

Fall 2025

Paratransit NEWSLETTER



IMPORTANT: Proposed Fare and Service Changes

WTA is looking ahead to 2026 with proposed changes to fares and service. Before we make any decisions, we would like to hear from you about how these proposals may affect you.

Summary of Proposed Changes:

- Paratransit fare would increase to **\$3 per ride**.
- **Fare capping** would replace passes, making it easier to pay only for what you use.
- **Gold Card program** would change. It would no longer offer free rides, but it would offer **half-price (\$1)** fixed route rides for seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, and paratransit-eligible riders.
- **Change to the paratransit service area:** A portion of the **Edgemoor neighborhood** would no longer be served by WTA paratransit service.

How to Share Your Feedback

Please take a moment to share your thoughts with us. Your input will help us understand how these changes would affect you.

How to Give Feedback:

- **Call:** (360) 676-7433
- **Email:** customerservice@ridewta.com
- **Mail:** Whatcom Transportation Authority, 4011 Bakerview Spur, Bellingham, WA 98226
- **Online:** Visit engage.ridewta.com/fares
- **Public Comment Meeting (Virtual):** Monday, November 17, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., via Zoom
- **Public Comment Meeting (In Person):** Wednesday, November 19, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m., Bellingham Public Library

Public Hearing: Thursday, December 4, 8:00 - 9:00 a.m., virtual and in person.

More info at ridewta.com/board-meetings.



Proposed Fares and Gold Card Changes

Paratransit Fare Increase

The paratransit fare would increase from **\$1 to \$3 per one-way trip**.

This proposed change is meant to help cover a small portion of the actual cost of providing paratransit service, including the fuel, maintenance, and staffing that make these trips possible. Our goal is to maintain the quality and reliability of paratransit service for our riders.

If approved, these fare changes would take effect in **summer 2026**.

What are the proposed fares?

Rider Type	Current Fare	Proposed Fare
Fixed Route	\$1	\$2
Fixed Route Reduced Fare (65+, veterans, income-based, NEW: Gold Card)	\$0.50	\$1
Paratransit	\$1	\$3
Youth (18 and under)	Free	Free

Gold Card Program

We are also proposing updates to the **Gold Card** and **Reduced Fare** programs.

Currently, Gold Card holders aged 75 and older ride free.

Under the new proposal:

- **More people will qualify** for a Gold Card, including all paratransit riders, individuals 65 and older, veterans, and those who meet income-based eligibility.
- Gold Card holders would pay **\$1 per ride** on fixed-route buses.
- Paratransit rides would be **\$3 per ride** for everyone.



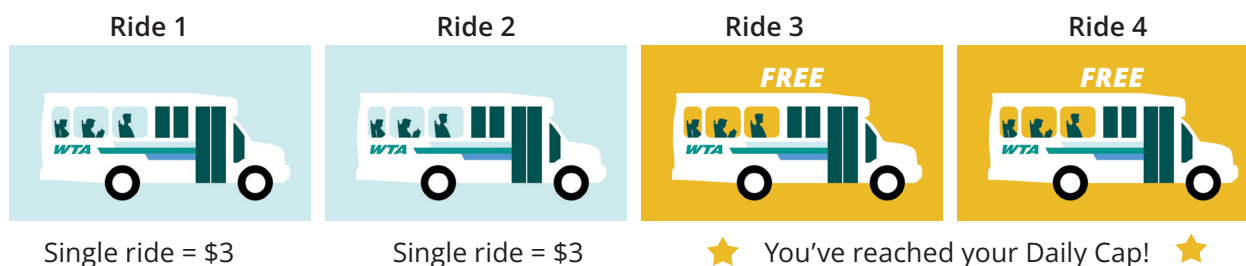
Fare Capping and Service Changes

What is Fare Capping?

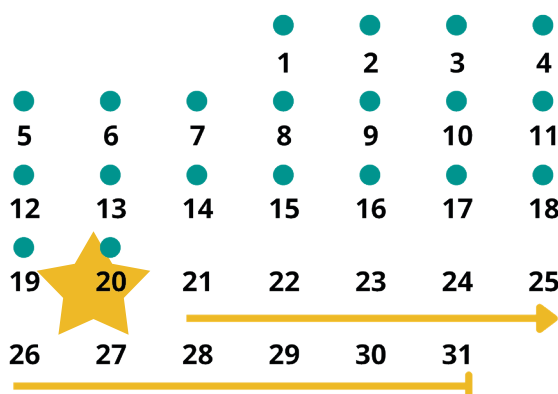
Fare capping replaces day and month passes. You'll pay as you go using a Umo card or a bank card at the farebox.

- The system automatically tracks what you've paid. Once you reach the limit, or "fare cap," (**\$6 in a day** or **\$60 in a month**) any additional rides are free for the rest of that period.
- Fare capping works across **fixed route** and **paratransit services**.

How it works:



Monthly Cap Example



Monthly Cap: When you pay for **20 paratransit rides** in a **calendar month**, you earn a monthly cap.

Instead of paying **\$93** in one month, you'll pay **\$60**.

Service Changes: Edgemoor Area

We are proposing changes to routes in South Bellingham, including the 105 which serves the Edgemoor Loop. This would result in reduced paratransit service in the area.

If you live in or travel to Edgemoor, these changes may affect whether your pick up or destination is within the paratransit service area. If you have questions about specific destinations, please give us a call at (360) 675-7433.

You can view detailed maps of the proposed changes and give feedback at:

engage.ridewta.com/changes.

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Holiday Closures

WTA offices and services will be closed on the following days:

Thanksgiving Day

Thursday, November 27, 2025

Christmas Day

Thursday, December 25, 2025

New Years Day

Thursday, January 1, 2026

Weather Safety

If the roads become unsafe this Winter, you may want to reschedule your trip. WTA staff can assist with rescheduling. This allows us to provide essential rides and reduce weather-related delays.

Before heading out, call ahead to make sure your destination is open, as many locations may close due to hazardous conditions. Stay safe and plan ahead!

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