplies leading up into the start of the new school year.

The mall was closed for several hours first thing in the morning granting the opportunity for the approximately 20 students, all middle school aged, to pick out new clothes and accessories. At the end of the event every participating kid even had the chance to pick out a brand-new backpack, stuffed to the brim with supplies. These backpacks and supplies were provided by JCPenney.

The police agencies also partnered with the Foundation for Edmonds School District for students and families that may have needed extra help affording school supplies this year, each of them provided \$200 to spend where they wished in one of Alderwood Mall's many stores.

"Every student deserves to feel good and confident heading into the school year," said Maren McKay, Public Affairs and Communications Manager for the Lynnwood Police Department.

The event was in partnership with the Mukilteo PD, Edmonds PD, Washington State Patrol, the Alderwood Mall, and Foundation for Edmonds School District and fully sponsored by JCPenney and Macy's. JCPenney also provided the backpacks filled with supplies.

"We truly love to interact with our community here in Lynnwood and that's why we hold events like this," McKay told the Lynnwood Times. "It was great to have Mukilteo, Edmonds and WSP there today too."

The idea for the event originated from a longstanding good relationship with Alderwood Mall, McKay added.



Lynnwood Police Department held its first ever Shop with a Cop back to school event at Alderwood Mall on Tuesday, September 3, 2024. SOURCE: Lynnwood Police Department.

Though the back-to-school Shop with a Cop event was the first of its kind the Lynnwood PD have been partnering with the Mukilteo PD, Mountlake Terrace PD, Edmonds PD, and WSP for their annual holiday Shop with a Cop event in December, made possible through the Mukilteo Police Foundation, for many years.

"Our goal was to create lasting memories with youth in our great community. Over 30 kids from our Mukilteo School District were able to participate," Mukilteo Police Department released in a statement after last year's event. "We were able to share a meal, shop, and then wrap the gifts together. The night was amazing and magical for every kid,

family and officer!"

Shop with a Cop provides a unique opportunity for law enforcement to make a positive contribution to the community by sharing Christmas with children and families.

Fluoride exposure linked to lower IQ in children, US Dept of Health

BY MARIO LOTMORE



A study released on August 21 by the National Toxicology Program (NTP) on the effects of fluoride exposure on cognitive function concluded that fluoride levels in drinking water above 1.5 milligrams per liter are associated with lower IQ scores in children.

The NTP, a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, started its study in 2016 with all its work undergoing rigorous scientific evaluation and peer review by the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM), and experts from several federal health agencies.

NTP research found that for every additional 0.5mg/L increase in fluoride exposure, there could be a 2.5-point drop in IQ. This inverse relationship was observed across various countries, indicating a global health concern. This relationship has been described as linear in some analyses, suggesting no safe level of exposure when considering cognitive health.

The data sets comprised both human

epidemiological studies and animal research, with a focus on neurodevelopmental outcomes. These studies were drawn from diverse geographical locations, ensuring a broad spectrum of exposure levels and demographic backgrounds.

The NTP has recommended a reevaluation of fluoride levels in public water supplies. While not advocating for an immediate cessation of water fluoridation, the program suggests that current guidelines might need adjustment to protect public health, particularly for vulnerable populations.

Children, especially during critical developmental stages, and fetuses are identified as the most susceptible to fluoride's cognitive effects. Prenatal exposure through maternal consumption has been linked to neurobehavioral deficits in offspring, highlighting the importance of monitoring fluoride intake during pregnancy. Additionally, individuals living in areas with naturally high fluoride levels or where water is treated with higher-than-average fluoride concentrations face increased risks.

The NTP calls for further research to pinpoint safer exposure thresholds and for public health policies to consider these cognitive risks alongside dental health benefits.

The primary sources of fluoride exposure include:

- **Drinking Water:** The most discussed and often the primary source, especially where fluoride is added for dental health or where natural levels are high.
- **Dental Products:** Toothpaste, mouth rinses, and fluoride treat-

ments in dental offices.

- **Food and Beverages:** Certain foods and beverages, particularly tea, can contain significant fluoride levels due to soil and water content.
- **Industrial Exposure:** Certain industries emit fluoride, which can contaminate local water supplies or air.

According to the 2023 Water Quality report from the Mukilteo Water and Wastewater District, fluoride is added to the water for dental health. The average concentration of fluoride in its water system is 0.7 part per million (or 0.7 mg/L). The same levels of fluoride were reported in the 2023 Alderwood Water & Wastewater report.

According to documentation by the Snohomish PUD and the Snohomish County Health Department, fluorinated water is also added as a dental additive in the following communities at a concentration of 0.6-0.7 mg/L: Brier, Edmonds, Granite Falls, Lake Stevens, Mill Creek, Monroe Mountlake Terrace, and Sultan.

Non-fluorinated drinking water is found in the communities of Darrington, Gold Bar, Lakewood, Maltby, Snohomish, and Stanwood.

The release of the NTP study will most likely reignite the debate on fluoride use in drinking water. While the study is not calling for an outright ban on fluoridation, it strongly advocates for caution and further research into fluoride's cognitive effects, especially in children. As the debate continues, the focus remains on balancing dental health benefits with potential cognitive risks.

from page 2 **HEALTH DEPT**

The county's current proposed public safety sales tax, which will be left to the voter's decision this November, could not be used for food permitting work. However, core functions of public health are in the domain of injury and violence prevention, Worsham noted. If the tax is passed, The County's Health Department would receive dollars to develop and implement a program that would address the increase of youth violence in Snohomish County. The program would take a public approach in reducing community violence and increase community well-being and safety, Worsham said, adding that this a role local public health should be doing and currently isn't because the agency lacks the capacity.

More Transit to Move You
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“Positive attitude”: Travel personality Rick Steves announces cancer diagnosis

By KAYVON BUMPUS

EDMONDS—In his many years as a travel writer, TV host, and tourism personality, Rick Steves has spent countless hours at Hollywood galas, in cozy Swiss chalets, and backpacking Western Asia from Turkey to Pakistan. But it seems no matter where he goes, he will always call Snohomish County home.

The 69-year-old Edmonds celebrity is known far beyond the Seattle area for his enthusiastic and informative travel programming, specifically the popular Rick Steves’ Europe show. His travel and tour business is headquartered in downtown Edmonds, and his website offers a variety of tour options for all sorts of tourists, from nervous newbies to red-eyed hippie backpackers (a camp that a young Steves fell into in the 1970s).

Steves is also a big name in social advocacy. In 2017, he donated a \$4 million dollar Lynnwood apartment complex to the YWCA, intended for sheltering “homeless women and kids.” Steves prominently supported cannabis legalization, giving a speech at the 2010 Seattle Hempfest, and also reportedly donates \$1 million annually to environmental causes.

The Lynnwood Neighborhood Center received a jump start with a \$3 million gift from Steves. The Lynnwood Neighborhood Center is a collaboration between Volunteers of America, Trinity

Lutheran Church, Steves and the Greater South Snohomish County community at large.

On August 21, Steves shared his prostate cancer diagnosis on social media. Despite the bad news, the positivity and lightheartedness that the travel guru’s fans have come to expect were fully present in his statement.

Fortunately, Steves said that there were “no signs of [the cancer] having spread.” With a September date for prostate surgery, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle has the “great trust” of Steves, who brings his “positive attitude” to match Fred Hutch’s “modern medicine and the army of amazing, smart, and dedicated people that make it possible.”

Steves signed off with a “PS: I’ll keep you posted.” His work in tourism is ongoing; he plans to finish filming two shows in France before returning to Seattle to tackle his cancer diagnosis. Steves also has an upcoming book, “On The Hippie Trail: Istanbul to Kathmandu and the Making of a Travel Writer”, which is projected for a February 2025 public release.

