New “Best Travel Times” Gives Transit Riders More Options

Coupeville, WA -- Island Transit now offers customers “Best Travel Times” information to further support social distancing practices during the pandemic by avoiding buses running at high capacity. The information now appears next to the bus schedules on the agency’s website. By providing this information, the agency hopes to empower riders to make informed decisions with options that protect their health and safety.

“Information is a powerful thing. As we all move through this public health crisis together, we want riders to be informed and make choices that are best for them,” says Todd Morrow, Island Transit Executive Director. “We’re doing our part by limited seating on the bus to allow for social distancing. Best Travel Times gives passengers the opportunity to do their part by choosing routes and schedules that typically run with fewer riders.”

Since March, seating has been limited to 11 passengers on two-door buses and eight passengers on one-door buses during the pandemic. Morrow says that early in the pandemic ridership was low, making social distancing easy. Between March and July, the agency saw a 30 percent increase in ridership.

“Customer’s confidence is building and people are slowly returning to ride the bus,” says Morrow, who credits Island Transit’s front-line staff for their heroic efforts to keep public transit running during the pandemic and slow the spread of the virus by implementing rigorous health and safety guidelines. “With more riders and limited seating, there are some routes at certain times of the day that are starting to get crowded and that concerns us all. We’re asking those who can make changes to their trips to use this information to find other times to ride.”

If buses are full, some passengers may need to wait for the next bus; a possible 30-to-60-minute delay. Although Island Transit dispatches a back-up bus to ease crowding when possible, back-ups are dependent on available buses and coach operators, so are not guaranteed.
“Best Travel Times is another tool in the arsenal to fight the spread of the COVID-19 virus,” says Morrow. “Our goal is to serve the essential travel needs of Island County residents in a safe and responsible manner during the pandemic. In addition to seating limits, face mask requirements and stringently sanitizing buses daily, this is one more thing we can do. We hope our riders will find the information useful to protect themselves and others. We really are in this together.”

Best Travel Times can be found on the Island Transit website at www.islandtransit.org/routes-and-schedules. The information is color coded to make it easy to read at a glance; and will be updated weekly.

**Key to Best Travel Times**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Riderhip Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Low Ridership – Good time to ride to maintain distancing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Moderate Ridership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>High Ridership – Seating may not be available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learn more about Island Transit’s commitments to passenger health and safety during the pandemic at www.islandtransit.org/commitments

**Media Contact:** Selene Muldowney-Stratton  
Marketing & Communications Officer  
Office: 360-678-9519  
Cell: 360-544-2015