

## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

### Kitsap Transit rolls out mobility improvements for Olympic College community

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BREMERTON – Starting on Monday, June 17, Kitsap Transit will begin serving a new bus stop at Olympic College Bremerton, one of many transit improvements the OC community will see in 2019.

Olympic hosted an event with Kitsap Transit at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, June 12, to christen the new bus stop. The mayors of Bremerton and Poulsbo and an Olympic College student offered brief remarks.



From the new bus stop at **OC Bremerton**, riders will be able to catch a Route 217 bus every 30 minutes on weekdays between 5:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The Route 217 provides service between Silverdale Transit Center and Bremerton Transportation Center. From Silverdale and Bremerton, passengers can transfer to other KT services to reach destinations elsewhere in Kitsap County or even downtown Seattle.

“We know that transportation can be a significant challenge for those trying to attend school. With the bus-service upgrades we’re making in Bremerton and Poulsbo now and in the future, Olympic College students will have more choices to get from point A to point B as well as expanded hours of bus service,” said John Clauson, Executive Director of Kitsap Transit.

The new bus stop incorporates a translucent image of the cherished OC mosaic, *The Progression of Mankind*, which reflects onto the ground. The bus stop also includes artistic benches that match the aesthetic of adjacent buildings.

The new bus stop on the Bremerton campus means OC students and staff will no longer have to dash across State Route 303 to a bus stop on Warren Avenue at 16<sup>th</sup> Street for northbound trips or a pull-out stop on Warren at 15<sup>th</sup> Street for southbound trips. (The bus stop on Warren at 16<sup>th</sup> Street will be removed and replaced with a stop just south of 15<sup>th</sup>.) And Kitsap Transit's northbound bus will no longer block a lane of Warren to load passengers at 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

Buses will be able to access OC Bremerton thanks to a recently completed project in partnership with the City of Bremerton. City crews moved a sidewalk at the northwest corner of Warren and 16<sup>th</sup> back to accommodate Kitsap Transit buses turning off Warren into the campus. The city also relocated utilities, storm drainage and the 16<sup>th</sup> Street traffic signal as part of the project.

"Olympic College greatly appreciates improvements made by the City of Bremerton to the main entrance to campus, which paved the way for Kitsap Transit's services enhancement," said Olympic College President Marty Cavalluzzi.

Bremerton Mayor Greg Wheeler applauded the City's staff for their work on the project.

"The City of Bremerton is strongly supportive of improving transit access for Olympic College students to increase safety as well as reduce traffic congestion," Wheeler said. "I applaud our City staff who worked to make these changes happen and are making it safer for students to get to classes."

Also later this year, Kitsap Transit plans to open the Wheaton Way Transit Center in East Bremerton, about 2 miles north of the OC Bremerton campus. The transit center will be located next to a new Park & Ride lot, making it more convenient for those who may not live on a bus route to ride transit. The Park & Ride lot will have approximately 160 stalls.

**OC Poulsbo** also will see major bus-service changes starting on June 17 that provide better connectivity and more choices for those traveling from Poulsbo, Kingston and Bainbridge Island. All routed buses will serve the lower parking lot on campus to allow for larger capacity buses and streamlined pickups and drop-offs. Among the changes coming to weekday bus service:

- Two buses on Route 344 will provide bidirectional service every 30 minutes from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., cutting travel time from OC Poulsbo to North Viking Transit Center (NVTC) from about 22 minutes currently to no more than 5 minutes.
- Route 390 will stop at OC Poulsbo more frequently between 8:40 a.m. and 6 p.m., making a loop from NVTC to OC Poulsbo and back to NVTC. This will enable passengers to make quicker connections to other bus routes.
- Residents of Kingston and outlying areas will be able to ride Route 307 throughout the day on weekdays between Kingston and North Viking Transit Center in Poulsbo. Currently, weekday service on Route 307 is limited to commute hours.

"These upgrades provide increased services and safer access to our campuses in Bremerton and Poulsbo, which is a big win for our students," Cavalluzzi said.

Bus service connections between OC Poulsbo and OC Bremerton are also on Kitsap Transit's service-improvement roadmap. Customers now have to catch Route 32 to NVTC, which continues on to the Silverdale Transit Center (STC), and switch to Route 217 to Bremerton.

With the June service changes, OC riders will ride Route 344 or 390 to NVTC and transfer to the Route 32 to STC; from STC, they will take Route 217 to Bremerton.

Kitsap Transit plans to roll out bus service upgrades in the fall with the goal of a single bus ride between the two campuses. These changes will include additional mid-day service on the Express Route #1 between Poulsbo and Bremerton.

Poulsbo Mayor Becky Erickson said Kitsap Transit's bus-service changes support what the City is doing.

"Kitsap Transit will now deliver more frequent bus service and expanded hours to the Poulsbo Olympic College campus, including the addition of a loop between the North Viking Transit Center and the campus," she said. "These changes, along with the new direct route between the Poulsbo and Bremerton OC campuses coming later this year, support the City's goal of encouraging expansion of higher education opportunities in Poulsbo."

Olympic College has approximately 12,000 students enrolled annually across its three campuses, or about 7,500 each quarter. In addition to students enrolled in distance-learning programs, about 4,500 attend classes in Bremerton; about 630 attend classes in Poulsbo; and about 300 in Shelton. OC also has more than 1,000 employees.

Learn more about Kitsap Transit's bus service expansion by going to <http://kitsaptransit.com/upgrade>