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?

The Lynnwood Times wants to know what issues you would like us investigate. Email editorial@lynnwoodtimes.com.



Rick Steves speaking before breaking ground of the Lynnwood Neighborhood Center on Thursday, April 18, 2024. SOURCE: Kienan Briscoe.

YOU'RE INVITED!

Join us in celebrating 35 years of award-winning senior living in the Lynnwood community!

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Join us at our 35th Anniversary Celebration on Thursday, September 26th from 1:30 to 4:30 pm with appetizers, cocktails, and a champagne toast.

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For more information and to RSVP, call 425-906-1823.



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Edmonds School District's welcomes 11 new principals for this school year

By **KIENAN BRISCOE**

The Edmonds School District is welcoming a total of 11 new Principals this school season, including Interims, Assistant Principals and a new Executive Director at its Educational Services Center (ESC).

Here's a short introduction as to who they all are, where they have worked, and what the opportunities they bring with their new roles.

KIM WHITWORTH, INTERIM PRINCIPAL AT MEADOWDALE HIGH SCHOOL



Kim Whitworth is joining Meadowdale High School as Principal, coming from a position as Chief Academic Officer for the Monroe School District.

Her goal as Principal is to ensure all students have the tools to be happy, engaged, and productive adults, which she said is a moral imperative for her. In her first year she plans to prioritize building relationships and working to build a welcoming environment for students, staff, and families.

"I am passionate about public education," Whitworth told the Lynnwood Times. "I look forward to working with Meadowdale HS students, staff, and parents. Being a part of this community is an honor."

The most impactful experiences of her career has been witnessing people come together to do great things for students, she continued.

"I want the community to know that I am here to serve and want to hear their hopes for the year," said Whitworth.

FAYE BRITT, PRINCIPAL OF HAZELWOOD ELEMENTARY



Before Faye Britt joined Hazelwood Elementary as Principal she served as an Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, was a former Middle School Principal, a former

High School and Middle School Assistant Principal, and served as Interim Principal at Hazelwood from January until June 2024.

She informed the Lynnwood Times the decision to enter the field of education was to work in greater partnership with staff, students and families and support their journeys in education so that they can recognize that there are so many opportunities available to them.

As Principal of Hazelwood Britt plans to prioritize getting to know the school's families and students and finding ways to connect them to events that are of

interest. Her goal is to ensure that all students have access to the school's grade level curriculum and creatively use multiple ways to connect students to learning.

One of the highlights of her career was being a part of the founding staff and the opening of an international school in Berlin, Germany, when she was a very new teacher.

"Not knowing what you don't know and learning along the way was such a great experience as we got to dream and build a school from scratch," said Britt. "Please don't hesitate to ask questions, share ideas, and reach out to your students teacher or myself. Input, curiosity, and suggestions help us grow."

PEDRO ARELLANO CAMARENA, PRINCIPAL OF CEDAR VALLEY ELEMENTARY



Pedro Arellano Camarena served as the Assistant Principal of Highline High School from 2021 until 2023 before becoming Principal of Cedar Valley Elementary.

As a student who struggled academically and behaviorally in school himself, getting into "a fair amount of trouble," he was driven to become a High School Math Teacher (the subject he struggled the most in) to prove to himself that he could succeed.

He immediately enrolled himself into community college two weeks after High School graduation, where his work at Green River and the Latinx Student Union club led him to work with high school youth

"I was inspired by the work my building was doing and that eventually led to becoming an administrator, with the goal of making an impact on systems that affect all students," said Camarena. "Working at the high school most of my career, I feel like I have a good understanding of what we need to do to ensure our students are prepared and ready for the 21st century. That is why I made the decision to move to the Elementary level, where I am at now."

Camarena's top priority is building a culture of belonging that makes students proud to be snow leopards and retaining staff members. He is also working on a team to start thinking about how to create systemic interventions and rich learning experiences for our students. Lastly, it is a goal of his to bring attendance rates up by 10%.

JIMMY NGUYEN, PRINCIPAL OF LYNNDALE ELEMENTARY

Jimmy Nguyen taught for eight years as an Elementary Teacher, nine as Assistant Principal at Spruce and Terrace Park Elementary, was an interim principal for one year, and is now Lynndale Elementary's newest Principal.



The thing he loved most about being in education, he shared, is the opportunity to make significant impact for children.

In his first few weeks as Principal he plans to continue to move the building forward and focus on student learning, as well as learn each student's name and something about them.

"Growing up in a diverse family, I feel like I have gained a lens that I use to view the world in which I work in. This lens guides me in supporting those around me," said Nguyen. "This is where I want to be, and I'm having so much fun doing it. This is literally my dream job, and am excited to give the Lynndale community everything I got."

HENRY SHAW, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AT COLLEGE PLACE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Henry Shaw has served as Assistant Principal / Athletic Director at College Place Middle School; and was the Dean of Students and former High School English teacher.

As Principal Shaw shared that he wants to be an advocate for kids and teachers. His favorite part about the job is meeting new students.

Shaw's focus in the coming weeks will be honing in on helping staff build more positive relations with their students.

"I am a 29 year teacher who believes in a service based leadership model. I am excited to serve our kids and their parents/guardians. Maya Angelou once said, 'people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel'. She was right. We must first teach to the heart and only thereafter to the head. Please know that I am really looking forward to working in partnership with the CPM parent/ guardian community," said Shaw.

BRANDON POPE, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AT MEADOWDALE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Brandon Pope was inspired seeing an administrator of color growing up, and he continued to get involved and grow as a teacher-leader, which peaked initially peaked his interest and pursuit of becoming a school administrator.

His goals are to build authentic relation-

ships and partnerships with students, staff, and families as well as learn about the ins-and-outs of Meadowdale Middle School, informing the Lynnwood Times that he wants to be "visible and clear" with his communication.

"I am looking forward to supporting, serving, and being a part of the MMS Viking community," said Pope. "Please reach out! I am looking forward to meeting you."

RON STIELL-WILLIAMS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL BRIER TERRACE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Ron Stiehl-Williams was a Special Education English Teacher, Special Education Department Chair, Administrative Intern, and Administrative Substitute at College Place Middle School

before becoming Assistant Principal for Brier Terrace Middle School.

He was driven to the work that he does due to a deep desire to support students and families to feel loved and cared about holistically during their Educational Journey, he said.

"I want all students to feel and know that, while simultaneously making sure marginalized populations know this, and heal the historical familial perceptions they may have of educational settings," said Stiehl-Williams.

Stiehl-Williams is looking forward to bringing his love for people and his relationships/connections to the center of his work in order to support every young person in reaching and obtaining educational excellence and holistically growth. It just so happens to be a bonus that he gets to serve in the community he grew up in.

"I am a forever learner who goes into anything I do with love and curiosity, with an aim to learn from anyone I get the privilege to interact with, while understanding how to best serve them," said Stiehl-Williams. "I also want the community to know to please reach out whenever you have a question, or something you would like to discuss. I want to hear from you, and I'll do what I can to support you, your student/s, and family."

HEATHER PADDOCK, PRINCIPAL AT EDMONDS ELEMENTARY



Heather Paddock has served as Director of Teaching and Learning, and was a former Principal, Assistant Principal, and Teacher before joining Edmonds Elementary as Principal.

from page 6 **PRINCIPALS**

She was drawn to school leadership because it gives her the opportunity to impact the lives of students, families, and the broader school community, she shared.

“I want to create schools where every student feels valued, supported, and empowered,” said Paddock.

Paddock is most looking forward to getting to know the students, staff, and community of Edmonds Elementary and working together as the school makes progress and growth. She is excited to foster a positive and inclusive school culture where every student feels a sense of belonging.

As Principal Paddock’s goals for the year are centered around enhancing student achievement, strengthening school community, and supporting the professional growth of staff. One of her primary goals is to continue implementing and refining Edmonds Elementary’s PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) system to create a more positive and inclusive school environment where all students can thrive.

“I want families and the community to know that I am deeply committed to the success and well-being of every student in our school. My door is always open, and I believe in the power of strong partnerships between the school, families, and the community,” said Paddock. “I strive to be a principal who listens, values diverse perspectives, and works collaboratively to create a positive and inclusive environment for all.”

TULANI FREEMAN, PRINCIPAL AT BRIER TERRACE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Tulani Freeman previously served as Assistant Principal of Meadowdale Middle School, Dean of Positive Behavior at Tillicum Middle School, in Bellevue, was an AP Social Studies teacher at Vancouver School of Arts and Academics, an English Teacher at Catlin Gabel School in Portland, and was Special Education Teacher, David Douglas School District, Portland.

Now, as Brier Terrace Middle School’s newest Principal, she’s most looking forward to meeting students and families, and bringing some positive energy and school spirit to assemblies and gatherings.

“I love helping staff, students and families problem-solve and find success, especially at the middle level,” said Freeman. “When I was a dean, my principal told me he thought I would make a good building leader, and I attended the University of Washington’s school principal program.”

Freeman’s priorities are focusing the school’s core values of Community, Belonging, and Accomplishment.

She reflected on being a Principal intern during the Covid shutdown as one of her most powerful years in education.

“I knew I was making a difference when I was helping families and students secure basic needs like housing, food resources, and internet access to connect with school. I collaborated with a team to counsel many students, and helped

them keep social connections open during a very stressful time,” said Freeman.

RANA NAKKOUR, PRINCIPAL AT SPRUCE ELEMENTARY



Rana Nakkour formerly served as Assistant Principal at Brier Terrace Middle School before transitioning to Principal of Spruce Elementary.

She’s passionate about equity work and improving the student learning experience.

In her first few weeks she plans to get to know students, staff, and families and create opportunities for community building and partnering with families.

Nakkour’s goals as Principal are centered around improving students’ learning using research-based PD, classroom observations, and instructional practices to improve academic outcomes and student engagement.

Her favorite part about working as an educator is partnering with families to support students’ academic and social-emotional growth.

“Edmonds is home to me; I have worked in different roles there for the past 17 years. It’s a pleasure and a privilege to have the opportunity to serve my community,” said Nakkour.

JON BELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES AT EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL SERVICES CENTER (ESC)

In addition to the ESD’s 10 incoming Principal’s the School District welcomes Jon Bell as its new Executive Director of Student Services at the ESD Educational Services Center.

Bell has previously worked as Director of Special Education, and is a former High School Principal, and High School Chemistry/Physics Teacher.

His favorite part of the job is the relationships he worked with adults that help improve practices for students overall.

“I am excited for the opportunity to develop new relationships with students, staff, and teachers as I get to know the needs of the Edmonds School District,” said Bell.

Bell’s immediate goal is to develop a trusting community of special educators who are rowing together toward successful outcomes for students.

One of his most impactful experiences of his career was when he was introduced to a non-verbal student in a wheelchair in such a friendly and compassionate way that it completely reframed his understanding of students with disabilities.

“I believe that all children can learn. They will amaze and surprise us with what they can imagine and do. Our responsibility is to create an environment that nurtures their natural curiosity, and provide the resources to help them access the learning they need to become the best versions of their future selves,” said Bell.

MUKILTEO LIGHTHOUSE FESTIVAL

SEPT 6th-8th

LIGHTHOUSE PARK
608 Front Street



SCAN FOR DETAILS



FRIDAY, SEPT 6TH

KID’S CORNER (4 PM to 7 PM)

- Inflatables
- Kid’s Corner Booths
- Laser Tag

BEER GARDEN LINE UP (4 PM to 10 PM)

- 4-5p The Sean Keck Project “Live Music”
- 6-7p Under the Puddle “Live Music”
- 8-10p Bon Novi Tribute Band “Live Music”

SATURDAY, SEPT 7TH

LIGHTHOUSE GRAND PARADE (11 AM)

- Parade begins near Kamiak High School

MAIN STAGE (11:30 AM to 4:30 PM)

- Reptile Man
- Scandinavian Band
- Modern Dance
- School of Rock
- Lion Dance & Martial Arts
- And more...

KID’S CORNER (11 AM to 7 PM)

- Inflatables
- The Bubble Man
- Game Trucks
- Kid’s Corner Booths

BEER GARDEN (5:30 PM to 10 PM)

- 5:30-6:30pm Jackie and the Holograms “Live Music”
- 7-8pm SEED “Live Music”
- 8:30-10pm The Machine “Live Music”

FIREWORKS AT LIGHTHOUSE (8:15 PM)

SUNDAY, SEPT 8TH

MAIN STAGE (11 AM to 3:30 PM)

- 11-12:30pm Josiah Bogle “Live Music”
- K-pop (Korean) Victorious Dance Company
- Applause Studio (Modern and Interactive Dance)
- Kamiak Barbershop (A cappella group)

BEER GARDEN (11 AM to 4 PM)

KID’S CORNER (11 AM to 5 PM)

- Inflatables
- Pony Rides (11am-1pm)
- Bumper Ball Arena
- Kid’s Corner Booths

Harm reduction, recovery, and reform take center stage

By KAYVON BUMPUS

EVERETT—Though drug addiction affects millions from all walks of life, the recovery process can feel like an isolated, silent struggle for many individuals. At the 8th Annual Snohomish County Overdose Awareness Day, the goal was to shine a light on state resources, community organizations, and other helping hands that can ease the process of recovery – to quote longtime advocate and event organizer Lindsey Arrington, “you are not alone.”

Strolling through a cluster of advocacy booths in the Snohomish County Campus Plaza, a fragment of conversation between the Homeward House and Recovery Coalition tables was overheard: “That guy that just walked by, he said he just got out of jail and started services at Evergreen [a Seattle-based treatment provider]... he’s been clean since,” a woman said, her voice tinged with wonder.

The sun set over the Cascades and downtown Everett as people emerged from the crowd and participated in a candlelight vigil; each flame representing a life lost to addiction. Soon after, Arrington took the stage with her fellow organizers, Cathi Lee and Debbie Warfield. Lee and Warfield had met and bonded over a shared experience that no mother should go through – the untimely loss of a child from an overdose. Their stories were “almost identical... good kid, good family, same desperate need for resources that were just not available.”

Snohomish County Overdose Awareness Day was born from the loss these mothers experienced, and they intend it to help fill a gap they noticed in their own familial struggles with drug abuse.

“There wasn’t enough information. We felt secluded, ashamed,” said Warfield. “So tonight we’re here to shed light on people who are suffering from addiction... we’re talking about different treatments, controversial treatments. This can affect anyone, and there isn’t a treatment that works for everyone.”

Arrington and Lee noted the presence of many local organizations providing resources, information, and recovery programs. Tallying over 30 separate booths, this Overdose Awareness Day had the biggest turnout of any so far. Organizations present included Oxford House, Center for Human Services, Quilceda Counseling, Everett Recovery Cafe, Nar-Anon Family Groups, and dozens more. The complete list will be posted on the Snohomish Overdose Prevention website.

Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers was a featured speaker, fielding questions from Arrington, Lee and Warfield on-stage. Also present were Karen Moore, a Superior Court Judge, and Amber, a recent graduate of the county’s drug diversion program: Snohomish County Adult Recovery Court, better known as “drug court.”

Judge Moore explained the effects and benefits of Everett’s rechristened “drug court”, which she referred to as “therapeutic court.” Based on an “evidence-based, nationally vetted” model, Moore said a primary aim of the program is to “work with parents going through substance-abuse and provide them with support systems” so they can avoid losing custody of their children. “We provide supportive, not punitive, accountability.”



8th Annual Snohomish County Overdose Awareness Day on August 29, 2024. Lynnwood Times | Kayvon Bumpus.

In Adult Recovery court, an individual undergoing drug treatment is likely doing so in place of a suspended sentence, or in order to avoid harsher criminal sentencing. But Moore insisted that the program is “not a cakewalk.” An individual must participate in the court’s recovery program for sometimes close to two years; this mandates weekly court and clinic check-ins, acquisition of stable housing and employment, and clean drug tests for over six months straight. Despite the requisites to pass, Moore said the program was intended for “high risk, most in need” candidates who would otherwise be considered “a lost cause,” repeatedly arrested just to continue abusing drugs upon release. “We are not a ‘you fail, you automatically go to jail’, court,” said Moore.

This portrayal of the system as more forgiving than traditional criminal court was undercut slightly by the personal account of one drug court alumni. “I got six months added to my treatment and served four days in jail after I ate a muffin with poppy seeds and failed a UA [urine analysis drug test],” Amber said, to groans from the audience. “One of the rules was ‘watch what you eat’, they told me.”

Regardless, Amber, who experienced the cycle of addiction, incarceration, and recovery firsthand, touted the court program as nothing less than lifesaving. “I have my daughters back, I work with the YWCA. I have a future... After recovery, I have a life now.”

For his part, County Executive Dave Somers spoke to his priorities in Snohomish County’s battle with addiction. He touted the purchase of two “meth-contaminated” motels, one in Edmonds and one in Everett, to be repurposed as low-barrier housing with recovery treatment mandated for tenants. The motels will be “completely gutted, with new walls, furniture, and kitchens.”

Somers told me that federal money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) primarily funded these ambitious remodels. The Everett Herald reported in February that the cleanup process had become more difficult than anticipated, due to the deep nature of the contamination. As Somers left the stage, Amber quipped, “Sorry Dave, I think I stayed at one of your hotels back when.”

Somers shared with the Lynnwood

Times more details about his general approach to addiction.

“A big chunk of 80 million federal dollars is going to the motels. It’s a huge asset to get people off the streets,” Somers explained.

Some critics have called this form of low barrier housing a poor solution, pointing out that addicts will continue using drugs whether they are homeless or not. But not at Hotel Somers: “The rooms come with services, programs, and 24/7 staff. If someone goes there and keeps using, they won’t be able to stay.”

Somers made his help-first philosophy clear saying, “We don’t ask someone who’s sick to get better before we put them in the hospital.”

He said that programs like this drew from what neighboring King County has implemented in an attempt to foundationally address the compounding issues of homelessness and addiction.

“Shelter is a basic human need. It’s extremely difficult for someone with addiction, someone living on the street, to pull themselves out of that,” Somers said.

Officials in both counties are working together to simply create “more beds”, something Somers described as both essential and difficult. “There’s a huge need that we can’t fill, but we’re trying the best we can.”

“Harm reduction” is an apt umbrella term to describe the efforts of Somers, each recovery organization present, and the hosting group Snohomish Overdose Prevention. Yet the term has become politicized as of late, associated with imagery of drug dealers outside methadone clinics and syringe caps littering sidewalks.

Although she disagrees with certain policies, event organizer Arrington disputed the negative characterization of harm reduction.

“A lot of people think harm reduction is just needle exchange. But it’s medication assistance, opioid recovery, overdose reversal through Narcan,” said Arrington. “I don’t believe in safe injection sites, but I do support Sound Pathways offering IV user services. This crisis is reality. And at the end of the day we want to keep people safe. We’ll throw everything at the wall and see what

sticks.”

Her personal modus operandi of harm reduction was expressed directly to the crowd. “If anybody here wants to go to detox, if you see anybody that wants to go, we’re doing detox runs tonight. We’ll take you there.”

Arrington further shared her thoughts on the modern nature of the opioid crisis, explaining that although resources have increased, “the number of overdoses is growing too. Things are getting worse with fentanyl, and it’s stronger... [addicts] don’t want to get clean.”

She added that Everett is a fitting venue for Overdose Awareness Day, citing reporting from the Los Angeles Times about the practically industrial-scale OxyContin trafficking that devastated Snohomish County’s largest city. The widespread opioid addiction left in the pharmaceutical’s wake greatly stoked the market for illegally imported street fentanyl, exponentially more potent than heroin or morphine.

But what can be done to combat a crisis with no end in sight? “If I had it my way, elected officials would give an emergency order to bring people off the streets and provide them with holistic addiction treatment. We’re not gonna get that, so we ask our officials to focus on prevention and education, especially within schools,” Arrington said.

Local politicians like Somers and community organizers like Arrington combat the societal impact of addiction on a daily basis. But to get even closer to the issue, an Oregon resident, now lawfully employed as an electrician, agreed to an anonymous phone interview to discuss former connections within an Everett drug distribution ring.

This conversation revealed a brazen method of transportation utilized by the man’s former associate.

“He would fly from Arizona or New Mexico with tens of thousands of blues [fentanyl pills] in his bag... to sell them in Everett,” he claimed. “Multiple trips per year, thousands and thousands of pills.”

The man didn’t mince his words when discussing the lethality of the business. “They’re killing kids,” he said. “It should be the same penalty as murder.”

Parents of teen lost to mall shooting call upon lawmakers to get tougher on juvenile crime

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD—The family of 13-year-old Jayda Woods-Johnson, who was tragically struck down by a bullet while hanging out at Lynnwood's Alderwood Mall last month, are calling upon the Washington State legislature to enact, what they're naming, "Jayda's Law" which would have harsher consequences for juveniles who commit serious crimes.

Woods-Johnson was visiting the Alderwood Mall with friends on July 3, 2024, when she was caught by a stray bullet fired by 16-year-old Samuel Gizaw.

Gizaw had gotten into a fight minutes earlier near the food court and, upon getting punched in the face by another teenaged male, pulled out a loaded firearm and fired. The bullet was intended for Gizaw's assaulter but struck Woods-Johnson, an innocent bystander not involved in the altercation, instead. According to the Snohomish County Medical Examiner autopsy reports indicate the bullet entered the teenager's back, near her right shoulder blade, piercing her lungs and heart. Despite lifesaving efforts at a nearby hospital

Woods-Johnson was pronounced dead later that day.

The 16-year-old shooter was turned in by his mother but was immediately released on bail the following morning.

On July 9, 2024, after additional investigation were found by detectives, the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office filed adult charges for Murder 1st Degree, Murder 2nd Degree, Assault 1st Degree, and Unlawful Possession of a Firearm on Gizaw in Superior Court. A Superior Court Judge approved an arrest warrant with a \$2 million bail. Gizaw appeared in Court pleading "Not Guilty" and is currently being held in a detention Center awaiting trial.

The bail hearing for Samuel Gizaw is scheduled for September 4, before Judge Anna Alexander.

"While he was given the luxury to go home and celebrate the 4th of July holiday with his friends and family, Jayda's family and friends were devastated and forced to experience the harsh pains of having to plan a candlelight vigil and then Jayda's memorial arrangements," wrote Ja-Me Thorson, the organizer of a petition to get Jayda's Law passed. "It is absolutely ludicrous and unacceptable that this young man took

Jayda's life and has faced no serious consequences as of yet. Samuel and his friends have been parading online on social media that they have access to firearms and that the gun that killed Jayda will never be found. These other teens should be at risk of being charged with obstruction of justice and being accessories to murder."

As of Tuesday, August 27, 3,795 have signed that petition to bring Jayda's Law to lawmakers desks.

Jayda's Law stipulates a no bail, no release, policy for juveniles who commit serious crime such as murder and calls for a 24 to 72 hour minimum hold time in police custody while the details of the crime are being investigated. Gizaw was released without the firearm involved in the crime being found.

The proposed law would also try juveniles involved in serious crimes similar to adults which Jayda's family said would deter other juveniles from committing serious crimes such as murder.

The law also proposes that those who do not possess a prior criminal history but is found to be in illegal possession of a firearm serve a mandatory six-months of community service interacting victims of gun violence, and twelve

months of counseling.

And lastly the law proposes parents of juveniles who commit serious crimes be held accountable financially, for medical bills and memorial arrangements and so the parents of a deceased victim may have the opportunity to take time off work to grieve.

Jayda was described by her friends and family, during a candlelight vigil on Mountlake Terrace High School's football field July 7, as "the happiest and sweetest little girl on earth."

"She had everything going for her and her whole life ahead of her. She was beautiful, loving, extremely funny and outgoing, and she undoubtedly brought a smile to everyone's face whom she met. She wanted to be an actress, a singer, and dancer. She was going to be a superstar!!! Our family had no idea that she would become famous for the way she died. Her memory will be honored and she will never be forgotten," her family wrote.

Lynnwood City Council leadership and Lynnwood Police held a community conversation on youth crime in the city on August 22 discussing the rising rate of juvenile crime in the region.

The economic eviction crisis in manufactured home communities

COMMENTARY by GEORGE & PAM HURST

The Baby Boomer generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) has been the driving force for consumption in America's economy. Gerber's baby food, Saturday cartoons filled with ads for sugary cereals, hula hoops, teaching the world to sing with Coca Cola are all part of the economic engine fed by the Baby Boomers. But this generation of consumers faces an unsettling reality in retirement.

Every day 10,000 Boomers retire, many surviving on an annual social security income of \$15,500, only four hundred dollars above the Federal poverty level. With affordable housing in short supply, seniors have turned to manufactured homes, believing they had found a stable and affordable solution, only to discover they are now at risk of losing the homes they own.

Washington has underproduced housing since 2000, and the State Department of Commerce projects a need for an additional one million housing units over the next two decades. Many seniors, hoping to secure a safe and affordable retirement, invested their savings into manufactured homes, expecting their Social Security to cover a typical \$300-500 monthly land rent.

Most Manufactured Home Communities (MHC) were originally owned by "Mom and Pop" landlords who maintained the community and infrastructure, fostering a strong sense of belonging. However, as these owners retired or passed away, their heirs often prioritized profit over people. The cost of maintaining aging infrastructure led many to sell the parks, opening the door for outside investors.

In a time when affordable housing is

scarce, MHCs have become the "dollar store" of the housing market. Investors, enticed by low-interest federal loans from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, are snapping up these communities, without any obligation to keep them affordable. But here's the audacity: these residents own their homes yet are being forced out by skyrocketing rents on the land beneath them. Unlike traditional renters, these homeowners have invested their life savings into their properties. Yet, because manufactured homes are often impossible to move, they are left with a devastating choice, abandon their homes without compensation or cut back on food and medical prescriptions in order to pay rents they can no longer afford.

Investors exploit this power dynamic. As one advisor bluntly puts it, "If you like having a monopoly, holding all the cards, knowing the tenants won't move their homes out, and taking one of the tenant's biggest assets [their home] if they default, then you're going to love mobile home parks [as an investment]." This is not just a matter of rising rents; it's a matter of stripping people of their most significant asset and their dignity.

The Washington State Legislature has attempted to protect these homeowners through the Manufactured/Mobile Home Landlord-Tenant Act (MHLTA). The MHLTA states, "It is the intent of the legislature to encourage and facilitate the preservation of existing manufactured/mobile home communities... Many tenants who reside in manufactured/mobile home communities are low-income households and senior citizens and are, therefore, the residents most in need of reasonable security in the siting of their manufactured/mobile homes".

But the Legislature did not anticipate the "Perfect Storm" now threatening

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these residents. It consists of:

Continued PAGE 10

School-Based Health Services coming Everett schools

By MARIO LOTMORE

EVERETT—Community Health Center of Snohomish County (CHC) will be adding two new school-based health centers at Everett and Cascade high schools in mid-2025.

“This new partnership with the Everett School District is an incredible step in our goal to provide accessible, high-quality healthcare to community members of all ages” said Joe Vessey, Chief Executive Officer at CHC of Snohomish County.

In March of this year, Mountlake Terrace High School became the second

school-based health center to open in Snohomish County. Community Health Center of Snohomish County opened the county’s first school-based health center (SBHC) at Edmonds School District’s Meadowdale High School on September 22, 2023.

“We are thrilled to expand our commitment to student well-being by partnering with CHC to bring comprehensive, on-campus health services to Everett and Cascade High Schools,” Dave Peters, Director of Student Support Services, Everett Public Schools. “This collaboration not only strengthens our community but also ensures our students have easy access to the essential

healthcare they need to thrive—right where they learn.”

SBHCs provide age-appropriate primary care services, integrated behavioral/mental health services, and health education to students in school. All school-based health services are provided to students at no cost to the family and follow the same healthcare privacy rules as standard healthcare facilities.

By locating clinics on campus, SBHCs aim to reduce barriers making it easier for students to access healthcare services and health education.

Like the two previous high schools in the Edmonds School District, Everett and Cascade high schools were selected by CHC of Snohomish County in part due to their distance from existing community health center access points and the surrounding community’s lower income levels compared to other high schools in the district. An SBHC meets students where they are, in schools, without the stress of figuring out transportation or worrying about how they are going to pay.

Capital funds have been secured to pay for the necessary building updates to support CHC’s clinical services.

Reykdal reveals “lost confidence” in Letter to Marysville Schools

By OLIVIA THIESSEN

Washington Superintendent Chris Reykdal reveals his lack of confidence in the Marysville School District to straighten its financial situation in his August 28 notice to the district and Superintendent Zachary Robbins. He also placed the school district under additional financial monitoring.

“I have lost confidence that the district has the decision-making tools or current personnel necessary to fix its financial situation on their own,” Reykdal wrote.

His notice is a response to an August 26 recommendation made by OSPI’s appointed financial oversight committee.

The committee, which met seven times since June, determined that “the district currently lacks the process, structure, and tools needed to effectively execute and routinely monitor a budget plan.”

Amongst the committee’s findings, Chief Financial Officer T.J. Kelly outlined multiple challenges at the district, including its failure to produce a reliable budget for the 2024-25 school year. The committee was unable to determine if the proposed budget meets OSPI’s binding conditions for several reasons:

1. The district insurance policy will cost more than the expected \$600,000 increase.
2. The district is unable to quantify its 2024-25 staff and unable to report a budget for salaries.
3. Its estimated material costs do not align with previous years after adjusting for inflation and enrollment changes.
4. The district continues to borrow

money to account for budgeting issues.

“Due to these issues,” writes Kelly, “the cash flow projections for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years are not reliable.”

As a result, the committee requires that the district present a list of all employees for the 2024-25 school year with their salaries by September 10, along with a list of any employee that received a raise of 7.4% or higher entering this school year, twice the rate of the legally required raise for inflation.

Another issue was the community’s lack of trust in the district. The committee found that many community members suggested OSPI move toward greater financial oversight, including overseeing the district’s day-to-day operations. Some also indicated they plan to withdraw their children from the school district entirely.

Community members cited the district’s inability to acknowledge its part in the current financial mess, an issue Kelly and Reykdal noticed, too.

“The district has shown it is unwilling and unable to take appropriate steps or accept responsibility for the current situation,” Reykdal added.

The Lynnwood Times reached out to the Marysville School District regarding the OSPI correspondence but did not receive a response.

On its Budget Information and Updates page, Marysville School District posted the following message regarding its current budget crisis:

[Marysville School District] has been good stewards of funds allocated to the district by the state and provided by local taxpayer dollars; has experienced flat enrollment for the past four years and anticipates a decline in enrollment;

Failed two consecutive levy measures in February and April 2022, which resulted in the loss of levy revenue for the 2023 - 2024 calendar year;

Will lose revenue from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds as they are non-recurring federal funds that expire in August 2023.

“Rather than prioritizing solving the budget deficit,” wrote Kelly, “the district continues to expend energy on, and publicly reference, state funding formulas, inflation, and levy equalization formulas as systemic challenges preventing progress.”

As a result of its findings, the financial oversight committee outlined 12 potential actions for immediate implementation. Reykdal implemented the following restrictions:

- A district-wide hiring freeze of all non-certified staff, with business-critical exemptions needing approval by the special administrator
- A freeze on all employee awards and incentives not currently outlined in collective bargaining agreements
- A freeze on all discretionary school building budgets (non-personnel costs)
- Postponement of any planned curriculum adoption until the district

- exits binding conditions
- No new or renewal of contractual agreements with vendors more than \$25,000 without prior approval of the FOC or special administrator
- No new technology purchases
- No new stipends for administrative staff until the district exits binding conditions
- No state or local funded travel for administrative staff
- No state or local funded travel for school board members
- Class size overage expenditures for 2024-25 must not exceed the amount spent on this purpose for the 2023-24 school year
- Consultation with the Tulalip Tribes Board of Directors about the impacts of budget reductions
- Complete, accurate, and prompt responses to requests made by the special administrator (who will be appointed by Reykdal to carry out the financial conditions)

The district must respond to the notice by September 10 by providing a new list of 2024-25 employees and salaries. The committee will then reevaluate the budget.

It is unclear if the district will be able to present a feasible budget plan to OSPI by that time. What is clear is that without financial transparency and accountability, the situation cannot improve for the Marysville School District.

“In order for the district to fully resolve its financial situation, trust must exist between all of the parties involved,” says Reykdal. “It is the responsibility of district leadership to not only build trust but ensure that it remains.”

from page 1 MANUFACTURED HOMES

- The wave of aging Baby Boomers retiring with limited, fixed incomes.
- The flood of corporate investors buying up “Mom and Pop” communities.
- The deluge of rent and fee increases by the new investor/landlords, who justify these hikes as aligning with market rates.
- The absence of rent stabilization laws to combat the rising tide of the predatory rent and fee increases.
- The drought of alternative housing options for seniors and other low-income households who cannot afford rising rents, leading to a situation where they are forced to abandon their homes, left with nothing after a lifetime of hard work except

their car to sleep in or being literally kicked to the curb and homeless.

Throughout Washington residents of MHCs are facing an escalating crisis. It’s not just about rent and fee increases; it’s about losing everything they have worked for. These homeowners are coerced into signing new leases, subjected to threatening park rules, and bombarded with undated demand notices. All with an apparent intent to create an atmosphere of fear and confusion.

The despair among these residents is palpable. In Lynnwood, the Royalwood MHC has had space rent and fees go up in one year from \$640/month to over \$940/month. One resident shared, “I don’t know where I will go. I don’t know if I can afford to stay here. People ask me if I am fine. I say I am fine. But

I am not fine. I can’t sleep, I can’t eat. I feel lost.”

Another resident, who once had a successful career, lamented, “Today I am treated with no value or respect. I feel like a squashed bug. I used to feel safe here. Now I feel worthless with no purpose in life.”

This is not just a local issue; similar stories are echoed by seniors across multiple counties. This is elder abuse, pure and simple, people are being stripped of their homes, their security, and their hope and dignity.

What can be done as we navigate this Perfect Storm?

- At the federal level: Regulations are needed on loans that require proper-

ties purchased with federal funds to continue to provide affordable rents so current homeowners can remain in place.

- At the state level: The State Legislature must pass a rent stabilization law to protect seniors on fixed income and other low-income households. Tying rent increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) would be a fair solution.
- At the local level: County and municipal officials must enhance tenants’ rights and establish emergency rental assistance for those facing economic eviction.

We must act now to protect these vulnerable residents and ensure they can live out their final years with dignity and security.

from page 1 **SOUND TRANSIT**

“I remember pressing the Department of Transportation in hearings and letters and phone calls and just about every way I could save the Lynnwood Link extension from the chopping block in a signed Full Funding Grant Agreement,” Senator Murray said, who is also the Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

In 2016, Sound Transit became the first transportation agency in the country to enter into a master credit agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation. By 2018, the agency received a \$1.17 billion Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) for its Lynnwood Link light rail extension from the Federal Transit Administration, then the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Build America Bureau on December 19, 2018, also executed a \$658 million low-interest loan supporting the Lynnwood extension.

“Of the \$9 billion in funding commitments invested by the Trump Administration to support the nation’s transit infrastructure since January 20, 2017, this \$1.17 billion Full Funding Grant Agreement is the largest, said then-FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams at the Lynnwood Link groundbreaking five years earlier. “This investment in the Lynnwood Link project will improve mobility for thousands of people in the Puget Sound region.”

The almost \$2 billion in funding secured from the federal government in 2018 allowed Sound Transit to break ground on September 3, 2019, for its 8.5-mile Lynnwood Link Extension to connect Lynnwood’s City Center with Northgate in King County. Both then-Mayor Nicola Smith and then-councilwoman Shannon Sessions shared at the groundbreaking ceremony that Lynnwood will be the regional model for Light Link Rail.

“Lynnwood Link, and all of the improvements that will come to our city as a result, will be a catalyst for a vibrant and interconnected community that supports living, learning, doing business and enjoying life,” said then-Mayor Smith.

The Northgate, Roosevelt and University District Link light rail stations opened on October 2, 2021, followed by the Tacoma Link extension on September 16, 2023, and the Bellevue to Redmond light rail route earlier this year.

Originally East Link (Line 2) was to fully open in June of 2023, prior to the Lynnwood Link, but supply chain disruptions due to the COVID shutdown of 2020 and a four-month concrete strike in 2021—both external challenges outside of Sound Transit’s control—coupled with construction quality issues along the entire stretch of the I-90 bridge portion of the light rail track discovered in June of 2022—specifically, faulty concrete plinths, and defective pre-cast blocks and nylon fasteners bolt inserts—resulted in a partial opening on April 24 along the Redmond to Bellevue route only.

The remaining portion of Line 2, along I-90, is now scheduled to open in 2025, which will then allow residents from Lynnwood City Center to travel to Bellevue via the International District/Chinatown Station in downtown Seattle.

According to Sound Transit’s adopted realignment strategy, the Lynnwood-Mariner extension is to be complete in 2037, and the Mariner-Everett link to open in 2041. Yet the parking for the Everett link is scheduled to be com-



Lynnwood Link Transit Center on opening day—August 30, 2024. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

plete in 2046.

“The opening of Lynnwood Link is a testament to the hard work of the construction teams and Sound Transit staff who have worked for years to make this project a reality,” said Sound Transit Interim CEO Goran Sparrman. “They persevered through the pandemic and a four-month concrete delivery strike to bring us to today’s celebration. Lynnwood Link’s opening also marks a transformative moment in Sound Transit’s history, as we enter Snohomish County. With the openings of the full 2 Line next year and the extension to Federal Way in 2026, we will have more than doubled the size of our system in just a few years, providing the residents of our region great options for easy, efficient travel to even more destinations.”

The Lynnwood Link extension increases the light rail system from 39 stations and 35 miles of track to 53 stations and 62 miles of track with trains running every 8 minutes during peak hours. Sound Transit expects approximately 50,000 people—pre-pandemic estimates—to use the Lynnwood Link daily.

“It’s not just that we can get off of I-5, get out of our cars and enjoy a fast and reliable trip to our destination,” said Sound Transit Board Vice Chair and Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers. “Light rail is also helping our environment and ensuring that our economy remains strong for generations to come.”

“The Lynnwood Light Rail Link opens today and so does a new chapter in the history of Lynnwood,” Lynnwood City Council President George Hurst told the Lynnwood Times. “The bedroom suburb with strip malls is being transformed into a major city in South Snohomish County. Lynnwood is the regional model for development around the light rail station. The walkable and vibrant City Center that residents have wanted for years will soon follow. It is an exciting time to live in Lynnwood.”

The project is the culmination of 15 years of dedicated work. Voters approved the Link light rail system initially back in 1996, which included service from SeaTac airport to the University of Washington in Seattle, with a Northgate extension dependent on funding. Voters then approved Sound Transit’s 15-year program in 2008 which included the extension to Lynnwood and east to Bellevue/Redmond, and in 2016 approved extending light rail north to Everett and south all the way down to Tacoma by 2044.

“You cannot have a big-league economy with little league infrastructure,” said U.S. Representative Rick Larsen, the lead Democrat on the Transportation

& Infrastructure Committee. “Thanks in part to historic federal investments, Sound Transit light rail has arrived in Snohomish County, and that means more jobs and opportunity for Northwest Washington.

Lynnwood is adding more than 3,000 housing units to its City Center because of light rail. Active construction sites along the Lynnwood Link extension will add over 10,000 new apartment units within walking distance of the new rail system, whose residents will take advantage of leveraging the transportation system’s investments. On Sound Transit property alone, there have been a total of 3,300 new living options built, the majority of which (2,200) are classified as affordable housing.

Housing Hope is currently building an additional 160 new affordable homes directly next to the Lynnwood City Center station, three quarters of which will serve larger families (three-to-four-bedroom units) which is in desperate need for the region.

“Lynnwood has been preparing for this milestone since the creation of our Legacy Lynnwood plan in 1993,” said Sound Transit Board Member and Lynnwood Mayor Christine Frizzell. “This achievement would not have been possible without our community’s incredible support, and for that, I am grateful.”

Lynnwood’s City Center light rail station will have 1,670 free parking spaces for commuters with an additional 688 parking spaces at the Mountlake Terrace station, and 500 parking spaces at each of the two Shoreline stations.

Projected travel times from Lynnwood to University District Station is 18 minutes; to Westlake in downtown Seattle is 28 minutes; and to SeaTac Airport is 65 minutes all at the flat rate of \$3. Low-income fares and senior discounts of just \$1 are also available. Riders can even use the Transit Go app to pay their fare so no need for an Orca Card. All riders using the app will have to do is show their paid fare to one of the many Fare Ambassadors patrolling the trains directly from their phone.

As far as security goes, Sound Transit is committed to ensuring riders have a safe trip. It currently contracts with Allied Security and law enforcement agencies providing 550 commissioned security guards within its system who will be working around the clock during the train’s regular operations from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m. Monday through Saturday and from 6 a.m. to midnight on Sundays and holidays. Security will also be stationed during nonoperational hours to protect facilities.

Fare Ambassadors will check passen-

gers for proof of payment at Link stations. They will also help new riders navigate the rail system. Elevators to the platform are available for those with ADA needs.

Artwork done by Preston Singletary, Claudia Fitch, David Franklin, a hummingbird, a kitchen window, and artistic yet functioning streetlamps, adorn the station as passengers trickle in to load their Orca cards with fare and board the train to whatever destination awaits.

The Lynnwood City Center Station—including the parking garage and plaza—is the first Sound Transit project to earn Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Specific achievements include the following:

- 30% energy cost reduction vs the ASHRAE 90.1 baseline, with advanced metering for real-time monitoring
- 34% indoor water use reduction through efficient fixtures vs EPA baseline
- 71% reduction in irrigation water use through native, drought-tolerant plant species vs EPA baseline
- 85% of open space covered in vegetation via pedestrian promenade, walkways, bike trails, and planting areas
- 81% of construction waste diverted from landfills
- 100% of paints, coatings, adhesives, sealants, flooring, ceiling, and insulation met LEED low-VOC requirements

Though construction of Lynnwood Link involved removing some trees along the 8.5-mile stretch, Sound Transit planted just over 15,000 trees, nearly three times as many as it had to remove. The agency will maintain the newly planted trees along the alignment for up to 13 years, greatly improving their survival rates.

“The opening of Lynnwood light rail service is a major milestone for our region,” said Sound Transit Board Chair and King County Executive Dow Constantine. “For the first time, our light rail system connects two counties, bringing us closer to the vision of an integrated, high-capacity transit network for Central Puget Sound. This achievement is the result of community support, careful planning and construction, and sheer persistence. Now, it’s time for Snohomish County to hop aboard reliable, traffic-free, carbon-free Link light rail.”

Stacy & Witbeck/Kiewit/Hoffman and Skanska Constructors performed the civil construction on the extension. Mass Electric completed the systems work, which included the overhead catenary, traction power, signaling, and communications.

Skanska, a global construction and development firm based out of Stockholm, Sweden, was a critical partner to the success of the Lynnwood Link extension. It served as the General Contractor for the construction of the Lynnwood City Center and Mountlake Terrace stations, built the Lynnwood City Center Station’s five-story parking garage and was responsible for meeting the construction standards required for the LEED Gold certification of that station.

Skanska was also responsible for the Lynnwood Link Extension (L300) section delivering 3.8 miles of light rail guideway connecting the cities of Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace and Lyn-

Continued **PAGE 12**

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lynnwood to the north of Seattle.

“As I was listening to the speeches today, what really resonated with me, is what we [at Skanska] tried to achieve as an organization, building projects that include the community that we work in and improving the lives of those that live in the community,” Ryan Clayton, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Skanska USA told the Lynnwood Times. “To hear that message and theme come through from all of the elected officials just gives you a sense of pride for the work the men and women who work in our organization, and the time and effort they put into it really brings value.”

Clayton informed the Lynnwood Times that throughout the lifecycle of the project, Skanska employed approximately 1,000 from union trades.

“What we try to do as an organization is make sure that we put together on-the-job mentorship,” Clayton said.

Skanska is hoping to continue its work with Sound Transit on the West Seattle extension. It is actively working currently with WSDOT on the \$4.1 billion 520 Portage Bay Bridge Project, that is expected to complete in 2031, and is building express toll lanes on the 405 through the city of Bothell that is expected to wrap up in 2028.

Infrastructure design firm HNTB collaborated with Sound Transit to ensure its design was consistent and compliant with the transportation authority’s standards, all while keeping costs under control. HNTB’s team selected the most effective type of structure for the region—precast concrete girders which the company used consistently throughout most of the stretch.

What stood out about this project to Moein El-Aarag, Group Director and Associate Vice President at HNTB, is its sheer scale and complexity, he informed the Lynnwood Times. Unlike the small-

er projects he has managed in the past, Lynnwood’s light rail had a significantly larger footprint.

“It feels incredibly rewarding [to have been a part of the light rail expansion]. I’m truly grateful to be working on a project of this magnitude that will have a lasting impact on Western Washington,” El-Aarag told the Lynnwood Times. “There’s a unique satisfaction in being part of something that connects communities and improves lives on such a large scale... I couldn’t be prouder to contribute to a project that will bring such significant benefits to our community, both now and for future generations.

Sound Transit’s Lynnwood Link light rail expansion is particularly special to El-Aarag as a Lynnwood resident. He continued that the impact of the project goes beyond improving mobility it will “enhance the quality of life for many people across the region.”

CHANGES TO COMMUNITY TRANSIT ROUTES TO ALIGN WITH SOUND TRANSIT CENTERS

Community Transit is making major changes and improvements to bus service on September 14. The changes come two weeks after Sound Transit’s Link light rail 1 Line extends to Snohomish County. It’s not too early for people to plan their new commute or explore new ways to travel by transit. Trip planning tools (below) are now available to help people get ready for September 14.

What to expect on September 14:

- Riders should check for schedule updates since there are changes on most routes for more frequent and reliable service.
- Commuter routes to Northgate and Seattle will be eliminated and replaced with new express and local routes that connect to light rail. Swift Blue Line is also extending south to connect to the Shoreline North/185th light rail station.

from page 2 **SILVERTIPS**

advanced to director of player personnel in 2021 and assistant general manager in 2022 before becoming general manager of the Silvertips.

“[Mike] Fraser has worked really hard to move up through the WHL. Mike [Fraser] came to us a few years back; he worked with two other organizations in our league and understands the caliber of player needed to be a good junior hockey team,” said Zoran Rajcic, chief operating officer of the Everett Silvertips.

Fraser is eager to leverage his experience with the team in his new role.

“The Silvertips have treated me like family since Day One. I’ve learned a ton here since 2018, and the bonus for me is that the last three seasons working closely with Dennis has helped prepare me for this role,” Fraser said. “With Dennis [Williams] having been both coach and GM, he trusted me to handle a lot of the GM duties already so that more of his focus could be on coaching

our club. It was a great way for me to learn some of the ins and outs of this role since coming out of the COVID season.”

Under Fraser’s leadership, fans can expect a hardworking, tenacious, and aggressive style. When searching for a new head coach, Fraser sought someone who would play to that hard-working style and excel at developing young players while achieving success on the ice.

“It’s our goal to continue to develop good young players while building successful teams on the ice and players our community can be proud of,” Fraser said.

STEVE HAMILTON, HEAD COACH

After accepting the position in July, Steve Hamilton became the sixth head coach in Silvertips’ history. The Edmonton, Alberta, native joins Everett Silvertips after coaching with the WHL’s Calgary Hitmen from 2018 to 2024. In Calgary, Hamilton compiled a 165-152-40 regular season record and led the

ELIMINATED ROUTES	NEW ROUTE OPTIONS
105	103', 106, 120, Swift Green Line, Zip Alderwood Shuttle
107, 113	103', 117'
227, 247	905', 907'
402	Link 1 Line, 515
405	102, 119, Swift Blue Line, Link 1 Line
410	201/202, Link 1 Line
412	901', Link 1 Line, Zip Alderwood Shuttle
413, 415	103', 112, 166, 201/202, 512, 513, 515, Swift Orange Line, Link 1 Line
416	909', Swift Blue Line, Link 1 Line
417	117', Link 1 Line
421	904', 905', Link 1 Line
422	905', Link 1 Line
425	106, 515, 903', Link 1 Line
435	120, 201/202, 515, 535, Swift Green Line, Swift Orange Line, Link 1 Line
810, 860	119, 130, 201/202, 901', Swift Orange Line, Link 1 Line
821	904', 905', Link 1 Line
871	102, 119, 130, Swift Blue Line, Link 1 Line
880	103', 112, 117', 201/202, Swift Orange Line, Link 1 Line, Zip Alderwood Shuttle
ROUTE CHANGES	NEW ROUTE OPTIONS
106 (between Canyon Park and UW Bothell/Cascadia College)	106, 120, 121'
130 (in Edmonds)	130, 909
EXTENDED ROUTES	DETAILS
120 Swift Blue Line	Extends to UW Bothell/Cascadia College Extends to Shoreline North/185th St station

Upcoming maps for each new route. SOURCE: Community Transit.

- There will be more bus service running more often, including on weekends.


Simplified bus fares start September 1 — \$2.50 for all adult fares, \$1.25 discounted fares for those who qualify, and kids 18 and under ride free. Using an ORCA card is the easiest way to pay.

Riders should take a few steps now to get ready for September 14:

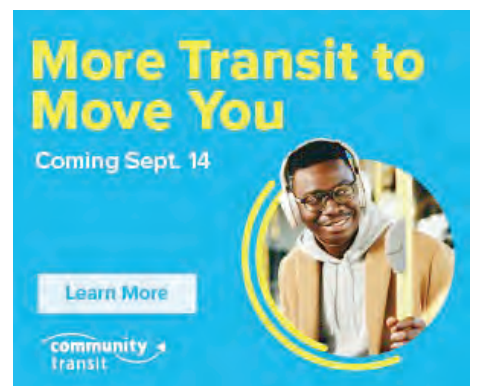
- Check Maps & Schedules on Community Transit’s website to view the Sept. 14 preview schedules.
- Use the Plan My Trip tool to build a customized trip plan any time. Be sure to set the arrival or departure date to Sept. 14 or later.
- Visit the Service Change web page to see maps and videos for chang-

ing routes.

- Contact Customer Care at riders@commtrans.org or (425) 353-RIDE (7433) for personalized trip planning or printed materials.



SCAN FOR ROUTES



More Transit to Move You
Coming Sept. 14
Learn More
community transit

team to the second round of the WHL playoffs in 2019 and the first round in 2023. Prior to Calgary, Hamilton also coached with the WHL’s Edmonton Oil Kings and in the Alberta Junior Hockey League (AJHL).

Rajcic, Chief operating officer of the Silvertips, was attracted to Hamilton’s attention to detail and preparation.

“He has a teaching background and has been a coach in the Western Hockey League for 12 seasons and understands what it takes to help mold and develop the young players personally and professionally as people and hockey players,” Rajcic said. Before coaching junior hockey in the AJHL, Hamilton taught for 17 years in public schools and spent 13 years providing on-ice instruction across several age groups.

Hamilton is excited to bring his coaching expertise to the Silvertips, an organization he admires.

“I have always considered Everett one of our league’s best organizations. The building and the crowd create a huge

home ice advantage and feed the energy of the players,” Hamilton said.

Hamilton aims to develop a club that works hard and is difficult to play against.

“I want us to have an attacking mindset and put pressure on the puck all over the ice. We have a veteran group of defensemen that I expect to contribute at both ends of the rink and depth at the forward position, allowing us to play a relentless style,” Hamilton said.

Hamilton looks forward to collaborating with the new general manager to create a winning product.

“Mike Fraser and his scouting staff have done a great job finding players that match the identity of the team and bring a high level of skill and grit,” Hamilton said.

As summer draws to a close, Hamilton is eager to work with the players and staff in a highly competitive U.S. Division. He emphasized the need for the team to be focused every game.



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